

WHAT WE  
MAKE IT

ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT AND  
TOURISM STRATEGY  
2025-2035



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Karratha's Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2025–2035 sets a clear path for sustainable economic and tourism growth. It reflects the City's ambition to diversify its economy, support local small and medium-sized businesses and Aboriginal economic participation, attract and retain talent, and establish Karratha as a world-class tourism destination.

Karratha's economy is dynamic, underpinned by world-class resource industries, ports, and a highly skilled workforce. The City of Karratha (the City) contributes significantly to Western Australia's economy, and is — among the most productive regions in WA, with each worker generating \$1.01m in GRP in 2024, nearly three times the State average. To ensure long-term resilience however, the City recognises the need to diversify, focusing on growing industries such as education, healthcare, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing and tourism.

The City stands at a pivotal moment for tourism growth. The UNESCO World Heritage listing of the Murujuga Cultural Landscape and the forthcoming sealing of the Manuwarra Red Dog Highway will bring global attention and open new opportunities. With around 55,000 overnight leisure visitors each year, compared to more than 600,000 at nearby Karijini National Park, the City has clear potential to expand its visitor economy. Growth in tourism will need to be guided by sustainable planning to protect cultural and natural assets while enhancing liveability and economic benefit.

The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (EDTS) prioritises initiatives that maximise economic impact, address local and regional needs, and deliver measurable outcomes for residents, businesses, and visitors. These initiatives will be implemented through a coordinated operating model, ensuring strategic alignment, clear governance, and strong partnerships with industry, government, and community stakeholders.



**WHAT  
WE  
MAKE  
IT™**



The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy is structured around five key strategic pillars:

## Pillar 1

### **Build Economic Resilience Through Diversification**

Leverage existing resource strengths while accelerating growth in emerging sectors such as renewable energy, manufacturing, logistics, education, health, and creative industries.

## Pillar 2

### **Provide an Enabling Environment for Business and Investment**

Create the conditions necessary for sustainable investment through infrastructure, policy alignment, planning, and strategic partnerships.

## Pillar 3

### **Empower Local Business**

Strengthen the capacity and competitiveness of local enterprises and Aboriginal businesses, enhance small business resilience, and expand participation in regional and global supply chains.

## Pillar 4

### **Attract and Retain Residents and Talent**

Promote liveability, deliver high-quality services and amenities, and strengthen education and training pathways to develop and retain a skilled workforce.

## Pillar 5

### **Develop a Tourism Industry**

Position Karratha as a sustainable destination renowned for world-class attractions and tourism that supports a diverse economy, strengthens the City as a liveable regional city, and preserves natural and cultural heritage.







## Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Karratha acknowledges the Aboriginal people throughout this vast land and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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## Acronyms and Definitions

<b>ANW</b>	Australia's North West Tourism	<b>PIBNG</b>	Pilbara Indigenous Business Network Group
<b>CCUS</b>	Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage	<b>REAP</b>	Red Earth Arts Precinct
<b>CIM</b>	Cumulative Impact Model	<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>EDTS</b>	Economic Development and Tourism Strategy	<b>SWA</b>	Service Worker Accommodation
<b>GRP</b>	Gross Regional Product	<b>TAFE</b>	Technical and Further Education
<b>KBECI</b>	Karratha Business Enterprise Centre Inc.	<b>Tourism WA</b>	Tourism Western Australia
<b>KDCCI</b>	Karratha and Districts Chamber of Commerce and Industry	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>KTVC</b>	Karratha Tourism and Visitor Centre	<b>VFR</b>	Visiting Friends and Relatives
<b>PDC</b>	Pilbara Development Commission	<b>WA</b>	Western Australia
		<b>WAITOC</b>	Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council

# LEADERSHIP MESSAGES

## Message from the Mayor

I am proud to present the **City of Karratha's Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (EDTS) 2026–2036** — a bold roadmap to shape our future, strengthen our economy, and celebrate the unique identity of our region.

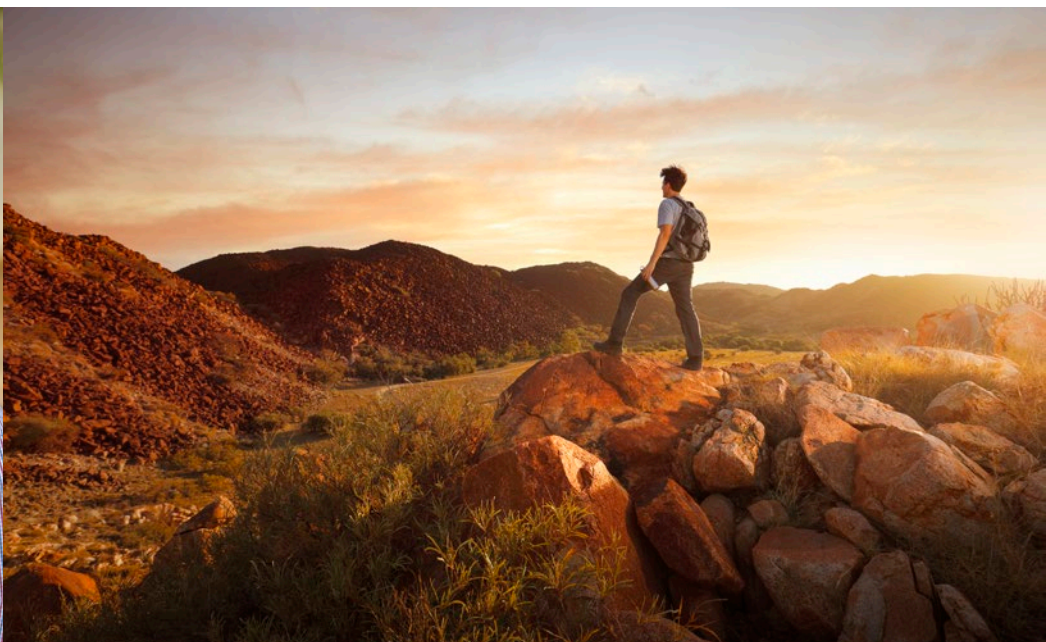
This strategy reflects the voices of our community, businesses, Aboriginal people, and partners who shared their aspirations during our extensive engagement process. Together, we have crafted a shared vision that builds on our strengths — our world-class natural environment, rich Aboriginal culture and heritage, and our reputation as a thriving hub for innovation, industry, and tourism.

The City of Karratha powers the State and national economy, and we are entering an exciting period of transformation. With major investments, emerging industries, and the UNESCO World Heritage listing of Murujuga, we are uniquely positioned to diversify our economy, create new opportunities, and showcase our region on the State, national, and international stage.

This strategy focuses on attracting investment, empowering local businesses, developing world-class visitor experiences, and making Karratha an even more vibrant and liveable place for residents, workers, and visitors alike. It sets out a clear path for sustainable growth while protecting the cultural and environmental assets that make our region extraordinary.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to shaping this strategy. Your ideas, passion, and commitment are the foundation of our collective success. Together, we will ensure Karratha continues to thrive, innovate, and inspire for generations to come.

**Daniel Scott**  
Mayor, City of Karratha



## Message from the CEO

As CEO of the City of Karratha, I am pleased to present our **Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (EDTS) 2026–2036**, a forward-looking plan designed to strengthen our economy, enhance liveability, and celebrate the unique identity of our region.

