

SHIRE OF WYNDHAM EAST KIMBERLEY

Whole-of-Shire Advocacy Framework

Core documentation

- Advocacy Framework - this document
- Advocacy Agenda, comprising:
 - Advocacy Priorities
 - Broader Advocacy Opportunities

1. Purpose

This Advocacy Framework establishes a clear, consistent and evidence-based approach to securing State and Federal investment, policy support and partnership action for projects and issues that deliver long-term economic, social, cultural and environmental outcomes for the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley.

The Framework is focused on strategic advocacy matters that have the capacity to significantly influence liveability, community wellbeing, economic development and regional resilience. It provides:

- A consistent methodology for identifying, developing and prioritising advocacy projects and issues.
- A clear line of sight between advocacy priorities, expected benefits and Strategic Community Plan outcomes.
- A prioritised and credible pipeline of advocacy-ready initiatives and broader opportunities.
- A transparent basis for Council decision-making, organisational effort and external advocacy activity.

The Framework aligns with the Shire's Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033 vision of:

"Connecting our cultures, striving for prosperity, celebrating the spirit of country and community."

2. Scope and Definitions

This Framework applies to whole-of-Shire advocacy priorities where external investment, policy reform, intergovernmental support or coordinated partnership action is required. It is not intended to replace project planning, asset management, annual budgeting or statutory decision-making processes.

For the purposes of this Framework:

- **Advocacy Framework** means this document, which sets the Shire's approach to identifying, prioritising, governing, communicating and reviewing advocacy matters.
- **Advocacy Agenda** means the Council-endorsed set of advocacy projects or matters
- **Advocacy Priorities** means the highest-ranked projects or issues within the Advocacy Agenda that receive active, coordinated advocacy effort.
- **Broader Advocacy Opportunities** means strategically relevant projects or issues within the Advocacy Agenda that are not currently identified as Advocacy Priorities. This may include smaller-scale or lower-value projects seeking external funding, matters with lower urgency or organisational priority, opportunities requiring further planning, evidence, partnerships or funding alignment, and matters where the Shire's role may be to monitor, support, partner or elevate concerns rather than lead active advocacy. These opportunities may be elevated to Advocacy Priorities through the annual review process, Council direction or in response to a significant funding, policy or partnership opportunity.

- **Advocacy-ready** means a project or issue has a clear problem statement, defined outcomes, evidence of need, stakeholder support, alignment with government priorities, and sufficient information to support credible external engagement.

Inclusion in the Advocacy Agenda does not, of itself, commit Council to fund, deliver or operate a project. Any Council financial contribution, delivery role or long-term operational commitment remains subject to separate Council decision-making, budget consideration and statutory requirements.

3. Advocacy Principles

The Shire's advocacy approach will be:

- Strategic - aligned to adopted Shire plans, Council priorities and regional outcomes.
- Evidence-based - supported by data, business cases, community insight, clear rationale and demonstrated need.
- Community-focused - responsive to community priorities and focused on regional benefit.
- Culturally respectful - informed by respectful engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities, including consideration of cultural heritage, cultural authority and place-based priorities.
- Collaborative - strengthened through partnerships with government, Traditional Owners, industry, community organisations, regional bodies and service providers.
- Responsible - mindful of long-term financial, operational, asset management, environmental and delivery implications.
- Outcome-driven - focused on practical, measurable and lasting outcomes for the community and region.

4. Types of Advocacy

The Shire's advocacy agenda is grouped into two streams, reflecting the different types of outcomes being sought and the role the Shire may play, rather than the priority level of the project or issue.

4.1 Stream 1 - Direct Investment

Stream 1 projects are clearly defined initiatives that require direct investment in a specific solution. These projects often involve infrastructure, facilities, assets or services where the desired outcome, lead responsibility and investment requirement can be clearly identified.

These matters are typically:

- Capital works or infrastructure projects.
- Projects requiring State or Federal funding support.
- Initiatives with a defined scope, location and delivery outcome.
- Projects where the Shire may be a lead agency, partner, proponent or asset owner.

Examples may include road upgrades, community facilities, airport infrastructure, public realm improvements, or investment in essential local infrastructure.

Advocacy activity may include:

- Funding submissions and business cases.
- Ministerial and agency briefings.
- Budget and election advocacy.
- Partnership development and co-investment discussions.
- Promotion of shovel-ready or regionally significant projects.

4.2 Stream 2 - Strategic Community and Policy Advocacy

Stream 2 focuses on broader policy, systemic and community issues affecting the region. These matters are often outside the Shire's direct statutory responsibility or delivery control, but may require advocacy, coordination, policy reform or influence across State and Federal agencies, service providers and regional partners.

These matters are typically:

- Community-led or regionally significant issues.
- Policy, legislative or service delivery matters requiring State or Federal attention.
- Service gaps or systemic challenges affecting local wellbeing, liveability, safety or economic participation.
- Issues where the Shire's role is to represent, convene, coordinate, influence, support evidence-building or elevate community concerns.

Examples may include youth crime, childcare access, housing pressures, health service gaps or other social and economic issues requiring coordinated government response.

