



**Shire of Derby /
West Kimberley**

Economic Development Strategy 2026-2036

Driving sustainable growth

Contents

To be updated

Introduction

Welcome to the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley's Economic Development Strategy 2026–2036 – Driving sustainable growth.

This Strategy supports the Shire's vision of "A welcoming community with opportunities to thrive" and aligns with the Council Plan, providing a clear framework to guide economic development across the West Kimberley over the next decade.

It sets out a shared 10-year action plan for a resilient, inclusive and diversified economy, alongside practical actions to attract investment, support local business and create sustainable employment opportunities. It responds to the region's unique strengths and challenges, recognising the importance of housing, infrastructure, workforce development, and economic diversification in enabling long-term growth.

Developed through economic analysis and engagement with government, industry, Aboriginal organisations and the community, the Strategy reflects a strong commitment to partnership and place-based development. It recognises that sustainable economic growth must be inclusive and culturally grounded, with Aboriginal leadership playing a central role in shaping the region's future.

The Strategy focuses on five key areas:

1. Tourism, brand and place identity
2. Housing and liveability as an economic enabler
3. Economic diversification and sustainable industries
4. Aboriginal economic empowerment and leadership
5. Strong coordination, partnerships and advocacy.

Together, these priorities position the Shire as a gateway to opportunity and driving growth while enhancing community wellbeing.

This Strategy is practical, adaptive and delivery-focused, with progress to be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of Reconciliation, Shire of Derby/West Kimberley acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout the Shire and the continued connection to the land, waters and community.

The Shire would like to pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the Elders past and present and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal people.

Message from the President



This Economic Development Strategy presents a clear and coordinated approach to driving sustainable growth across the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley.

Aligned with the Shire's vision of this Strategy outlines how Council will work in partnership with the community, Aboriginal organisations, local businesses, and government to strengthen and diversify the local economy over the next decade.

The Shire continues to face a range of challenges, including housing constraints, workforce availability and the high cost of living and doing business in a remote environment. At the same time, there are significant opportunities to build on the region's natural assets, cultural heritage, and strategic position to support growth across key industries.

Council recognises the importance of maintaining a balanced and sustainable approach to economic development. This includes ensuring responsible financial management, making informed decisions about investment and priorities and advocating for the infrastructure and services required to support long-term growth.

In the short term, Council will focus on enabling the key foundations for economic development, including housing, infrastructure, and workforce capability, while supporting local business growth and strengthening regional partnerships.

Over the medium to long term, the Strategy will guide efforts to diversify the economy, support improved Aboriginal economic participation and develop opportunities that contribute to employment, investment and improved quality of life across the Shire.

Council looks forward to working collaboratively with its partners and the community to deliver on this Strategy and support a strong and sustainable future.

Peter McCumstie

President, Shire of Derby/West Kimberley

The Shire at a glance

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley is known for its rich Aboriginal heritage and rugged natural beauty.

Covering over 120,000 square kilometres, it includes the towns of Derby, Fitzroy Crossing and Camballin, and 54 remote Aboriginal communities.

The population is predominantly Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, comprising over 60% of the population with 17 distinct language groups. This rich cultural heritage is central to the identity and future of our region.

The Shire is a gateway to some of Australia's most spectacular and unique natural attractions, like the Gibb River Road, Fitzroy River, Windjana Gorge, Devonian Reef and Horizontal Falls, drawing tourists seeking adventure and cultural experiences.

There is a wide range of public and community facilities, including libraries, swimming pools, town ovals, parks, a civic centre, recreation centres, and essential services like a waste management facilities and airports. These amenities support recreation, learning, transport, and community engagement across both urban and remote areas, while iconic locations like the Derby Jetty and community hubs enhance local lifestyle and tourism.

The main industries for employment are education and training, and health care and social assistance, followed by public health and administration.

Continued investment in community development, health services, education, digital connectivity and housing – especially in Aboriginal communities – will be critical to improving long-term wellbeing and equity.

Building on its unique assets, the Shire has strong potential for inclusive and sustainable growth, making the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley a truly unique and vibrant place to live, work and visit now, and for the future.





Resident population

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
June 2024, ABS Estimate



8,536

Annual change: 2023-2024
1.2% increase

Socio-economic index for Australia (SEIFA)

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2021, ABS Census

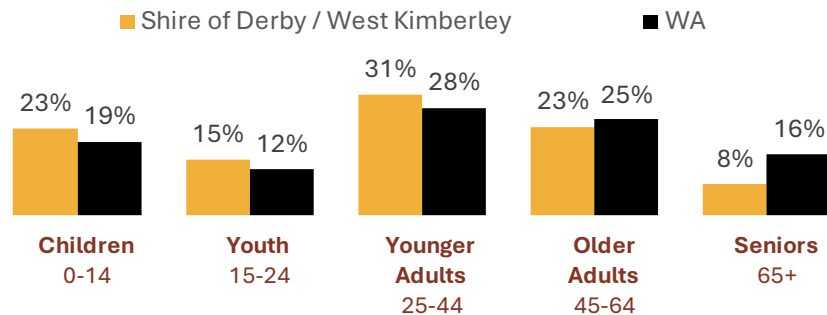


818

Rank: 4 out of 139
WA LGAs

Age profile

2021, ABS Census



Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2021, ABS Census



60.3%
WA: 3.3%

Profound or severe core activity limitation

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2021, ABS Census
(excludes not stated)



4.4%
WA: 4.9%

People who speak a non-English language

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2021, ABS Census
(excludes not stated)



43.5%
WA: 19.6%

Cycle or walk to work

Among employed persons aged 15+ years, 2021, ABS Census
(base excludes work from home, did not go to work and not stated)



25.8%
WA: 3.2%

Long-term health conditions

% residents, 2021, ABS Census(excludes not stated)



Diabetes
(excluding gestational diabetes)

7.2% WA: 4.8%



Asthma

4.9% WA: 8.1%



Arthritis

3.9% WA: 8.4%



Mental health condition
(including depression or anxiety)

3.8% WA: 9.1%



Heart disease
(including heart attack or angina)

3.2% WA: 3.9%



Kidney disease

1.6% WA: 0.8%



Cancer
(including remission)

1.5% WA: 3.0%



Lung condition
(including COPD or emphysema)

0.9% WA: 1.7%



Dementia
(including Alzheimer's)

0.7% WA: 0.7%



Stroke

0.7% WA: 0.9%

Gross Regional Product

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2024, REMPLAN



\$509.8M

Annual change:
+\$13.3M (2.7%)

Visitor economy: tourism jobs

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2024, Kimberley Development Commission



155

5.9% of total jobs

Home ownership

Owned outright
or with a mortgage
2021, ABS Census
(excludes tenure type not stated)



17.4%

WA: 70.1%

Completed year 12 or equivalent

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2021, ABS Census



36.1%

WA: 62.6%

Housing diversity

Semi-detached house,
townhouse, flat or apartment
2021, ABS Census
(excludes not stated)



7.6%

WA: 19.5%

Volunteering

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
Among 15+ year olds
2021, ABS Census
(excludes not stated)



13.9%

WA: 17.2%

Businesses and jobs

Shire of Derby / West Kimberley
2024, Kimberley Development Commission

Businesses

Jobs

245

2,304

Annual change: -2

+306 offshore jobs

Main industries of employment

2021, ABS Census (% of residents)

Education and Training	Health Care and Social Assistance	Public Administration and Safety	Retail Trade	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	Construction
21.9%	20.1%	13.2%	6.3%	5.7%	5.7%
WA: 9.2%	WA: 14.2%	WA: 6.2%	WA: 9.2%	WA: 2.4%	WA: 9.2%

Our community vision

*A welcoming community
with opportunities to thrive.*

Economic Development Strategy 2026 - 2036 and 10-year Action Plan

Economic Development Strategy Structure

This section is informed by stakeholder interviews, the Shire's Strategic Community Plan consultation process, a scan for alignment with stakeholder strategies, and by analysis of the region's economic profile

Context and situational analysis, problems and opportunities

What are we trying to achieve?
What is the desired public impact?

Vision, objectives and expected benefits

Where do we focus our resources strategically?
Who do we partner with?

Strategic pillars

What will we do?

Action / implementation plan

How do we know if we're succeeding?

Monitoring and evaluation

Feedback
loop



About this section

This section of the draft Economic Development Strategy was developed through a structured and evidence-based approach. The primary foundation was the detailed economic and demographic analysis which provides quantitative insights into population trends, employment, industry composition, economic output, and land use patterns. This analysis highlighted key structural characteristics of the Shire's economy, including its reliance on mining and pastoral industries, population decline over the past decade, and recent signs of recovery in gross regional product and employment.