This strategy recognises the extraordinary strengths of our community — our natural environment, rich Aboriginal culture and heritage, strategic location, and innovative industries. It sets out clear actions to diversify our economy, attract new investment, empower local businesses, and deliver world-class visitor experiences that showcase the Pilbara’s distinctive character.

The EDTS reflects extensive collaboration with Aboriginal people, industry partners, local businesses, government agencies, and our community. By working together, we can unlock new opportunities in emerging sectors, strengthen tourism, and ensure sustainable growth that benefits everyone who calls Karratha home.

As an organisation, we are committed to implementing this strategy with diligence and transparency, fostering strong partnerships, and leveraging local expertise. Our focus is on creating an inclusive and resilient economy, while protecting the environmental and cultural values that make our region extraordinary.

We look forward to sharing regular updates as we progress towards our shared goals and deliver a future where Karratha thrives as a vibrant, diverse, and globally connected regional city.

**Virginia Miltrup**

Chief Executive Officer, City of Karratha



# INTRODUCTION

## About this Strategy

### Purpose of the EDTS

The City of Karratha (the City) has undergone significant change through population growth, industry shifts, major infrastructure investment, and its emergence as a regional hub. These changes have created the need for an updated Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (EDTS) that will guide diversification, resilience, and sustainable growth while reducing reliance on the resource sector and creating long-term opportunities for businesses, residents, and visitors. Through the implementation of the updated EDTS, the City will unlock opportunities in priority industries, support local business growth, and attract new investment.

Tourism is elevated to a strategic level for its role in driving economic diversification. The UNESCO World Heritage listing of the Murujuga Cultural Landscape and the sealing of the Manuwarra Red Dog Highway have significantly enhanced the region's potential, opening opportunities to develop new visitor experiences, support local businesses, and strengthen the economy beyond the resource sector. Realising this potential requires a deliberate and measured approach. This strategy focuses on laying strong foundations through responsible planning, capability building, and supporting the creation of authentic experiences that deliver long term sustainable tourism growth over rapid growth or high tourist volumes.

### Methodology

The EDTS was developed through a structured, evidence-based process tailored to the City's unique context. The study followed the following process:

- Stakeholder and Community Engagement were undertaken with businesses, Aboriginal business and related groups, industry, tourism operators, government, and the community to identify barriers, enablers, and opportunities.
- The City assessed its position across policy, community, economy, environment, and infrastructure to ensure the strategy's economic development and tourism development objectives were balanced with social and environmental considerations.
- Project concepts were assessed against strategic alignment, local impact, and feasibility. Highest-ranking projects informed strategic goals and areas for transformation.
- The strategy was formulated around strategic pillars, each with programs and projects. Tourism is highlighted separately to emphasise its strategic importance.
- An operating model is provided to outline how the strategy will be implemented, monitored, and results measured.



Methodology and Process Followed

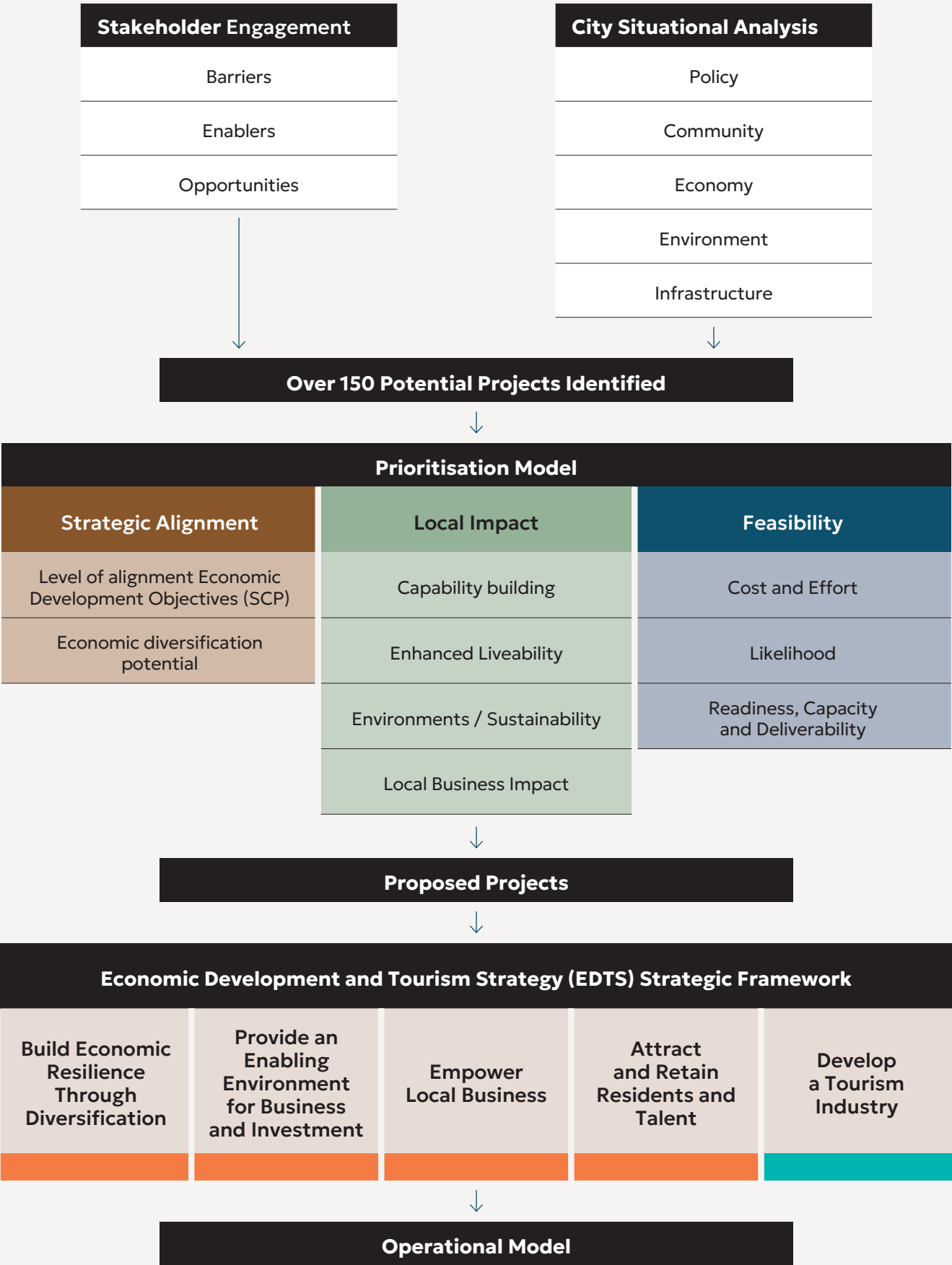




Photo Credit:  
Karratha District Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry (KDCCI)

## What we Heard

### Economic Development

- The City's economic strength is underpinned by its world-class resource industry and ports. However, this reliance creates exposure to boom-and-bust economic cycles.
- There is strong recognition of the need to diversify the economy. With continued support, local entrepreneurs and small businesses can drive sustainable growth and innovation.
- Karratha's liveability encourages residents to stay long-term. Expanding education, employment, and retirement options will help sustain a thriving, lifelong community.
- Strong collaboration between industry, government, and community is essential to unlock diversification opportunities, build a more resilient local economy and create opportunities for Aboriginal economic participation.

### Tourism Development

- The City's strengths lie in its unique Aboriginal culture, rich marine and coastal environments, and unique heritage towns.
- Barriers include high travel costs, workforce and housing shortages, limited product, and a lack of coordinated leadership.
- Stakeholders expressed strong support for better visitor servicing, more affordable and flexible access (flights, car hire, roads), and enabling infrastructure.
- There is shared recognition that tourism must be developed sustainably, protecting the City's natural and cultural assets while creating new economic and community value and opportunities for Aboriginal economic participation.



# ABOUT US

## City Vision

**Australia's  
most liveable  
regional city.**

**THE PLACE WE ARE  
PROUD TO CALL HOME.**

## City Goals

The City's Council Plan outlines a vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable future by 2035, guided by commitments to place-based planning, cultural respect, fairness, and innovation. It sets key goals to strengthen Aboriginal leadership, foster connected and welcoming communities, protect the natural environment, support economic growth, and ensure responsive, balanced civic leadership. The plan focuses on delivering functional infrastructure, enhancing wellbeing, and creating opportunities for all residents and businesses.

Photo Credit:

Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC)



## Our Goals and Priority Focus Areas for achieving the 2035 Vision

<b>1</b>	<b>We respect Aboriginal peoples' cultural authority and connection to Country</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of Aboriginal leadership</li> <li>• Genuine and meaningful engagement with the Aboriginal community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconciliation and truth telling</li> <li>• Support for on Ngurra (Country) activities</li> <li>• Support for Aboriginal peoples' self-determination, prosperity and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture, art and heritage recognition and celebration, led by Traditional Owners and Ngarda-ngarli (Aboriginal people)</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Our community is welcoming, connected, vibrant, healthy, and safe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community infrastructure</li> <li>• Water play and indoor leisure and recreation</li> <li>• Opportunities to make new connections, especially for newcomers</li> <li>• Access to health services</li> <li>• Family and domestic violence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Everyone is included</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifestyle Village and aged care facilities</li> <li>• Improve Disability Access and Inclusion throughout the City</li> <li>• Celebration of our diverse community, and addressing discrimination</li> </ul>	<p><b>Our places and spaces are functional, attractive and reflect our unique identity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting, public art, shade, seating, water stations, signage, public toilets</li> <li>• Public transport solutions within and between towns</li> <li>• Land use planning</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<p><b>We respect and care for the natural environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste management and resource recovery</li> <li>• Foreshore protection and enhancement</li> <li>• Environmental sustainability, including decarbonisation</li> </ul>	<p><b>The local economy is diverse and thriving, with opportunities for all</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable and diverse housing</li> <li>• Higher education, training and innovation</li> <li>• Tourism development</li> <li>• Small to medium business support and diversification</li> <li>• Aboriginal economic participation</li> <li>• Interstate and inter-national connections</li> </ul>	<p><b>Our civic leaders are innovative, listening and balanced in meeting community needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive community engagement with all segments of the community</li> <li>• Industry and government advocacy and partnerships</li> <li>• Equalise townscape standards across the towns</li> </ul>



## EDTS Policy Alignment

The EDTS is an informing policy formulated in alignment with federal and state policies and strategies, as well as the City’s Council Plan 2025-2035. This plan sets the long-term vision, priorities, and aspirations of the City’s local community, guiding council decision-making and investment.

**Goal 6** of the Council Plan states that **“The local economy is diverse and thriving, with opportunities for all”** and sets the following objectives that relate to the EDTS:



### 6.1

Advocate for, facilitate and support the provision of affordable housing choices



### 6.2

Support a diverse and sustainable local labour market



### 6.3

Support the local small and medium business sector to grow and diversify



### 6.4

Support increased education and training opportunities



### 6.5

Effectively market and promote the diverse attractions and amenities of the City of Karratha to attract residents and businesses



### 6.6

Support local tourism development and visitor services



### 6.7

Pursue expansion of the flight network (both domestic and international)



Aboriginal reconciliation is a cross-cutting priority embedded across all the City’s goals and objectives, with a particular focus under Goal 6 on strengthening Aboriginal economic participation.

## The City of Karratha

The City of Karratha is set within a 2.5-billion-year-old landscape rich in cultural heritage and natural beauty. Situated on the Pilbara coast, the City encompasses five towns: Karratha, Dampier, Roebourne (Ieramugadu), Wickham, and Point Samson (Mulhagurla).

The City is home to major resource and energy projects, offers strong investment potential supported by government partnerships, growing tourism, international port access, and three industrial precincts. The City serves as Australia's nearest gateway to Singapore, providing strategic access to Asian markets and tourism opportunities.

## Towns / Settlements

### TOWNS

1. Roebourne
2. Wickham
3. Point Samson
4. Karratha
5. Dampier

### PLACES OF INTEREST

6. Murujuga Cultural Landscape (World Heritage)
7. Dampier Archipelago
8. Hearson's Cove
9. Cossack
10. Millstream Chichester National Park
11. Karijini National Park
12. Honeymoon Cove

### ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

#### Industrial Infrastructure

13. The Burrup Strategic Industrial Area
14. The Maitland Strategic Industrial Area
15. Gap Ridge Industrial Estate
16. Karratha Industrial Estate

### Ports

17. Dampier Port
18. Cape Lambert Port

### Proposed Strategic Infrastructure Developments

19. Cape Preston West
20. Cape Preston East
21. Anketell Point Multi-User Port and SIA
22. Balla Balla Infrastructure Project