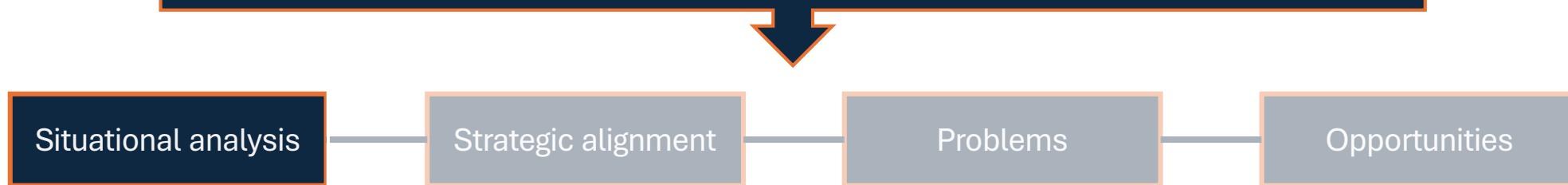
This quantitative baseline was strengthened through extensive stakeholder engagement, including targeted one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders across government, industry, and the community. These discussions provided grounded, on-the-ground perspectives on local challenges and opportunities. Their inputs were carefully distilled and directly informed the framing of issues such as housing constraints, workforce attraction and retention, infrastructure limitations, and governance effectiveness.

In parallel, a review of relevant State and Federal Government strategies, along with regional stakeholder plans, was undertaken to ensure alignment with broader policy frameworks. This included consideration of priorities relating to housing, workforce development, infrastructure investment, Indigenous economic participation, and Northern Australia development.

The problem statements were then refined to clearly articulate the most critical barriers to economic growth and liveability, while the opportunity statements identify practical, place-based pathways to leverage the Shire's unique assets. This approach ensures the strategy is grounded in data, shaped by stakeholder insight, and aligned with government priorities.

Furthermore, development of this document was undertaken 'hand-in-glove' with the development of the Shire's Council Plan. It is intended that the content of this document mirror the content in the respective section(s) of the plan.

Context and situational analysis, problems and opportunities



Summary below

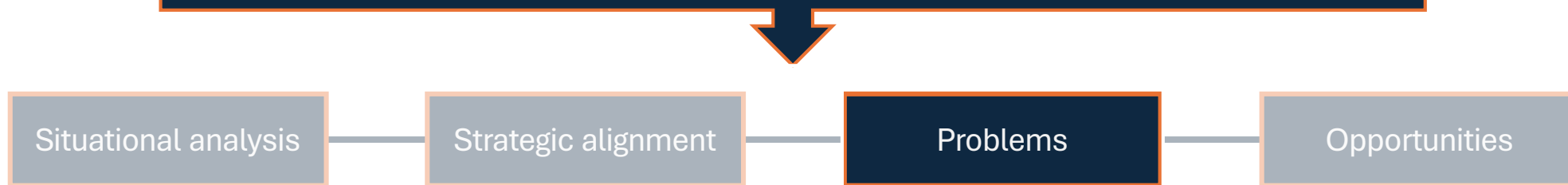
1. Community priority: the 2025 MARKYT® Community Scorecard identified 'Economic Development' and 'Housing' at the two highest priorities, but as the two worst performing.
2. Economic reliance: The Shire's economy is relatively concentrated on a small number of sectors, leaving it vulnerable to volatility and policy shifts.
3. Fiscal constraint: A small, declining rate base and low asset renewal limit the Shire's financial sustainability and ability to co-fund infrastructure or attract grants.
4. Infrastructure deficit: Ageing facilities, flood-damaged assets, and poor housing conditions undermine livability and workforce attraction.
5. Social disadvantage: Unemployment and youth disengagement are high, with weak education outcomes, low retention, and high staff turnover across sectors.
6. Aboriginal participation: Although many residents are Aboriginal, there is limited involvement of Aboriginal people in Shire procurement processes, and in some governance bodies.
7. Governance fragmentation: Limited coordination among government agencies, native title bodies, and regional institutions limits effective planning and delivery.
8. Environmental conflict: Competing priorities around the Martuwarra (Fitzroy River) basin – economic development vs. cultural and ecological protection – create policy tension and limit effective and strategic Government direction.
9. Remoteness and connectivity: Poor road and digital infrastructure isolate communities, raising service costs and constraining supply chains.
10. Strategic potential: Assets such as Derby Port, Curtin RAAF Base, and vast natural landscapes provide anchors for diversification in tourism, carbon markets, and logistics.
11. Emerging priorities: Initial consultation identified five imperatives – rebuild livability, embed Aboriginal governance, localise training and procurement, attracting private sector investment in sustainable industries, and strengthen advocacy partnerships.

Context and situational analysis, problems and opportunities



Strategic Pillar	WA Government Alignment	Federal Government Alignment	Regional Stakeholder Alignment
Housing and livability as an Economic Enabler	WA Housing Strategy 2020–2030; WA Jobs Act 2017; Closing the Gap – WA Implementation Plan; WA Regional Development Framework	National Housing and Homelessness Plan (in development); National Skills Agreement; Closing the Gap; Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme	KDC Blueprint – Regional Leadership and Aboriginal Advancement; RDA Kimberley Strategic Plan – livability and Workforce
Tourism, Brand and Place Identity	Diversify WA – Tourism and Creative Industries; Tourism WA Two-Year Action Plan; Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy 2021–2029; WAITOC.	National Tourism Strategy 2030; Northern Australia Action Plan 2024-2029 (NAAP); WA Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2021 – 2025.	RDA Kimberley Strategic Plan; Broome Growth Plan; KDC Blueprint – Tourism and Regional Branding
Aboriginal Economic Empowerment and Leadership	Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy 2021–2029; WA Climate Policy 2020; WA Jobs Act	Closing the Gap Priority Reforms; National Aboriginal Ranger Program; Aboriginal Advancement Strategy	Registered Native Title Prescribed Body Corporate (RNTNBC); KDC Aboriginal Advancement Pillar; ACCOs; opportunities to connect with existing Aboriginal Leadership Groups.
Economic Diversification and Sustainable Industries	Diversify WA Strategy; WA Agribusiness Strategy; WA Climate Policy 2020; WA Green Jobs Plan	Northern Australia Action Plan 2024-2029 (NAAP); Ag2030 Strategy; Nature Repair Market Bill; Net Zero 2050 Commitments	RDA Kimberley Strategic Plan; KDC Blueprint – Infrastructure and Emerging Industries; Kimberley Pastoral and Agribusiness Networks
Partnerships, Leadership and Advocacy	WA Regional Development Framework; WALGA Advocacy Priorities; State Infrastructure Strategy	Federal Regional Investment Framework; Northern Australia Action Plan 2024 - 2029; Infrastructure Australia Priority List	KDC and RDA Kimberley advocacy priorities; Regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry; Kimberley Regional Group (KRG)

Context and situational analysis, problems and opportunities



Housing shortages and construction challenges

- The Shire faces a critical shortage of affordable and appropriate housing, in Derby and Fitzroy Crossing. These shortages are compounded by complex land tenure and native title processes, which are perceived by some stakeholders to slow down development and deter private and public investment. High supply chain costs and limited construction capacity further raise barriers. The lack of housing undermines livability, restricts workforce attraction and retention, and limits business investment. This is compounded by limited investment in building local capacity, training and employment pathways in the construction sector.

Workforce attraction, retention and skills

- The region struggles to attract and retain a stable workforce due to high living costs, limited services, and constrained training pathways. A mismatch persists between community expectations, industry needs, and training availability, creating instability and barriers to growth in key some sectors.
- Local contractors face difficulties competing for major projects due to limitations in compliance, project management, and administrative capacity. This prevents the region from fully capturing value from government, defence, and infrastructure contracts. Furthermore, skilled workers are often attracted to greater remuneration offered by the mining sector.

Economic concentration and exposure to policy shifts

- The local economy is reliant on pastoralism and mining, leaving it vulnerable to global commodity fluctuations and national policy shifts such as any future live export bans on cattle (not currently proposed). This lack of diversification constrains resilience, limits innovation, and places long-term growth at risk.

Infrastructure maintenance and high supply chain costs

- The scale and remoteness of the Shire means that maintaining essential road, digital, and logistics infrastructure is costly and resource-intensive.
- These higher infrastructure and supply chain costs flow through to businesses, service providers, and households, influencing the overall cost of living and cost of doing business in the district. It also limits opportunities for businesses to achieve economies of scale.
- Ensuring sustainable and affordable infrastructure investment is therefore critical to attracting new industries, supporting tourism, and enabling reliable service delivery for communities across the Shire.