### EDUCATION

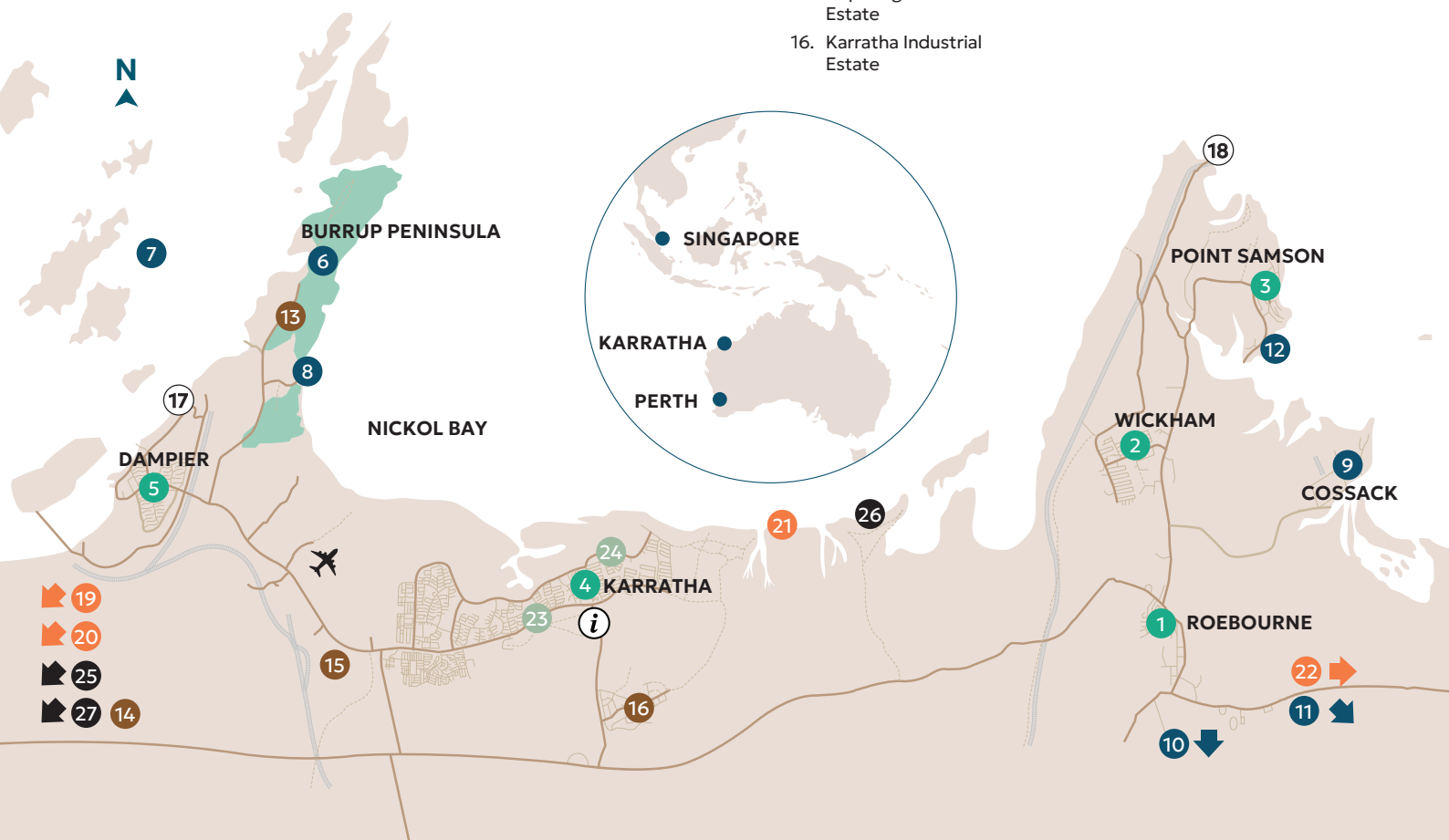
23. TAFE
24. PKUC

### AIRPORT

### CAMPSESITES

25. 40-Mile (Gnoorea Point)
26. Cleaverville
27. Miaree Pool

### KARRATHA TOURISM VISITOR CENTRE







## The City's Role in Economic and Tourism Development

Under the *Local Government Act 1995*, local governments are responsible for providing good governance and services that support the wellbeing of their communities.

Economic and tourism development fall within this mandate, as they contribute to job creation, business growth, liveability, and prosperity.

The City of Karratha is not the only economic development and tourism development actor. Success depends on collaboration with government, industry, local business, Aboriginal people, and the community.

### The City's functions include:



#### Deliver

Play a lead role in providing services, programs, facilities, and infrastructure to meet community needs.



#### Empower

Facilitate and support others to deliver services and programs to the community.



#### Regulate

Regulate particular planning and public health matters (e.g., licensing and monitoring food premises), local laws, the appropriateness and safety of new buildings, and the use of land to ensure compliance and maintain community standards.



#### Partner

Collaborate and build partnerships with others to achieve shared goals and deliver community outcomes.

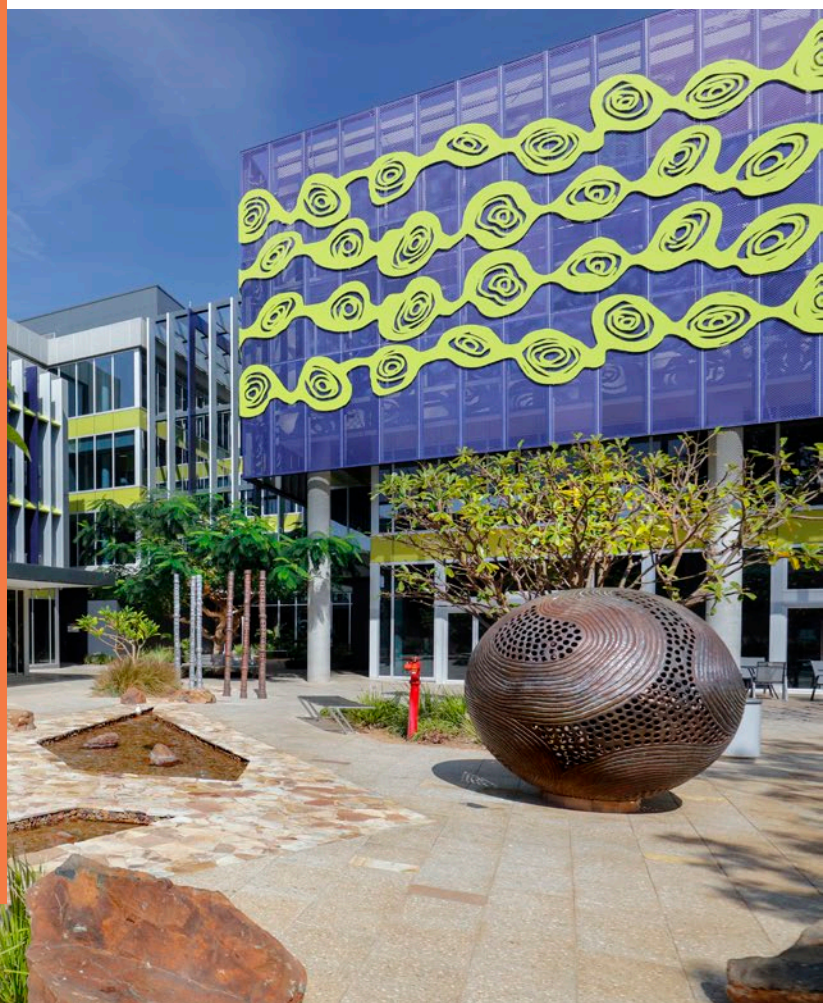


#### Advocate

Advocate on behalf of the community to influence decisions and secure resources to meet the needs of the community.

## Our Economy

Karratha's economy is dynamic and full of opportunity, built on a foundation of strong industries and a commitment to sustainable growth. It combines a rich resource sector with emerging sectors and innovative businesses, supported by expanding infrastructure and strategic investment. Whether you're a local entrepreneur, or an investor, Karratha offers a thriving environment where economic potential and community wellbeing grow hand in hand.



### Our Comparative Advantages:

**Economic Contributor** — Despite making up only 0.8% of Western Australia's population, the City contributes 3.3% to Gross State Product.

**Productivity** — Among the most productive regions in WA, with each worker generating \$1.01m in GRP in 2024, nearly three times the State average.

**Growth and Diversification** — Economy grew 9.7% p.a. from 2017–2023, led by mining and supported by utilities, construction, healthcare, arts and recreation, and education.

**Skilled Workforce** — Workforce is highly skilled, with strong representation in trades, professional roles, and machinery operations.

**Expanding Employment** — Employment reached 14,910 in 2023, growing 1.6% p.a. since 2017, with very low unemployment (1.8%) and increasing diversity across industries beyond mining.

**Innovation Hub** — The City is a leader in new technologies, hosting drone test flights, advancing automation in mining, and supporting the Pilbara Rail Collaboration Hub.

**Investment Pipeline** — About \$71.1b in committed and proposed projects across resources, green energy, chemicals, desalination, and infrastructure.



## Tourism

The City's tourism appeal is anchored in deep Aboriginal culture, extraordinary natural landscapes, unique heritage towns, and a distinctive industrial story. This appeal is strengthened by the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Murujuga Cultural Landscape, a place of profound cultural and spiritual significance and home to one of the world's largest and densest collections of ancient petroglyphs. These strengths position Karratha as a potential hub for Pilbara tourism and a destination of cultural depth, natural wonder, and strategic importance.



### Karratha's Unique Tourism Selling Proposition:

**Aboriginal culture and heritage** — anchored by the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Murujuga Cultural Landscape.

**Natural assets** — the pristine Dampier Archipelago, Pilbara ranges and coastline, and proximity to Karijini National Park, one of Western Australia's most visited natural attractions.

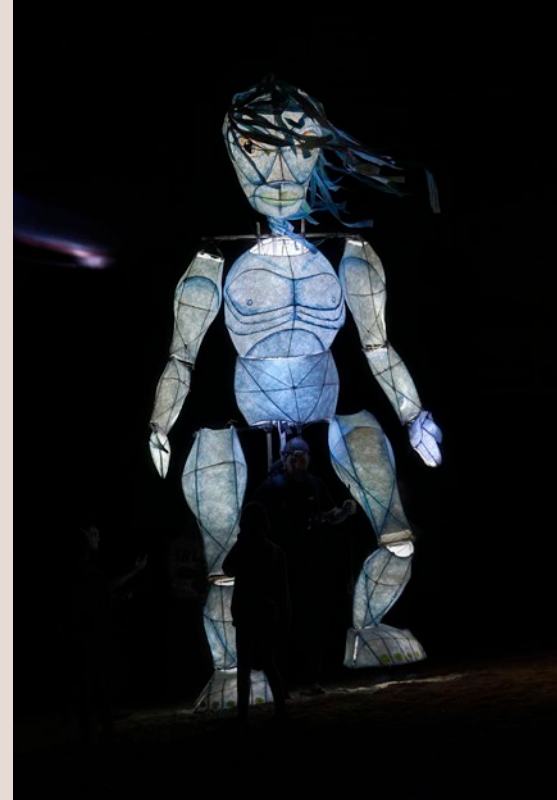
**Cultural heritage towns** — Roebourne (Ieramugadu), the only township on the North West Coastal Highway for over 1,800km, and Cossack (Bajinhurrba), a nationally recognised heritage town.

**Industrial story** — world-class resource projects in gas, salt, and iron ore that shape a distinctive industrial tourism offering.

**Strategic location** — a hub for Pilbara tourism and a natural crossroads for travellers, connecting cultural, natural, and industrial experiences.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM STRATEGY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



## Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (EDTS) Strategic Framework

### Pillar 1

#### **Build Economic Resilience Through Diversification**

Leverage existing resource strengths while accelerating growth in emerging sectors such as renewable energy, manufacturing, logistics, education, health, and creative industries.

### Pillar 2

#### **Provide an Enabling Environment for Business and Investment**

Create the conditions necessary for sustainable investment through infrastructure, policy alignment, planning, and strategic partnerships.

### Pillar 3

#### **Empower Local Business**

Strengthen the capacity and competitiveness of local enterprises and Aboriginal businesses, enhance small business resilience, and expand participation in regional and global supply chains.



Photo Credit:  
Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and  
photographer Heather Osbourne

The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (EDTS) establishes the foundation for sustainable growth and long-term prosperity within the City. The framework is structured around five key strategic pillars:

## Pillar 4

### **Attract and Retain Residents and Talent**

Promote liveability, deliver high-quality services and amenities, and strengthen education and training pathways to develop and retain a skilled workforce.

## Pillar 5

### **Develop a Tourism Industry**

Position Karratha as a sustainable destination renowned for world-class attractions and tourism that supports a diverse economy, strengthens the City as a liveable regional city, and preserves natural and cultural heritage.

### **Tourism has been given dedicated focus for two key reasons:**

- It represents a primary driver of economic diversification; and
- The recent UNESCO World Heritage listing of Murujuga Cultural Landscape significantly elevates the region's tourism potential.

Together, these five pillars provide the strategic direction for fostering a resilient, inclusive, and prosperous future for the City, with the following chapters exploring each in greater detail.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY<sup>1</sup>

## Strategic Objectives

The EDTS seeks to:

- Diversify the City's economy by unlocking potential in priority industries and attracting investment, including:
  - › Industrial diversification
  - › Small and medium business
  - › Education and training
  - › Healthcare, aged care and wellness
  - › Arts and recreational services
  - › Tourism
- Develop an enabling environment for existing business, potential investors and Aboriginal economic participation to take the lead in developing and thriving in our economy.
- Strengthen small businesses.
- Attract, develop and retain talent to drive economic growth.

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<sup>1</sup> Tourism is covered separately in the next section.





# Pillar 1



## Build Economic Resilience Through Diversification

### Rationale

Diversifying Karratha's economy is key to long-term resilience and reducing reliance on the resource sector, which leaves the community vulnerable to boom-bust cycles. Expanding into industries like tourism, education, healthcare, aged care, wellness and arts and recreation, creates jobs, attracts investment, and strengthens local supply chains.

A more diverse economy supports population growth by offering career opportunities and a sustainable economic base. The City is committed to future-proofing the economy by fostering innovation, local capability including Aboriginal economic participation and investment across priority sectors.

The City is "open for business".

## 1.1 / Opportunity Mapping

### Program Objectives

- To identify and assess economic development opportunities within the City.
- To promote investment and enable informed decision-making aligned with the City's priority areas.

### Projects

#### Value Chain and Market Assessment of Opportunities



Partner with Industry and the Pilbara Development Commission and Regional Development Australia to identify and assess strategic economic opportunities through value chain mapping<sup>2</sup> and market analysis, highlighting areas for growth, local capability development, and investment.

#### City-led Priority Areas

- Small and medium-sized enterprises attraction and retention
- Education and training
- Healthcare, aged care and wellness
- Arts and Recreation Services
- Tourism

#### Partner-led Areas

- Local Manufacturing, including low-carbon advanced manufacturing and advanced chemical processing
- Construction
- Critical minerals and mineral beneficiation
- Agriculture, aquaculture and agro-processing
- Circular economies
- Climate mitigation and carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS)
- Energy, including hydrogen and renewables

<sup>2</sup> A visual tool used to identify and analyse the activities, stakeholders, and relationships involved in delivering a product or service.



### Priority Project Business Cases

Deliver business cases and economic analyses based on market gaps identified in Projects 1.1.1, to support investment attraction, business advocacy, and funding opportunities.

## 1.2 / Investment Attraction and Promotion

### Program Objectives

- To promote Karratha as a strategic investment destination and generate actionable investor leads.
- To support investors and businesses with guidance and connections to streamline decision-making.

### Projects



#### Targeted Investor Marketing Campaign

Implement targeted marketing campaigns to position Karratha as a strategic investment destination. Leveraging digital platforms, industry events, and trade shows, the campaigns will showcase priority sectors, highlight market gaps and investment opportunities, and promote the City's competitive advantages to attract new investors and generate actionable leads.



#### 'Open for Business' Investment Concierge Service

Establish a dedicated service to support prospective investors and existing businesses in Karratha. The concierge service will streamline the investment process by providing tailored guidance on site selection, regulatory requirements, and available incentives, as well as facilitating connections with local, state, and federal agencies, reducing barriers and enabling faster, informed decision-making.