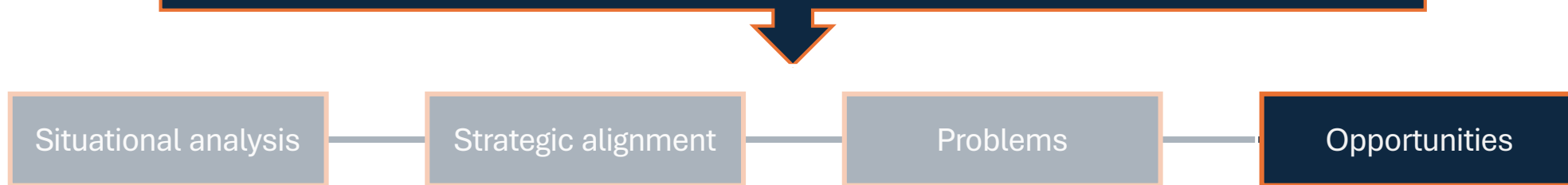
Underutilised governance and advocacy structures

- Despite multiple regional bodies, advocacy for public investment is inconsistent. This weakens the Shire's influence with higher levels of government, reduces funding leverage, and slows reform.
- Furthermore, Aboriginal stakeholders are often under-represented in governance structures, which limits impact with some stakeholders and undermines inclusiveness.

Fragmented tourism assets and reputational damage reducing visitor stay and spend

- The tourism sector remains underdeveloped, with fragmented assets, limited accommodation, and reputational challenges reducing visitor stay and spend. While the district has significant natural and cultural assets, these are underutilised. Limited brand recognition and inconsistent positioning constrain the region's ability to fully realise its tourism potential and attract a broader visitor market.

Context and situational analysis, problems and opportunities



Collaborate to address housing shortages and complexities

- The Shire can work with partners to scope pilot projects aimed at address complex housing challenges and unlocking affordable supply while building local workforce capability in final assembly and servicing.
- Innovative housing also creates opportunities to train and employ people from the local population and to align workforce migration programs such as Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) and Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM), linking housing provision with sustainable workforce development.

Aboriginal economic empowerment

- By working with various stakeholders to support Aboriginal-led enterprises in cultural tourism, land management, aquaculture, and carbon markets, the Shire can foster inclusive growth. Supporting partner organisations to empower RNTFBCs through training, finance, and enterprise support will unlock shared value, preserve cultural integrity, and increase local employment.
- Embedding Aboriginal representation in governance and planning processes strengthens credibility and ensures the Strategy reflects community aspirations.

Tourism revitalisation and destination branding

- Derby and Fitzroy Crossing can be repositioned as distinctive gateways to the Kimberley by leveraging their natural and cultural assets.
- Initiatives include:
 - Destination branding: Establish the region as the gateway to the Gibb River Road, Buccaneer Archipelago and Horizontal Falls.
 - Cultural tourism: Expand Aboriginal-led tourism and small-scale adventure / recreational charters.
 - Events and marketing: Leverage the 2028 solar eclipse as a catalyst for branding and visitor growth.
 - Infrastructure renewal: encourage upgrades to caravan parks, improve accommodation options, and enhance town presentation to increase visitor stay and spend.

Economic diversification and strengthening of key sectors

The local economy has opportunities to expand and diversify through:

- Promote and support Ranger programs working alongside border control and defence.
- Pastoral and agricultural value-add: Meat processing, irrigation (where feasible), and Aboriginal agribusiness ventures.
- Renewable energy: Harness solar, wind, and storage to reduce costs, drive sustainability, and create jobs.
- Defence and security: Develop training, logistics, and border monitoring activities with greater community integration.
- Carbon and nature repair markets: Leverage Kimberley's natural assets for carbon offsets, biodiversity projects, and ranger-led programs.

Regional collaboration and investment advocacy

- There is a strong desire for coordinated advocacy aligned with State and Federal frameworks such as the RDA Charter, NAAP, and Regional Investment Framework.
- The Shire can convene stakeholders (KDC, RDA Kimberley, Kimberley Ports Authority, Aboriginal organisations) to create a unified voice and secure public investment for shovel-ready projects (housing, health, training hubs, ports).
- SDWK can develop 'funding ready' projects with costed business cases.

Build small business capability:

- Acknowledging that local businesses face various barriers to winning major contracts, building capacity through mentoring, project management support, and business skills training will allow them to compete for defence, infrastructure, and government projects.
- While not a direct provider of business support, the Shire can play a facilitation role, connecting small businesses with services such as the Small Business Development Corporation, industry mentors, and regional training providers.

Vision, objectives and expected benefits



The vision for the Shire's economy is:

A resilient, inclusive, and prosperous economy, where cultural heritage, natural assets, and innovation drive sustainable growth, create meaningful jobs, and strengthen community wellbeing.

This vision positions the Shire as both a gateway to opportunity in key sectors such as tourism, defence, agriculture, and carbon markets and a place of belonging where the local community can build secure livelihoods and futures.

OBJECTIVES

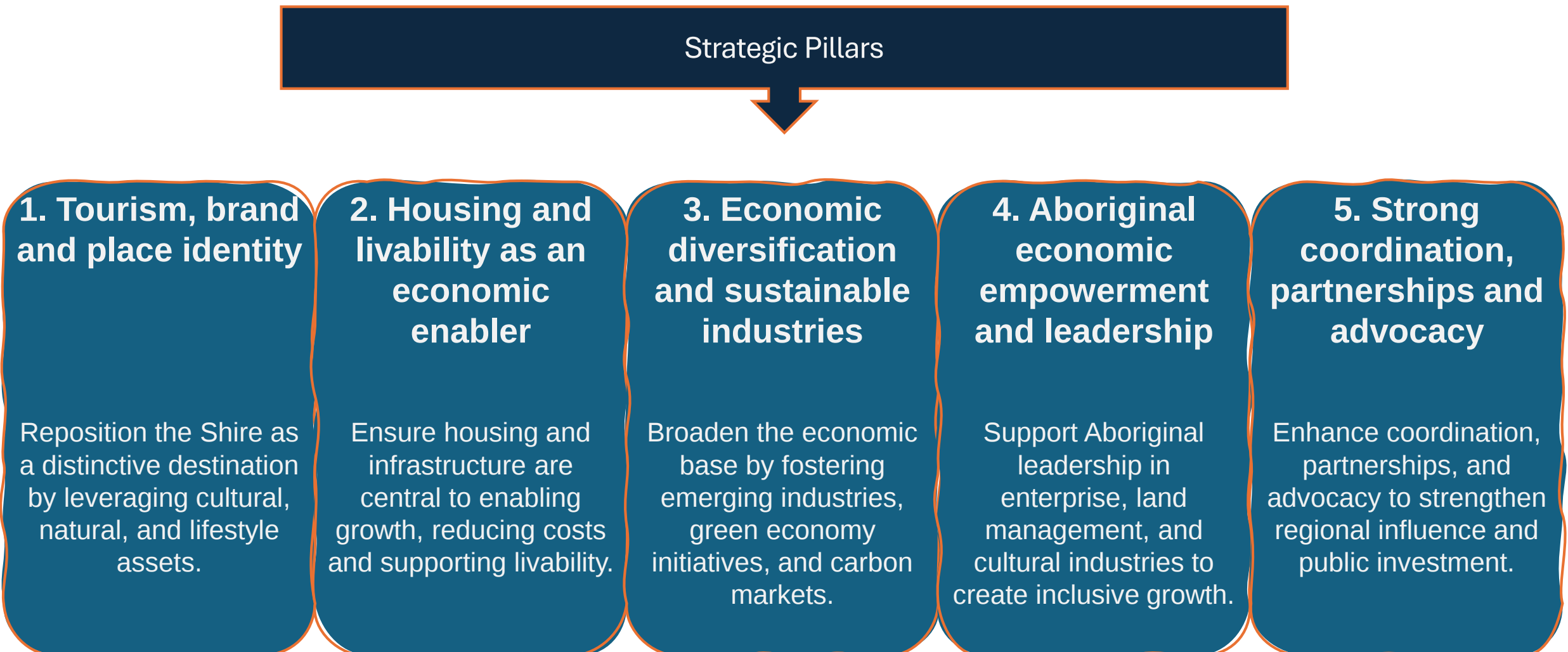
The Strategy is underpinned by the following core:

1. A distinctive, revitalised brand and tourism offering that attracts new visitors and residents.
2. Improved housing supply and modern infrastructure that enable investment and reduce cost-of-living pressures.
3. A diversified, sustainable economy that is resilient to policy shifts and environmental challenges.
4. A more inclusive, self-determined economy that reflects Aboriginal knowledge, culture, and leadership.
5. Stronger coordination and advocacy delivering more resources, reforms and investment to the region.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

1. Economic resilience: A more diverse local economy, less vulnerable to global commodity cycles or policy shifts.
2. Jobs and skills: Increased employment across multiple sectors, with growth in Aboriginal-led enterprises and higher retention of skilled workers.
3. Improved livability: Greater housing availability, more attractive services, and stronger community confidence in the district's future.
4. Cultural Strength: Recognition of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and leadership as core to economic decision-making.
5. Infrastructure renewal: Modernised facilities that underpin growth and resilience.
6. Stronger voice: More effective advocacy to State and Federal Governments, resulting in improved access to funding, better policy decisions and public investment.