# Pillar 2



## Provide an Enabling Environment for Business and Investment

### Rationale

Creating an enabling environment supports economic growth by removing barriers and making it easier for businesses to invest, operate, and expand in Karratha. This includes improving infrastructure, streamlining regulation, enhancing access to land and premises, and addressing service gaps such as housing, digital connectivity, and workforce availability. A well-functioning, supportive environment encourages innovation, attracts investment, and boosts confidence in the region.

## 2.1 / Governance

### Program Objectives

- To facilitate collaboration and coordination between business development support organisations and stakeholders across the City.
- To support local business through aligned planning, shared insights, and joint project delivery.

### Project

#### Establish Business Development Support Network Group



Establish a coordinated network of business development support organisations to improve collaboration, reduce duplication, and align efforts across the City. The group will share information, coordinate activities, and identify opportunities to strengthen local business support and drive economic growth.

## 2.2 / Advocacy

### Program Objectives

- To advocate to state and federal government to complete budgeted initiatives that support local economic development within the timeframes to which they have committed.
- To deliver a comprehensive advocacy agenda that advances the City's economic priorities, including access to land, infrastructure investment, industrial development, connectivity, and resourcing.

### Projects

#### Increase Small Business Development Support Resourcing



Advocate for additional resourcing for local business through existing state-funded programs.



### Additional Education Development Support



Advocate to state and federal government to increase investment in education infrastructure, with a focus on expanding and upgrading access to quality education.

### Additional Workforce Development Initiatives



Advocate for workforce development initiatives to address local skills gaps, improve training and employment pathways, and support programs that build a workforce aligned with the region's economic needs.

### Industry Development



Develop a targeted advocacy plan to support economic growth and investment.

## 2.3 / Infrastructure and Development

### Program Objectives

- To enable the efficient and productive use of land and assets to maximise economic, housing, and community outcomes.
- To strengthen the City Centre as a vibrant commercial, civic, and cultural hub that attracts people and investment.
- To facilitate the growth of education and recreation opportunities that enhance liveability and support population retention.

### Projects

#### Commercial and Industrial Space Gap Analysis



Undertake a detailed supply and demand analysis of commercial (including medical) and industrial lands and properties to assess capacity, forecast needs, and guide investment priorities, including consideration of the City's role in facilitating space for retailers and businesses.

### Optimise Underutilised City-owned Property Assets



Identify and activate underutilised City-owned properties to attract and retain small-to-medium enterprise tenants through targeted investment, flexible leasing arrangements, and partnerships that support adaptive reuse and placemaking initiatives.

### City Centre Precinct Development



Implement the CBD Precinct Site Structure Plan through collaboration with private landowners and businesses to revitalise the City Centre as a vibrant commercial and civic hub. Key actions may include attracting the right business mix, improving access to retail space, encouraging placemaking and walkability, and supporting activation of private land such as shopping centre forecourts and food vendor zones.

### Education and Recreation Precinct Development



Plan and deliver an integrated education and recreation precinct in Karratha to support tertiary education growth, research, housing, and community recreational infrastructure, including university partnerships, student and faculty accommodation, and co-located research centres, and shared facilities.



# Pillar 3



## Empower Local Business

### Rationale

Empowering local business is vital to strengthening Karratha's economy. Small and medium enterprises are major employers and contributors to community wellbeing. Supporting local businesses through capability building, networking, procurement opportunities, and access to resources helps them grow, innovate, and remain competitive.

## 3.1 / Business Grants

### Program Objective

- Support local business, business development support organisations and investors to deliver projects and programs aligned with the City's economic goals.

### Project

#### Deliver Economic Development Grants



Continue delivering targeted grants to businesses and organisations in alignment with the City's economic and tourism development strategic goals. Continuously improve the City's business grant programs to optimise business support, ensure alignment with the City's strategic priorities, and streamline application processes.

## 3.2 / Local Procurement

### Program Objective

- Increase small business participation in City procurement by enhancing local supplier weighting and raising awareness of procurement opportunities.

### Projects

#### Review and Promote Local Procurement



Review existing local procurement data to assess the feasibility of increasing local and Aboriginal supplier weighting within the City's Local Procurement Policy, while considering the potential impacts on local businesses, City finances, and regional economic growth.



### 3.3 / City Accreditation

#### Program Objective

- To facilitate investment and improve ease of doing business by identifying and reducing regulatory barriers through relevant accreditation and improvement programs.

#### Projects

##### Small Business Friendly Local Government Alliance Program



Maintain the City's commitment to the Small Business Development Commission's Small Business Friendly Local Government program by reducing red tape and making it easier to do business with the City.

##### Film Friendly



Support the City's ongoing participation in Screenwest's Film Friendly Local Government Program by facilitating clear filming guidelines, permit application processes, promoting local locations, and fostering partnerships that attract screen industry activity.

### 3.4 / Business Support

#### Program Objective

- To support new business onboarding and provide a soft landing by equipping new businesses with essential local information, contacts, and resources.

#### Projects

##### New Business Digital Welcome Pack



Develop and distribute a digital welcome pack ('Doing business in the City of Karratha') to help new businesses navigate local requirements, access support, and connect with the community for successful establishment in the City.



## 3.5 / Data Hub and Research

### Program Objective

- Collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate economic data for evidence-based decision-making in the City.

### Projects

#### Data

##### Subscriptions

Continue subscriptions for economic development-related data, including contributing to the updating and modelling of datasets required by service providers.



#### Business Scorecard

Continue conducting an annual business survey.



#### Census 2026

Collaborate with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to support the planning and delivery of the 2026 Census, including targeted community engagement to ensure accurate data collection and increased participation across the City.



#### Data Collection Tools

Conduct a feasibility study to investigate the use of technology to collect data at strategic points within public places and events hosted by the City, particularly focusing on regulation and ethical aspects such as privacy and ethical concerns.



#### Data Analytics

Analyse and interpret economic data to inform evidence-based decision-making and support strategic economic development initiatives, including the cumulative impact of major projects (CIM).



#### Data Hub



Develop a centralised digital data hub to consolidate and share relevant economic insights, improving access to information for internal planning and external stakeholders.

## 3.6 / Economic Development Services Promotion

### Program Objective

- To increase awareness of the economic programs, business development support and services delivered by the City and its partners.

### Projects

#### Promote the City's and Third Party's Economic Programs and Services.



Develop and implement a targeted promotional campaign to increase local business and City staff awareness of economic programs and services. This may include, but is not limited to the promotion of:

- Procurement policies and outcomes, enabling Aboriginal and local businesses to better access and benefit from available opportunities
- DAMA
- Data Hub
- City Advocacy
- Cumulative Impact
- City Grants and Sponsorships

# Pillar 4



## Attract and Retain Residents and Talent

### Rationale

Attracting and retaining talent is essential to sustaining Karratha's economic growth and ensuring businesses can access the skills they need. A skilled and stable workforce supports small business, industry development, improves service delivery, and enhances liveability. To remain competitive, the City must offer appealing lifestyle opportunities, quality education and training pathways, accessible housing, and career prospects across diverse sectors. Talent attraction and retention also help embed knowledge and innovation in the local economy, and reduce reliance on fly-in, fly-out models.

## 4.1 / Talent Development and Retention

### Program Objectives

- Identify priority skills needs and address workforce gaps within the City to guide talent attraction and retention.
- Align education, training, and housing solutions with industry demand by strengthening partnerships to deliver local education pathways and housing to priority occupations.

### Projects

#### Develop a City Critical Skills List



Develop a City Critical Skills List by conducting a skills audit to identify workforce gaps and future needs and prioritising occupations in City-led priority areas needed to support economic and tourism growth. This will guide workforce planning, inform training and education efforts, and strengthen targeted advocacy and attraction initiatives.

#### Provide Support for Tertiary Education



Continue to support the growth of the tertiary education sector to expand access to local learning opportunities and strengthen the pipeline of skilled workers aligned with the City-led priority areas.

#### Review Service Worker Accommodation



Review the Service Worker Accommodation to align this scheme with the City's Critical Skills List and to explore the City's potential role in facilitating dedicated housing solutions for occupations on this list.

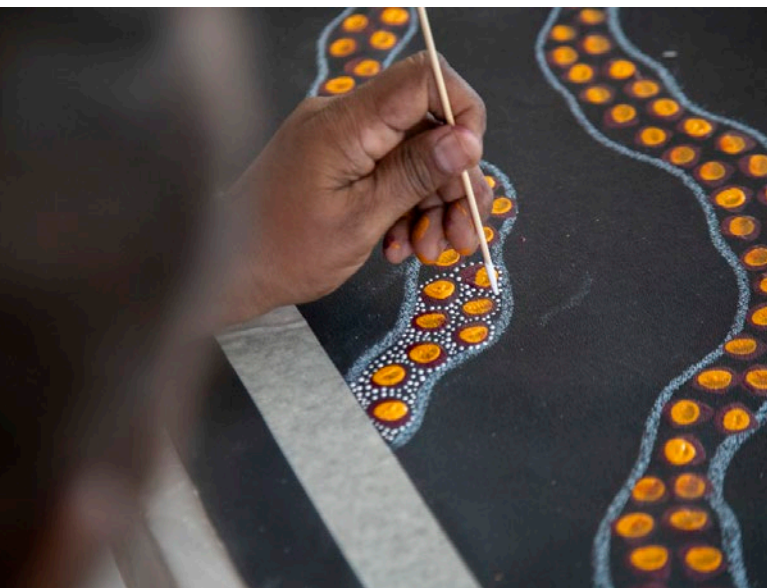


Photo Credit:  
North Regional TAFE



### Health Services Review

Undertake a health services review to understand health care needs for the community and associated workforce demands.



### Reconciliation Action Plan

Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan that supports a culturally inclusive and skilled local workforce where Aboriginal people are empowered to pursue sustainable careers, leadership roles and business opportunities within the City of Karratha and the broader Pilbara region.



## 4.2 / Talent Attraction and Promotion

### Program Objective

- To attract skilled professionals in priority occupations experiencing shortages to support City-led priority areas, or that may affect liveability within the City.

### Projects

#### Develop and Implement Karratha is Calling — Version 2



In line with the Brand Marketing Framework, deliver an integrated marketing and communications campaign aimed at attracting new residents and skilled professionals to the region, while promoting initiatives that support talent retention and position Karratha as a vibrant, liveable and opportunity-rich community.

#### Develop and Implement Targeted Talent Attraction Program



Design and implement a targeted workforce attraction initiative offering tailored relocation support — such as housing, visa, and relocation assistance — for priority occupations on the City Critical Skills List.

#### Support DAMA



Continue to support the Designated Area Migration Agreements (DAMA) program that allows local employers to sponsor skilled and semi-skilled overseas workers for positions they are unable to fill with local workers.





# TOURISM STRATEGY

## Tourism Development Strategic Objectives

For tourism development, the EDTS seeks to:

- Lay strong foundations for sustainable destination development by creating a transparent, inclusive governance model that strengthens tourism operations, regulatory frameworks, collaboration, and industry capability.
- Support the development of tourism infrastructure to enable visitors to access and discover the City's natural and cultural sites.
- Recognise and promote Aboriginal culture as a unique strength of the region, supporting Aboriginal economic participation through the development of authentic cultural tourism products and experiences.
- Support the development of new, "one-of-a-kind" signature visitor experiences (Hero experiences) aligned with the region's unique tourism selling proposition across the City.
- Deliver access to information for the City's visitors at all stages of the travel cycle and support the development of a friendly and welcoming guest experience that encourages visitors to stay longer and spend more in the region.
- Develop a place-based brand to support tourism marketing and promotion aimed at increasing destination awareness in identified target markets and sustainably growing visitation.



# Pillar 5.1



## Tourism — Governance and Industry Capability Building

### Rationale

Tourism in the City has been held back by fragmentation, limited leadership and industry ownership, capability, and inconsistent advocacy. Establishing strong local governance, improving industry capability, and fostering regional partnerships will provide the foundations for sustainable tourism growth. By positioning the City as the lead tourism development organisation, re-engaging stakeholders, and investing in workforce development, tourism can grow into a recognised pillar of the economy and contribute meaningfully to liveability and diversification.

### Program Objective

- To position the City as the lead tourism development organisation, strengthen collaboration, and build industry capability to support a sustainable visitor economy.

### Projects

#### Tourism

##### Advisory Group



Support tourism development by bringing together local tourism operators, Aboriginal people, community and government agencies to develop a shared brand identity and advocacy plan to attract investment, secure government and industry support and deliver consistent messaging that strengthens liveability and visitor appeal across the City.

#### Tourism Workforce

##### Upliftment Program



Support tourism workforce development by promoting career pathways, partnering with education providers, and advocating incentives to attract international workers for industry sustainability and social equity.

#### Secure ECO Destination Accreditation



Pursue ECO Destination accreditation by partnering with industry and facilitating sustainable practices across the tourism sector.



## Pillar 5.2



### Tourism — Enabling Infrastructure

#### Rationale

This program focuses on supporting the improvement, development, and provision of tourism infrastructure to enable visitors reliable access to the City and its natural and cultural sites. Improvements in tourism infrastructure at key locations will help deliver a better experience for both visitors and residents. Risk management must guide infrastructure developments to ensure vulnerable natural, cultural, and socio-economic assets are protected as key tourism resources.

#### Program Objective

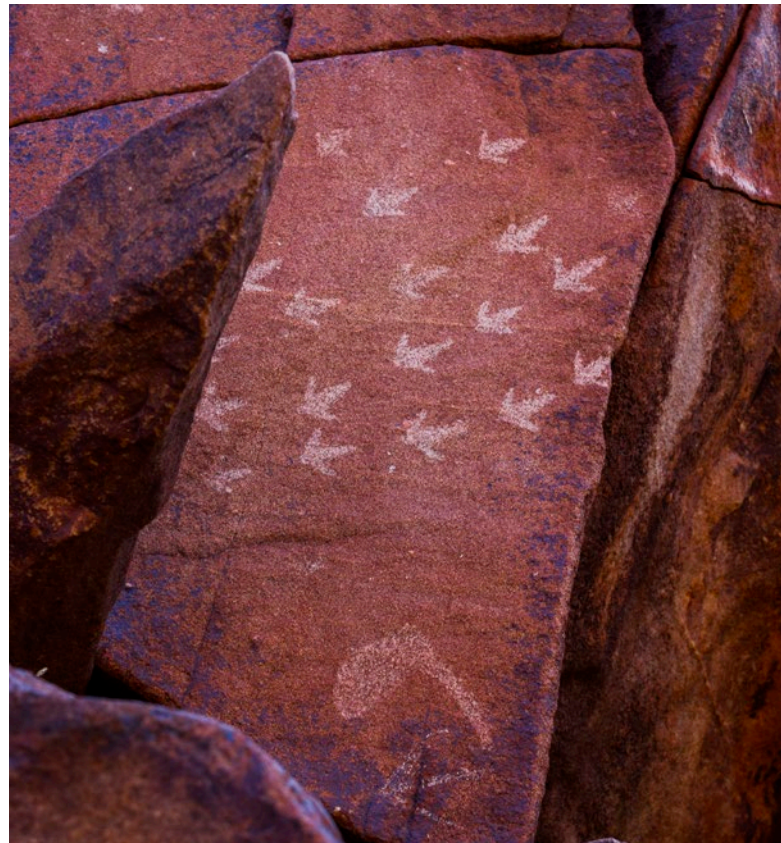
- To support and advocate for the development of infrastructure that improves visitor access, strengthens destination appeal, and enhances the liveability of the City.