Strategic Pillars



1. Tourism, brand and place identity

Reposition the Shire as a distinctive destination by leveraging cultural, natural, and lifestyle assets.

2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler

Ensure housing and infrastructure are central to enabling growth, reducing costs and supporting livability.

3. Economic diversification and sustainable industries

Broaden the economic base by fostering emerging industries, green economy initiatives, and carbon markets.

4. Aboriginal economic empowerment and leadership

Support Aboriginal leadership in enterprise, land management, and cultural industries to create inclusive growth.

5. Strong coordination, partnerships and advocacy

Enhance coordination, partnerships, and advocacy to strengthen regional influence and public investment.

Action plan summary table



#	Strategic Pillar and project	Deliver	Partner and advocate
1. Tourism, brand and place identity			
1.1	Tourism Infrastructure Renewal Program	✓	✓
1.2	Wayfinding, Interpretive Signage, and Entry Statement Network	✓	✓
1.3	Marketing Partnership	✓	✓
2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler			
2.1	Land Release and Planning Reform Initiative	✓	✓
2.2	Community Facilities Renewal Program	✓	
2.3	Public Realm and Streetscape Improvement Program	✓	
2.4	Town Activation and Events Program	✓	✓
2.5	Regional Housing Collaboration Forum		✓
3. Economic diversification and sustainable industries			
3.1	* Local Circular Economy and Waste-to-Resource Hub	✓	
3.2	* Renewable Kimberley Innovation Partnership		✓
4. Aboriginal economic empowerment and leadership			
4.1	Aboriginal Procurement and Employment Framework	✓	
4.2	* Kimberley Cultural Enterprise Incubator	✓	
5. Strong coordination, partnerships and advocacy			
5.1	Shire's Economic Leadership Coordinating Group	✓	
5.2	Integrated Advocacy and Investment Prospectus	✓	✓
5.3	* Derby–West Kimberley Prisoner Work Partnership Program		✓

* Denotes the proposed project requires further assessment and funding

Action plan



1. Tourism, brand and place identity

Reposition the Shire as a distinctive destination by leveraging cultural, natural, and lifestyle assets.

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley is working to reposition itself as a distinctive and authentic destination by showcasing the region's extraordinary cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and relaxed Kimberley lifestyle.

Tourism is both an economic driver and a storyteller for the region, creating local jobs while sharing the area's rich Aboriginal culture, vast wilderness, and historic character with the world. The Shire's role is to coordinate and promote a unified regional brand, improve visitor infrastructure, and support Aboriginal-led and small-scale tourism ventures that deliver genuine experiences.

Through partnerships with WAITOC, Australia's North West Tourism (ANW), Tourism WA, RNTTPBCs, and regional operators, the Shire seeks to strengthen the visitor economy and extend average stays. By leveraging its cultural and natural assets, the Shire aims to redefine the West Kimberley as a welcoming gateway to adventure, history, and connection – where community pride and visitor experience grow hand in hand.

Action plan

1. Tourism, brand and place identity

Reposition the Shire as a distinctive destination by leveraging cultural, natural, and lifestyle assets.

Project 1.1: Tourism Infrastructure Renewal Program

In partnership with public and private sector stakeholders, this project positions the Shire as the steward and showcase of the region's tourism experience, transforming essential local assets into strategic infrastructure that tells the West Kimberley's story. By investing in visible, visitor-facing improvements, the Shire turns its public spaces and gateways into catalysts for economic development, regional pride, and community confidence, reinforcing Derby and Fitzroy Crossing as welcoming, high-quality destinations at the heart of the Kimberley.

Purpose

Upgrade visitor amenities (e.g. signage, town entrances) to extend visitor stay and improve reputation.

Rationale

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley manages local roads, signage and public open space which are critical to shaping visitor experience and town presentation. Upgrading and maintaining these tourism assets will strengthen the region's reputation, encourage longer stays, and create shovel-ready projects for future funding opportunities.

Actions

1. Work with stakeholders to develop a five-year capital works plan for tourism assets, including commissioning a feasibility study for opportunity for the private sector to expand or redevelopment of existing caravan parks, with a view to securing investment so that new projects can be delivered before the 2028 solar eclipse.
2. Refresh Derby and Fitzroy Crossing visitor gateways with consistent branding and interpretive signage.
3. Work with WAITOC and ANW to advocate for and promote Aboriginal-led cultural tourism experiences and cross-promote Aboriginal enterprises`.
4. Develop and promote the region as the starting point of the Gibb River Road and Buccaneer Archipelago, including a coordinated tourism marketing campaign aligned with Tourism WA.
5. Collaborate with RNTPBCs and industry partners to complete a feasibility study for a Cultural and Visitor Centre in Fitzroy Crossing.
6. Engage industry partners to develop a Green Paper to describe tourism accommodation needs and recommendations.
7. Investigate options for constructing a mangrove boardwalk in Derby.
8. Investigate and progress development opportunities for Derby Airport and Fitzroy Crossing Airport.

Expected Outcomes

- Higher visitor satisfaction and longer stays.
- Strengthened local tourism brand consistency.
- Ready projects for Tourism WA and NAAP funding streams.

Action plan

1. Tourism, brand and place identity

Reposition the Shire as a distinctive destination by leveraging cultural, natural, and lifestyle assets.

Project 1.2: Wayfinding, Interpretive Signage, and Entry Statement Network

This project will create a visually unified and culturally authentic navigation experience across the Shire, where visitors are welcomed by striking entry statements, guided by cohesive signage, and connected to Country through Aboriginal storytelling and local identity. It establishes SDWK as a leader in cultural design, civic pride, and place-based tourism infrastructure.

Purpose

To design, install, and maintain a coordinated wayfinding, interpretive signage, and entry statement system that connects key attractions, cultural sites, and community facilities across the Shire. This project will create a visually cohesive and culturally rich arrival experience, celebrating the Shire's identity and improving navigation, safety, and visitor orientation across Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, and key regional routes.

Rationale

Clear, attractive signage and welcoming entry statements improve safety, accessibility, and visitor experience, all core responsibilities of local government in managing roads, reserves, and public spaces.

A unified, high-quality design language also strengthens regional branding and enhances cultural and heritage recognition. Entry statements at major access points will symbolise local pride and connection to Country, showcasing Traditional Owner identity and the Shire's position as the gateway to the West Kimberley.

Actions

1. Develop a costed Wayfinding and Interpretative Signage Plan to include Derby and Fitzroy Crossing entry statements, Gibb River Road junctions and key tourism attractions.
2. Design and install new entry statements at key arrival points and major gateways to communities and tourism trails.
3. Co-design signage and entry statement templates with RNTNBCs, Tourism WA, and local artists - incorporating Aboriginal languages, artwork, and cultural narratives.
4. Procure and install a unified suite of directional, interpretive, and digital QR-linked signage, ensuring consistency across the Shire.
5. Incorporate solar lighting, anti-graffiti finishes, and sustainable materials to reduce lifecycle costs.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced visitor experience through improved orientation, navigation, and first impressions.
- Distinctive entry statements that strengthen the region's sense of identity and cultural presence.
- A consistent and professional regional image integrated into all Shire-managed assets and public spaces.
- Improved connectivity between towns, attractions, and cultural or recreational sites.
- Visible recognition of Aboriginal culture and language throughout the Shire.
- Higher visitor satisfaction and extended stay duration, supporting tourism growth and local business activity..

Action plan

1. Tourism, brand and place identity

Reposition the Shire as a distinctive destination by leveraging cultural, natural, and lifestyle assets.

Project 1.3: Marketing Partnership

This project positions the Shire as the regional convener, storyteller, and brand leader of the West Kimberley – transforming perception into power. By merging tourism marketing with livability promotion, the Shire turns its authentic cultural identity and community spirit into a strategic advantage, working with public and private stakeholders to attract visitors, residents, and investors while strengthening pride, unity, and confidence across the region.

Purpose

To deliver a coordinated regional branding and marketing initiative that jointly promotes Derby and Fitzroy Crossing as the dual “Gateways to the Kimberley” while reshaping external perceptions of the region’s livability, culture, and opportunity. The project combines destination marketing with a livability and reputation campaign, positioning the Shire as both a vibrant place to visit and a welcoming, family-friendly place to live, work, and invest.

Rationale

The Shire’s image and visibility are fundamental to its success in attracting visitors, workforce, and investment. While Broome dominates region’s branding, Derby and Fitzroy Crossing hold unique cultural, natural, and adventure assets that are underrepresented in tourism and lifestyle promotion.

At the same time, outdated perceptions of remoteness and disadvantage affect population growth and investor confidence. A strategic, evidence-based media and branding campaign can reverse these perceptions by showcasing the region’s livability, culture, and progress.

Actions

1. Collaborate with Tourism WA and other stakeholders on a joint “Gateways to the Kimberley” campaign, emphasising adventure, heritage, and culture.
2. Lead a formal marketing alliance (MOU) with Tourism WA, Aboriginal tourism bodies such as WAITOC and other stakeholders.
3. Secure inclusion of Derby and Fitzroy Crossing in Tourism WA’s major campaigns, itineraries, and digital content.
4. Develop consistent branding and design assets across Shire communications, ensuring alignment with regional campaigns.
5. Identify and promote available grants, grant writing assistance and other support services to assist and encourage Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, local artists, schools and community groups to produce stories, film, social media content and town art to promote and celebrate local culture, history and heritage.
6. Leverage major events such as the 2028 Solar Eclipse and/or a Gibb River Road annual event for joint promotion and visitor attraction.
7. Highlight community renewal and capital works projects, including parks, sporting facilities, youth spaces, and public amenities.
8. Partner with RNTNBCs, schools, and community groups to produce stories, films, and social media content celebrating local life and connection to Country.
9. Refresh the Shire’s online presence, website, social media, and digital content, in alignment with regional tourism platforms.
10. Coordinate with regional and State media outlets to publish positive stories about community resilience and progress.

Expected outcomes

- Improved regional reputation and stronger public perception of Derby and Fitzroy Crossing as thriving, inclusive, and liveable communities.
- Increased visitor numbers, dwell times, and tourism expenditure through consistent and compelling marketing.
- Expanded Aboriginal enterprise participation and stronger cultural representation in regional branding.
- Enhanced investor and workforce attraction, supporting the Shire’s economic diversification and population growth goals.
- Unified and professional messaging across local, State, and regional marketing efforts.
- Greater community pride, participation, and confidence in the region’s future.

Action plan



2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler

Ensure housing and infrastructure are central to enabling growth, reducing costs and supporting livability.

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley recognises that housing and livability are not just social priorities, they are economic imperatives essential to attracting and retaining the skilled workforce needed for the region to thrive.

Without sufficient, affordable, and quality housing, key workers in healthcare and allied services, education, construction, and community services struggle to relocate or remain in the district, constraining growth and service delivery. The Shire plays a central role in addressing this challenge by enabling land release, streamlining planning approvals, and advocating for coordinated housing investment across all levels of government.

The Shire also prioritises essential infrastructure (roads, digital connectivity, recreation spaces, and town amenity) that make Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, and surrounding communities places where people want to live and build careers. By championing livability as an economic enabler, the Shire strengthens workforce stability, supports local enterprise, and underpins sustainable regional development.

Finally, it has a role in liaising with the WA State Government on the strategy and timing of its land release program, advocating for alignment with the region's priorities to compound community benefits.

Action plan

2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler

Ensure housing and infrastructure are central to enabling growth, reducing costs and supporting livability.

Project 2.1: Land Release and Planning Reform Initiative

This project positions the Shire as an active enabler of housing and investment, using its planning powers to create the conditions for growth, affordability, and livability. By leading local planning reform and coordinated land release, SDWK demonstrates practical, regulatory leadership in building a sustainable future for Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, and surrounding communities.

Purpose

To unlock serviced, development-ready land across Derby and Fitzroy Crossing through targeted planning reforms, enabling increased housing supply and investment aligned with the Shire's livability and workforce objectives. This project addresses critical housing shortages by ensuring that land availability, zoning, and infrastructure readiness keep pace with regional growth and workforce needs

Rationale

SDWK has statutory authority for local planning, subdivision facilitation, and building approvals. Within these powers, the Shire can streamline development approvals, modernise its Local Planning Scheme, and coordinate infrastructure policies to unlock serviced land for both private and community housing. This initiative responds directly to current housing supply constraints, supports the Shire's "Liveable and Resilient Communities" priority under the NAAP, and promotes investor confidence by providing clear, transparent planning frameworks.

Actions

1. Continue to review the Local Planning Scheme and infrastructure policies to encourage investment readiness across Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, and remote communities, to ensure it is consistent with State and Federal Government strategic objectives.
2. Conduct a Local Planning Scheme Amendment to streamline residential zoning processes and enable flexible housing typologies.
3. Prepare and promote a register of sites suitable for new housing developments, including social, affordable and modular homes.
4. Develop Precinct Plans for key sites including Derby Wharf, Derby town centre and Fitzroy Crossing to guide coordinated investment, infrastructure and housing infill projects.
5. Develop fast-track approval processes for modular and prefabricated housing and housing projects.
6. Promote cross-agency collaboration and private sector engagement to ensure integrated planning and timely delivery of new housing precincts.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased lot availability and investment confidence.
- Faster housing approvals and shorter development timeframes.
- Greater housing affordability and diversity of supply, including modular and social housing.
- Enhanced alignment with NAAP's "Liveable and Resilient Communities" priority.
- Clear pipeline of development-ready land for public, private, and Aboriginal housing providers.
- Reduced infrastructure duplication and improved servicing efficiency.
- Stronger investment signals to State and private sector stakeholders.

Action plan

2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler

Ensure housing and infrastructure are central to enabling growth, reducing costs and supporting livability.

Project 2.2: Community Facilities Renewal Program

This project positions the Shire as the champion of public sector investment in community renewal and inclusion, transforming essential public facilities into vibrant, sustainable, and culturally connected spaces. By investing in the social fabric of Derby and Fitzroy Crossing, the Shire strengthens livability, community pride, and the economic resilience of the West Kimberley. Attracting State and Federal Government funding is critical to ensuring success. The Shire's resources will be concentrated on working with regional partners such as the KDC and RDA to advocate for public sector investment in a range of integrated renewal programs.

Purpose

To upgrade and activate community, sport, and youth facilities in Derby and Fitzroy Crossing, strengthening livability, retention of families, and local wellbeing. This program focuses on modernising essential community assets and ensuring they are vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable – supporting social cohesion, workforce attraction, and quality of life across the Shire.

Rationale

The Shire of Derby–West Kimberley (SDWK) owns and manages key community, recreation, and youth facilities that are central to daily life in its towns and communities. Many of these assets require renewal or activation to meet contemporary standards of safety, accessibility, and environmental performance. Modernising and activating these facilities not only improves livability and civic pride but also directly supports workforce attraction, family retention, and community wellbeing, all of which are critical economic enablers in remote towns. This project will demonstrate visible progress and positive impact at the local level, showcasing the Shire's leadership in community development and quality-of-life improvement.

Actions

1. Undertake a comprehensive audit of community facilities, including ovals, youth centres, skateparks, town halls and swimming pools, to assess current condition and undertake community consultation to prioritise required works to include in the Capital Works Program.
2. Deliver a rolling capital works program prioritising safety, accessibility, and climate-resilient design.
3. Develop a Community Facilities Renewal Program to upgrade and activate community, sport and youth facilities in Derby and Fitzroy Crossing.
4. Incorporate energy-efficient retrofits such as solar lighting, battery storage, and water re-use systems to reduce long-term operational costs.
5. Promote inclusive and culturally responsive design, co-developed with RNTNBCs, youth groups, and community representatives to ensure facilities meet local needs.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced attractiveness of Derby and Fitzroy Crossing as family-friendly, liveable towns.
- Increased community participation and stronger sense of belonging.
- Reduced antisocial behaviour through improved access to safe and active spaces.
- Improved facility utilisation rates and greater return on Shire infrastructure investment.
- Lower long-term maintenance and energy costs due to sustainable design and management practices.
- Reinforced perception of the Shire as a vibrant, forward-looking community investing in its people and places.

Action plan

2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler

Ensure housing and infrastructure are central to enabling growth, reducing costs and supporting livability.

Project 2.3: Public Realm and Streetscape Improvement Program

This project positions the Shire as the custodian of civic pride and place identity, transforming its town centres into vibrant, walkable, and culturally expressive environments. Through careful design, collaboration, and maintenance, the Shire will showcase the beauty and character of its communities, turning streetscapes into living expressions of local culture, sustainability, and pride. Priorities within this area will be guided by the Shire's community and delivered via grants and renewal programs.

Purpose

To improve the visual appeal, safety, and functionality of key streets, open spaces, and pedestrian corridors in Derby and Fitzroy Crossing, reinforcing civic pride, enhancing livability, and strengthening the visitor experience. This program will deliver visible, high-quality upgrades to the public realm that make the Shire's town centres more walkable, welcoming, and reflective of local culture and identity.

Rationale

The Shire is responsible for the care, control, and maintenance of streets, footpaths, reserves, and public amenities. Attractive, well-maintained streetscapes and public spaces directly enhance livability, encourage economic activity, and contribute to community pride. By improving pedestrian connectivity, landscaping, and town presentation, the Shire will create safer, greener, and more vibrant town centres that support both local businesses and the visitor economy.