#### Projects

##### Advocate for and Enable Tourism Development Projects



Advocate for and enable tourism development projects such as the Murujuga Tourism Precinct, sealing of the Manuwarra Red Dog Highway, affordable flights, cruise ship facilities, cultural spaces, Roebourne Gaol, Sam's Island, Cossack, and Warlu Way to increase visitation and accessibility.





### **Tourism Accommodation Development**

Support tourism accommodation development in the City by advocating for land release and promoting investment opportunities, with a focus on prioritising accommodation for leisure visitors during peak tourist season.



### **Support Tourism Infrastructure**

Advocate for improved infrastructure and activation of tourism nodes, including developing Roebourne, Point Samson and Dampier as a tourism centres, including the proposed Dampier Marina.



### **Enable Tourism Investment**

Support private tourism investment by advocating for land release, policy reform, and business case support to enable new ventures.



### **Improve Tourism Amenity**

Develop and enhance public amenities used by visitors such as dump points, public restrooms, picnic areas and seating and drinking fountains to ensure visitors and residents feel welcome, safe, and have high-quality experiences.



Photo Credit:  
Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and  
photographer Heather Osbourne



# Pillar 5.3



## Tourism — Product and Experience Development

### Rationale

The City lacks tourism products. The City will support the development of “one-of-a-kind” signature experiences (hero experiences) that will create new and unique visitor experiences across the City that align with the destination’s unique tourism selling proposition.

### Program Objective

- To support the development of innovative, bookable and sustainable visitor experiences that leverage the City’s unique cultural, natural, industrial and recreational strengths.

### Projects

#### Provide Tourism Development Funding



Deliver a tourism grant stream and other funding support to encourage local businesses to develop innovative and unique tourism products and experiences.

#### Support Local Businesses to Develop New Bookable Experiences



Support the development of new bookable experiences by partnering with local businesses to deliver hero tourism products, including guided tours and events that showcase the region’s unique natural and cultural attractions.

#### Support the Development of Cruise Tourism



Support the development of the City’s small-ship expedition cruising by coordinating onshore experiences and promoting access to key attractions including Murujuga Cultural Landscape, the Dampier Archipelago, and the Montebello Islands.

#### Develop and Implement a Destination Events Plan



Develop and Implement a destination events plan that supports the growth of sport, leisure and business events, that drives visitation, disperses demand into the shoulder season, and attract intra-regional and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) visitors.

### **Enable Access and Investment into the Dampier Archipelago**



Support the development of improved access to internationally significant hero experiences to attract new and emerging markets and increase overall visitation to the City.

### **Cossack and Roebourne Heritage Preservation and Activation**



Advocate for the preservation of historic assets and the promotion of cultural history in Cossack (Bajinhurrba) and Roebourne (Ieramugadu) as key visitor experiences.

### **Develop Tracks and Trails**



Support the development of trail networks across the City to connect and provide access to nature-based hero experiences and strengthen links between towns and key attractions.

### **Arts and Culture Strategy**



Work collaboratively with Traditional Owners, Artists, cultural organisations and regional partners to develop an Arts and Culture Strategy with the aim of strengthening local creative industries, enhance cultural tourism and support skills development, business growth and market access; ensuring cultural knowledge, practices, and stories are appropriately represented and respected.





## Pillar 5.4



### Tourism — Visitor Servicing

#### Rationale

Visitors expect accurate, accessible and engaging information throughout their travel journey. Providing consistent, high-quality visitor servicing, both in-person and online, will improve satisfaction, encourage longer stays, and increase visitor spend, while also building community pride in Karratha as a welcoming destination.

#### Program Objective

- To provide visitors with clear, reliable, and engaging information throughout their journey, supported by welcoming and innovative visitor services that enhance their overall experience.

#### Projects

##### Refresh KTVC as a Welcome Centre



Develop and rebrand the Karratha Tourism and Visitor Centre to the 'Karratha Welcome Centre' by redesigning its interior to improve visitor servicing and enhance financial sustainability.

##### Develop a Mobile or Pop-Up Visitor Centre



Develop a mobile or pop-up visitor centre at key hotspots and major events to support visitor dispersal, extend stays, and encourage exploration of the region.



### Create a Strong Online Digital Presence



Deliver a comprehensive, up-to-date destination website and leverage digital platforms to inspire visitation, support trip planning, and encourage longer stays.

### Develop and Implement a Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage Plan



Develop consistent, high-quality wayfinding and interpretive signage across key attractions and routes to enhance visitor navigation and storytelling.

### Enhance the Visitor Experience at Visitor Hotspots



Develop engaging and accessible visitor information and services at key hotspots to ensure visitors are informed, welcomed, and have a positive experience.

### Provide Visitor Servicing Outside the City



Develop and expand visitor servicing to neighbouring hotspots and key decision points, to provide consistent information and promotion across the Pilbara region.



# Pillar 5.5



## Tourism — Destination Identity and Marketing

### Rationale

The City of Karratha is not a widely recognised brand and lacks positive tourism brand associations. Developing a compelling destination brand and marketing strategy that tells the story of the City's people, places, and Aboriginal cultural connections, while embedding sustainability principles, will raise awareness, attract target visitors, and position the City as a unique tourist destination.

### Program Objective

- To develop and promote a place-based destination identity that differentiates the City in the market, grows visitation sustainably, and strengthens community support for tourism.

### Projects

#### Develop and Deliver a Comprehensive Tourism Marketing and Destination Brand Identity



Develop a distinctive destination brand that celebrates the City's story, values and assets, while working with Aboriginal communities to ensure cultural identity is authentically represented. This project will deliver targeted marketing campaigns that attract responsible visitation and sustainable tourism growth.

#### Facilitate Collaboration Across the Pilbara



Partner with regional and state stakeholders to deliver shared campaigns that amplify the Pilbara story and align the City's brand with broader marketing efforts.

#### Develop a Local Awareness Program



Develop a tourism ambassador program and community-focused initiatives that encourage residents to experience the City's tourism offerings, build pride, and grow the Visiting Friends and Relatives market.

Photo Credit:

Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation  
(Ranger Services Manager  
Heather Osborne) Nganjarli walk  
trail in Murujuga National Park.









[whatwemakeit.karratha.wa.gov.au](http://whatwemakeit.karratha.wa.gov.au)