Actions

1. Prepare a Public Realm Masterplan for both Derby and Fitzroy Crossing.
2. Implement a suite of streetscape upgrades that may include: street trees and landscaping using native, low-maintenance species; shaded seating, public art, and solar-powered lighting to improve comfort and amenity; footpath resurfacing and accessibility improvements to enhance safety and connectivity; and smart waste bins and CCTV systems to improve cleanliness, security, and efficiency.
3. Partner with local schools, community groups, and Aboriginal artists to design and install murals, sculptures, and interpretive public art that reflect local heritage and culture.
4. Integrate project delivery with broader Town Activation, Tourism, and Branding initiatives, ensuring consistent design language and branding across the Shire.

Expected Outcomes

- More attractive, functional, and safer town centres in both Derby and Fitzroy Crossing.
- Increased pedestrian activity and greater business confidence through improved amenity.
- Enhanced town identity and pride through local art, culture, and landscaping.
- Higher resident and visitor satisfaction with public spaces.
- A greener, cleaner, and more welcoming visual environment supporting the Shire's livability goals.

Action plan

2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler

Ensure housing and infrastructure are central to enabling growth, reducing costs and supporting livability.

Project 2.4: Town Activation and Events Program

This project positions the Shire as the driver of cultural and civic revitalisation. By combining infrastructure renewal with creative activation, the Shire turns its town centres into living spaces that reflect the spirit of the West Kimberley, places where people gather, celebrate, and belong.

Purpose

To revitalise the town centres of Derby and Fitzroy Crossing as vibrant community and visitor hubs through improved public spaces, coordinated activation, and a calendar of locally led events that celebrate culture, creativity, and connection.

This project aims to reinvigorate the civic heart of both towns, strengthening local pride, enhancing livability, and supporting economic vitality through culture, design, and community engagement.

Rationale

Under the *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)*, the Shire is empowered to provide and manage public spaces, support community development, and promote economic activity within the district. Both Derby and Fitzroy Crossing serve as gateway towns to the Kimberley, yet currently face challenges including declining amenity, vacant shopfronts, and limited after-hours activity.

Enhancing these centres through coordinated investment in public realm, events, and partnerships will strengthen civic pride, visitor experience, and local business viability. By combining infrastructure improvements with creative activation, the Shire will create welcoming, safe, and lively spaces that reflect community identity and cultural diversity.

Actions

1. Public Realm Upgrades
 - Install new street furniture, shaded seating, murals, and lighting.
 - Improve pedestrian connectivity between key civic, retail, and tourism nodes.
 - Include landscaping, wayfinding, and shaded community gathering areas to enhance accessibility and comfort.
2. Town Activation Grants Program
 - Establish a Shire-administered small grants program to support community groups, youth organisations, artists, and local businesses to host:
 - Pop-up markets, art installations, night markets, and live music events in public spaces.
 - Prioritise local Aboriginal enterprises and cultural collaborations to showcase regional identity.
3. Partnership and Participation
 - Continue to leverage the existing events program in the SDWK region, encouraging business participation and opportunities for greater expenditure capture.
 - Collaborate with RNTNBCs, schools, and local businesses to co-design activities and build youth engagement pathways.
 - Work with partner organisations to integrate local performers, ranger groups, and artists into event programming to ensure authenticity and inclusivity.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced sense of place, pride, and livability in both Derby and Fitzroy Crossing.
- Greater visitor engagement and longer dwell times, strengthening the tourism economy.
- Increased local business activity and growth in the night-time economy.
- Strengthened cultural recognition and collaboration between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.
- Revitalised public spaces that act as safe, inclusive, and welcoming gathering points for residents and visitors alike.

Action plan

2. Housing and livability as an economic enabler

Ensure housing and infrastructure are central to enabling growth, reducing costs and supporting livability.

Project 2.5: Regional Housing Collaboration Forum

This project positions the Shire as one of many major stakeholders involved in tackling one of the region's most pressing challenges – housing. By fostering collaboration, aligning partners, and championing innovation, the Shire turns influence into impact, driving the delivery of real housing solutions that strengthen livability and economic stability across the West Kimberley.

Purpose

To coordinate State, Federal, and community housing partners to accelerate the delivery of workforce and social housing across the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley. This project ensures alignment, communication, and collaboration among key agencies and housing providers to address chronic supply shortages and improve livability outcomes for the region

Rationale

The Shire does not directly fund or construct housing, but it holds a vital convening and advocacy role. By bringing together State and Commonwealth agencies, Aboriginal housing providers, and private developers, the Shire can reduce duplication, align priorities, and advocate for more investment and innovation in housing delivery. This initiative positions SDWK as the regional facilitator for housing reform, driving collaboration to unlock modular housing pilots, attract skilled workers, and ensure that land use, infrastructure, and training strategies all work together to increase supply and affordability.

Actions

1. Take a prominent role in annual Regional Housing Forums with key partners, including Government, private and community representatives, to agree on an approach to address local housing needs and fast-track delivery of new housing.
2. Advocate for the Government to repurpose underutilised Crown land for housing.
3. Research land release incentives and flexible development pathways for private sector developers and community housing providers.
4. Facilitate a pilot project using innovative and pioneering housing construction techniques, such as modular or prefabricated models suited to remote conditions – Shire can work with partners, including the WA Departments of Communities and Housing, to scope a pilot project delivering innovative housing solutions. High-quality pre-fabricated, modular, or 3D-printed dwellings could be assembled locally, unlocking affordable supply while building local workforce capability in final assembly and servicing.
5. Investigate workforce and migration programs to address skills shortages in the construction and housing maintenance sectors.

Expected Outcomes

- A stronger and better coordinated pipeline of housing projects across the Shire.
- Recognition of the Shire as a proactive housing enabler and regional convener.
- Improved housing supply and quality infrastructure, enabling investment and reducing cost-of-living pressures.
- Increased collaboration between government, industry, and Aboriginal housing organisations.

Action plan



3. Economic diversification and sustainable industries

Broaden the economic base by fostering emerging industries, green economy initiatives, and carbon markets.

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley is focused on broadening the region's economic base by fostering emerging industries and championing sustainable, future-facing sectors. Recognising the risks of over-reliance on a small number of industries, the Shire works to attract and enable investment in renewable energy, carbon and biodiversity markets, sustainable tourism, and value-added agriculture.

Through its planning, land-use and advocacy functions, the Shire helps create an environment where innovative enterprises thrive, facilitating partnerships between RNTBPCs, researchers, investors, and government agencies.

The Shire also promotes initiatives that enhance environmental resilience, ensuring growth aligns with both ecological integrity and community wellbeing. By positioning the West Kimberley as a hub for green innovation and circular economy projects, the Shire is laying the groundwork for long-term prosperity and greater regional self-sufficiency.

Action plan

3. Economic diversification and sustainable industries

Broaden the economic base by fostering emerging industries, green economy initiatives, and carbon markets.

Project 3.1: Local Circular Economy and Waste-to-Resource Hub (subject to further assessment and funding)

This project positions the Shire as a leader in practical sustainability and innovation, turning waste into a community asset. By transforming the Derby Waste Facility into a circular economy hub, the Shire demonstrates that small regional governments can deliver environmental, social, and economic impact simultaneously, creating local jobs, reducing emissions, and building a cleaner, greener West Kimberley.

Purpose

To convert Derby's waste management system into a circular economy hub through local recycling, composting, and materials reuse initiatives directly supporting the NAAP pillars of sustainability and livability.

This project aims to transform the Shire's waste operations from a cost centre into a value-generating system that creates jobs, reduces environmental impact, and positions Derby as a leader in circular economy innovation in northern Australia.

Rationale

Waste management and recycling are legislated local government functions, making this initiative fully within the Shire's control.

By adopting circular economy principles, the Shire can reduce landfill volumes, cut operating costs, and stimulate local enterprise in recycling and materials recovery. These changes will demonstrate environmental leadership while contributing to employment, sustainability, and resilience outcomes aligned with both the Shire's Economic Development Strategy and NAAP's Sustainable Regions objectives.

Actions

1. Develop a Waste Management Strategy with consideration for a regional approach to recycling, materials recovery, green waste composting and landfill.
2. Establish a Community Recycling and Innovation Hub at the Derby Waste Facility to enable community access, education, and small-scale reuse projects.
3. Introduce education and local employment programs linked to recycling and waste reduction initiatives.
4. Construct a materials recovery facility and green waste composting area to divert organic and recyclable waste from landfill.
5. Partner with local contractors and social enterprises to create micro-businesses focused on recycling, materials processing, and product innovation.
6. Deliver community education campaigns on waste separation, resource recovery, and circular economy practices.
7. Integrate the Hub into the Shire's broader sustainability framework, aligning with livability and environmental goals.

Expected Outcomes

- Local job creation in resource recovery, waste management, and maintenance.
- Reduced landfill costs and emissions through increased diversion and reuse.
- Demonstrated environmental leadership consistent with NAAP sustainability and circular economy principles.
- Reduction in landfill volumes and operational costs, improving long-term financial sustainability.
- New local business opportunities in recycling and materials reuse.
- Potential carbon credits or offsets generated through waste reduction and composting programs.

Action plan

3. Economic diversification and sustainable industries

Broaden the economic base by fostering emerging industries, green economy initiatives, and carbon markets.

Project 3.2: Renewable Kimberley Innovation Partnership (subject to further assessment and funding)

This project positions the Shire as the facilitator and advocate of the Kimberley's renewable energy transition, helping to unlock investment, innovation, and training pathways in the emerging green economy. By bridging local opportunity with State and national priorities, SDWK leads a collaborative approach to low-carbon development, delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits that strengthen the region's future resilience.

Purpose

To advocate for and facilitate renewable energy innovation within the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley through partnerships that support the development of community microgrids, hydrogen projects, and carbon offset initiatives. This project seeks to position the Shire as an active enabler of Kimberley's green economy, driving collaboration between the public and private sectors to deliver cleaner, more affordable, and more resilient local energy systems.

Rationale

While energy generation and regulation are primarily State and private sector responsibilities, the Shire has an important role to play in convening, facilitating, and enabling renewable energy initiatives. By working with energy providers and regional stakeholders, SDWK can identify sites, streamline land tenure processes, and advocate for pilot projects that support the continued transition to low-carbon, decentralised energy systems. Such initiatives directly reduce energy costs, improve energy security, create local training opportunities, and attract green investment consistent with the NAAP and the national Net Zero transition agenda. This is a potential 5–10 year initiative, beginning with pilot projects and progressing toward larger-scale renewable infrastructure, such as a powerhouse rebuild and integrated solar system.

Actions

1. Collaborate with key partners, such as Horizon Power, Energy WA and the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia, to pilot community-scale renewable microgrids in priority locations.
2. Work with community to identify sites and land tenure agreements to be investment-ready for renewable infrastructure projects.
3. Incorporate training and skills development opportunities for local technicians, apprentices, and Aboriginal ranger groups to participate in renewable energy construction and maintenance.
4. Collaborate with key partners, such as Aboriginal ranger organisations and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, to investigate opportunities for a pilot carbon offset or biodiversity restoration project.
5. Advocate for inclusion of the Shire's energy innovation projects in the NAAP and State Government renewable energy transition programs.

Expected Outcomes

- Lower community energy costs and emissions through renewable energy adoption.
- Enhanced energy security and reduced reliance on remote diesel generation.
- Local workforce development and new skills in renewable energy technology.
- Attraction of green investment under NAAP's New Economy and Sustainability pillars.
- Recognition of the Shire as a regional leader in renewable innovation and environmental stewardship.

Action plan



4. Aboriginal economic empowerment and leadership

Support Aboriginal leadership in enterprise, land management, and cultural industries to create inclusive growth.

The Shire is committed to advancing Aboriginal economic empowerment and leadership as a cornerstone of inclusive regional growth. With Aboriginal people holding deep cultural and custodial ties to much of the Shire's land, the Shire recognises that sustainable development must be driven by Aboriginal voices and enterprise. The Shire's role is to enable and create conditions where Aboriginal organisations can thrive through fair procurement practices, co-designed projects, and partnerships in tourism, land management, carbon markets and cultural industries.

By embedding Aboriginal participation across planning, governance, and investment decision-making, the Shire helps ensure economic outcomes reflect local values, build community capacity, and preserve cultural heritage. This approach strengthens self-determination, unlocks new industries, and positions the region as a national model for culturally grounded economic development.

Action plan

4. Aboriginal economic empowerment and leadership

Support Aboriginal leadership in enterprise, land management, and cultural industries to create inclusive growth.

Project 4.1: Aboriginal Procurement and Employment Framework

This project positions the Shire as the benchmark for inclusive procurement and employment in northern Australia, turning its purchasing power into a tool for social and economic transformation. By ensuring that Shire expenditure supports Aboriginal participation and regional prosperity, the Shire leads by example, driving a fair, culturally grounded, and self-sustaining local economy.

Purpose

To embed local and First Nations procurement targets into the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley's purchasing framework to drive regional economic participation, aligning with the NAAP priority areas of jobs, Aboriginal enterprise, and inclusive economic growth. This initiative ensures that the Shire's own operational and capital expenditure directly contributes to Aboriginal business development, employment, and self-determination within the region.

Rationale

The Shire has direct control over its purchasing and procurement policies. By strategically embedding Aboriginal procurement targets and employment clauses into all major contracts, SDWK can use its existing budget to deliver tangible social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal communities. This framework aligns with *Closing the Gap* commitments, promotes Aboriginal participation in local supply chains, and builds long-term partnerships with Aboriginal corporations and small businesses. It also increases trust, transparency, and community ownership in how public funds are spent, reinforcing the Shire's leadership in equitable and inclusive development.

Actions

1. Introduce a formal Aboriginal Procurement Policy, establishing a minimum procurement target for Aboriginal businesses.
2. Create and maintain an Aboriginal Business Register.
3. Encourage RNTPBCs and other Aboriginal owned businesses to register with the Derby Chamber of Commerce and Fitzroy Crossing Business Network, and other local associations.
4. Support the Derby Chamber of Commerce and Fitzroy Crossing Business Network to develop and embed a Supplier Mentoring Program to help businesses and organisations to meet tendering and compliance requirements.
5. Introduce a local employment and training clause in major Shire contracts with a requirement for suppliers to demonstrate local workforce training and participation.
6. Support stakeholders to deliver training and supplier briefings aimed at improving participation in procurement exercises.
7. Promote awareness and recognition of successful Aboriginal businesses through local media and community events, reinforcing their role in regional economic growth.

Expected Outcomes

- Tangible growth in local Aboriginal enterprise participation across Shire contracts and projects.
- A more inclusive and self-determined regional economy that reflects Aboriginal knowledge, culture, and leadership.
- Compliance with *Closing the Gap* targets and NAAP workforce inclusion objectives.
- Increased local trust, legitimacy, and transparency in Shire procurement practices.
- Greater retention of Shire spending within the local economy.
- Measurable increases in Aboriginal business participation and employment through Shire contracts.
- Demonstrated NAAP outcomes achieved through ordinary Shire operational expenditure rather than additional funding.

Action plan

4. Aboriginal economic empowerment and leadership

Support Aboriginal leadership in enterprise, land management, and cultural industries to create inclusive growth.

Project 4.2: Kimberley Cultural Enterprise Incubator (subject to further assessment and funding)

This project positions the Shire as a champion of Aboriginal enterprise and cultural innovation, creating an ecosystem where Aboriginal entrepreneurship can flourish. By enabling access to facilities, funding, and collaboration, the Shire helps transform cultural knowledge and creativity into sustainable, locally owned industries – strengthening identity, prosperity, and self-determination across the West Kimberley.

Purpose

To support the growth of Aboriginal-led enterprises, creating pathways for Aboriginal entrepreneurship, employment, and cultural leadership across the Shire of Derby–West Kimberley (SDWK). This initiative strengthens the intersection of culture and economy, enabling Traditional Owners and RNTBPs to build sustainable, culturally grounded businesses that express identity, stewardship, and innovation.

Rationale

While the Shire does not directly operate commercial enterprises, it plays a vital enabling and facilitative role by creating the right conditions for enterprise networks to thrive. By coordinating partnerships, infrastructure, and advocacy, the Shire can help unlock opportunities in Aboriginal-led industries that combine environmental management, tourism, arts, and land-based enterprise. The Kimberley region has strong cultural capital and existing ranger and creative programs that can be scaled through structured support, shared spaces, and access to finance – helping to embed cultural knowledge, economic independence, and long-term community wellbeing in the regional economy.

Actions

1. Advocate for the expansion of the Aboriginal Ranger and land management programs managed by Aboriginal organisations.
2. Support Derby Chamber of Commerce and Fitzroy Crossing Business Network to facilitate business development workshops in partnership with stakeholders to help new and emerging businesses and organisations to access grants and finance.
3. Provide shared facilities or co-working spaces to serve as a Cultural Enterprise Hub, offering affordable workspace, exhibition areas, and business support services for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and artists.
4. Support joint marketing and promotion of Aboriginal tourism, cultural products, and creative enterprises through coordinated branding, events, and regional campaigns.
5. Explore opportunities to link Aboriginal enterprises with the Shire's broader tourism, carbon, and sustainability initiatives.
6. Promote collaborations between ranger programs, tourism operators, and cultural producers to create new products, experiences, and land-based enterprises.
7. Support Aboriginal cultural tourism (especially in the Buccaneer Archipelago, Koolan Island and Cockatoo Island) with infrastructure planning and provision (e.g. modern boat ramp facilities), and explore opportunities to showcase Aboriginal cultural art (e.g. an annual festival).

Expected Outcomes

- Expanded Aboriginal business ecosystem across multiple sectors, including tourism, arts, ranger programs, and carbon markets.
- Greater local employment, skills retention, and entrepreneurship within Aboriginal communities.
- Cultural strength embedded in economic activity, ensuring that enterprise development reflects Aboriginal knowledge and identity.
- A more inclusive and self-determined regional economy driven by Aboriginal innovation and leadership.
- Ensured that cultural knowledge informs future land and water management initiatives, strengthening both environmental and economic resilience.

Action plan



5. Strong coordination, partnerships and advocacy

Enhance coordination, partnerships, and advocacy to strengthen regional influence and public investment.

The Shire serves as the central hub in the regional network of stakeholders driving economic and social development across the region. Through strategic partnerships and advocacy, SDWK champions funding for priority projects that unlock economic potential and create lasting prosperity.

By aligning its advocacy with State and Federal Government priorities and infrastructure frameworks, the Shire ensures the region remains visible, investment-ready, and equipped for long-term sustainability.

Action plan

5. Strong coordination, partnerships and advocacy

Enhance coordination, partnerships, and advocacy to strengthen regional influence and public investment.

Project 5.1: Shire's Economic Leadership Coordinating Group

This project positions the Shire as a key partner in regional economic development, helping to ensure communication, alignment, and action across all major partners. Through the Shire's Economic Leadership Coordinating Group, the Shire transforms collaboration into measurable progress, building a unified, well-governed, and proactive regional alliance that drives investment, reform, and shared prosperity across the West Kimberley.

Purpose

To take a lead role in becoming the regional hub that coordinates and connects stakeholders to support the delivery of major projects aligned with the Shire's strategic vision. This initiative will serve as a central mechanism for regular engagement with key regional partners, government agencies, and industry leaders. The group will enable the Shire to maintain ongoing dialogue with stakeholders, understand emerging opportunities and issues, and demonstrate visible leadership in regional advocacy, coordination, and delivery support.

Rationale

Establishing a structured coordinating group strengthens strategic alignment, accountability, and communication across partners. Through this mechanism, the Shire can: proactively monitor and influence major regional projects; align advocacy messages with regional and state strategies; broker connections between stakeholders and government; maintain continuity and momentum behind critical initiatives. This structure also enhances the Shire's credibility and influence with higher levels of government, providing practical support to regional stakeholders and demonstrating the Shire's commitment to shared economic and community outcomes.

Actions

1. Establish the Strategic Coordination and Liaison Group (SCLG) including senior representatives from: Kimberley Development Commission (KDC); Regional Development Australia (RDA) Kimberley; RNTPBCs; Kimberley Ports Authority; and major employers and regional service providers.
2. Prepare a Regional Advocacy and Investment Prospectus highlighting priority projects and funding opportunities, with annual reporting and updates.
3. Develop a Strategic Issues Dashboard to track advocacy progress, commitments, and upcoming funding opportunities.
4. Broker meetings with senior State and Federal officers, Ministers, and departmental executives to advance critical issues and stakeholder proposals, starting with: Advocate for the State Government to work more closely with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, schools and businesses to strengthen local youth engagement and employment pathways, including developing more effective programs to address truancy.
5. Coordinate regional advocacy messaging to ensure unified communication and consistency across local, State, and Federal agendas.

Expected Outcomes

- Creation of a unified regional advocacy platform for engagement with State and Federal governments.
- Alignment with existing State and Commonwealth strategies for regional development and investment.
- Stronger, coordinated advocacy delivering more resources, reforms, and infrastructure investment to the region.
- Improved communication, transparency, and trust between the Shire, partners, and the community.
- Better alignment between Shire operations, regional partner initiatives, and funding programs.
- Enhanced visibility and credibility of the Shire as the coordinating local government for the West Kimberley.

Action plan

5. Strong coordination, partnerships and advocacy

Enhance coordination, partnerships, and advocacy to strengthen regional influence and public investment.

Project 5.2: Integrated Advocacy and Investment Prospectus

This project positions the Shire as a strategic communicator and investment champion, translating vision into opportunity.

By consolidating all key priorities into one authoritative advocacy document, SDWK ensures its message is clear, consistent, and compelling, securing the attention and confidence of decision-makers and investors in building the future of the West Kimberley.

Purpose

To create a single, professionally designed advocacy and investment document showcasing the Region's priority projects, economic potential, and funding needs for use in engagement with State, Federal, and private sector stakeholders. The prospectus will serve as the Shire's central advocacy tool, providing a clear, credible, and cohesive platform for communication and investment attraction.

Rationale

The Shire often competes with other regions for limited investment funding and policy attention. A consolidated, evidence-based advocacy prospectus will enable SDWK to clearly articulate the region's priorities, demonstrate project readiness, and showcase its capacity for partnership. By uniting all strategic projects and economic data into one authoritative document, the Shire can:

- Present consistent, high-quality messaging across all levels of government.
- Strengthen its case for infrastructure and social investment.
- Reinforce its leadership role in regional coordination and project delivery.

Actions

1. Compile a Prospectus integrating:
 - Shire-led projects.
 - Regional priorities.
 - Social and Aboriginal development initiatives.
 - Major 'asks' for public investment and a 'burning platform' explaining the need.
2. Design concise project summaries suitable for use in ministerial briefings, funding proposals and presentations.
3. Update the prospectus annually to reflect new funding submissions, completed projects, and emerging opportunities.
4. Use the prospectus to underpin all lobbying trips, investor meetings, and funding submissions, ensuring consistent and professional presentation across all engagements.
5. Assess and advocate for sustainable agricultural and primary industry diversification within the Shire, including collaborative opportunities for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Expected Outcomes

- Unified, professional, and credible advocacy materials used consistently across government and industry engagements.
- Increased visibility and influence of the Shire with State, Commonwealth, and private sector decision-makers.
- Better alignment of funding proposals with Shire priorities and regional development strategies.
- Improved success rate in attracting grants, partnerships, and co-investment.
- Stronger perception of SDWK as an investment-ready, strategically led local government.

Action plan

5. Strong coordination, partnerships and advocacy

Enhance coordination, partnerships, and advocacy to strengthen regional influence and public investment.

Project 5.3: Derby–West Kimberley Prisoner Work Partnership Program (subject to further assessment and funding)

This project positions the Shire as a leader in practical rehabilitation and community reinvestment, demonstrating how local government can create real social and economic value through innovative partnerships. By connecting rehabilitation with civic improvement, the Shire strengthens livability, community pride, and opportunity, turning public works into pathways for renewal, inclusion, and second chances.

Purpose

To establish a structured partnership between the Shire and the WA Department of Justice to engage low-security prisoners from West Kimberley Regional Prison (Derby) and Broome Regional Prison in supervised community works projects that improve public infrastructure, beautify town centres, and build local skills. This initiative strengthens community connection, reduces costs, and provides meaningful training and rehabilitation opportunities for prisoners nearing release.

Rationale

The Shire faces high costs and workforce shortages in maintaining infrastructure across its vast region. At the same time, correctional facilities are seeking constructive, community-based work programs that assist prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration. This partnership creates a clear mutual benefit:

- The Shire gains labour support for vital community maintenance and beautification projects.
- Participants gain work experience, training, and purpose, improving post-release outcomes and reducing recidivism.
- The initiative demonstrates strong social responsibility and leadership by both the Shire and the State, while delivering visible improvements to local amenity and livability.

Actions

1. Formalise a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SDWK and the Department of Justice (Corrective Services Division) to define objectives, safety protocols, and operational responsibilities.
2. Establish a joint work schedule for supervised low-security prisoners to assist with (for example):
 - Town centre beautification: landscaping, painting, verge clean-up, and preparation for public art.
 - Minor construction works: kerbing, fencing, and public facility repairs.
 - Roadside and park maintenance: litter removal, weed control, tree planting.
 - Community event support: site setup, cleaning, and logistics assistance.
3. Recognise participant contributions publicly through community acknowledgment programs and local events.
4. Explore employment transition pathways for successful participants, connecting them to local contractors, TAFE programs, or Shire traineeships.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced delivery of public works, beautification, and maintenance projects at reduced cost to ratepayers.
- Improved civic pride and livability across the region.
- Skills development, work readiness, and rehabilitation for prisoners nearing re-entry into the community.
- Strengthened partnership between State and local government, improving collaboration and mutual understanding.
- Reduced recidivism through meaningful work experience and community contribution.
- Expanded local workforce capacity, addressing regional labour shortages.