Stream 2 provides a structured mechanism for community concerns to be heard and elevated to the appropriate agencies, decision-makers and advocacy channels. It does not imply that the Shire is responsible for directly funding, delivering or resolving matters that sit outside local government jurisdiction. Rather, it reflects the Shire's role in representing regional interests, facilitating constructive engagement and supporting community voices.

Advocacy activity may include:

- Evidence-based submissions and policy representations.
- Coordinated regional advocacy.
- Agency and stakeholder engagement.
- Participation in alliances, working groups and sector partnerships.
- Facilitating connections between the community and responsible authorities.

5. Methodology

The Shire will apply a structured methodology to ensure consistency and rigour in project and issue development. Key steps include:

1. Define the problem, opportunity or service gap.
2. Identify expected benefits aligned to the Strategic Community Plan and other adopted strategies.
3. Identify relevant communities, Traditional Owners, stakeholders, partners and responsible agencies.
4. Develop and assess response options, including the Shire's potential role.
5. Identify a preferred investment, policy or partnership approach.
6. Gather evidence to support the case for change, including data, community insight, cost information and policy alignment.
7. Assess and prioritise projects or issues using the Advocacy Evaluation Criteria.
8. Develop the Advocacy Agenda and identify Broader Advocacy Opportunities.

This approach ensures advocacy matters are supported by a clear rationale, defined outcomes and evidence-based justification before significant organisational effort is committed.

6. Evidence Standards

Evidence requirements will vary depending on the scale, complexity and maturity of the advocacy matter.

Relevant evidence may include:

- Community engagement findings, service user feedback or demonstrated community concern, including from affected residents or stakeholders.
- Strategic alignment with the Strategic Community Plan, adopted Shire strategies, regional plans and State or Federal policy priorities.
- Feasibility studies, concept plans, technical investigations, asset condition data or options analysis.
- Economic, social, cultural, environmental or regional impact analysis.
- Cost estimates, lifecycle cost information, operational implications and potential funding sources.
- Letters of support, partnership commitments or evidence of Traditional Owner, Aboriginal and Community-Controlled Organisation (ACCO), community, industry or agency support.
- Risk assessments, including consequences of not proceeding.

Higher-priority advocacy matters should be supported by stronger evidence and clearer implementation pathways. Less mature opportunities may remain in the broader opportunities list until sufficient evidence and readiness are developed.

7. Evaluation and Prioritisation Framework

To support consistent, transparent and evidence-based decision-making, all advocacy projects and issues are assessed using a structured set of prioritisation criteria. Each matter is scored against the criteria and weighted to determine an overall priority ranking. This ensures advocacy efforts are focused on matters that deliver significant community and regional benefit and have a credible case for external investment, policy support or partnership action.

7.1 Assessment Criteria

1. **Economic and Regional Impact:** Contribution to economic growth, job creation, industry development, productivity, regional resilience and investment attraction.
2. **Community and Social Outcomes:** Improvements to liveability, wellbeing, safety, inclusion, cultural outcomes and community cohesion.
3. **Strategic Need and Case for Change:** Strength of the problem definition, supporting evidence and clarity of the case for investment, reform or intervention.
4. **Whole-of-Life Financial Impact:** Consideration of capital, operational, maintenance and long-term financial sustainability implications.
5. **Stakeholder Support and Partnership:** Level of support from community, Traditional Owners, industry, government agencies, service providers and potential partners.
6. **Alignment with Shire Priorities:** Alignment with the Strategic Community Plan and other adopted Shire strategies, plans, services and Council decisions.
7. **Risk / Consequence of Not Proceeding:** Risks associated with not progressing the matter, including service, economic, social, environmental, cultural, reputational or community impacts.
8. **Value for Money:** Assessment of benefits relative to cost and overall efficiency of investment or intervention.
9. **State and Federal Alignment:** Alignment with government priorities, policies, funding programs, budget cycles and election commitments.
10. **Deliverability and Project Readiness:** Level of planning, approvals, land availability, governance, resourcing, partnership commitment and readiness to proceed.

8 Advocacy Agenda

Projects and issues are grouped into two categories to guide advocacy focus and determine the appropriate level of organisational effort. The Advocacy Agenda categories relate to the level of priority, readiness and

organisational focus assigned to each project or issue. They do not determine the type of advocacy being undertaken. Both Advocacy Priorities and Broader Advocacy Opportunities may include Direct Investment projects and Strategic Community and Policy Advocacy matters.

8.1 Advocacy Priorities

Advocacy Priorities represent the highest-ranked matters suitable for active, coordinated advocacy. Projects or issues included in the Advocacy Priorities will be endorsed by Council and receive the highest level of organisational focus.

These matters are typically:

- High-value, transformational, critical or regionally significant.
- Strongly aligned to Council and regional priorities.
- Dependent on significant State or Federal investment, policy support, service delivery reform or partnership action.
- Supported by a clear case for change, evidence of need and identifiable benefits.
- Advocacy-ready, or capable of being made advocacy-ready within an identified timeframe.

Advocacy Priorities are supported through targeted advocacy strategies, stakeholder engagement and tailored advocacy materials.

8.2 Broader Advocacy Opportunities

Broader Advocacy Opportunities include projects and issues with strategic merit that are not currently identified as Advocacy Priorities. This may include smaller-scale or lower-value projects seeking external funding, matters with lower urgency or organisational priority, opportunities requiring further planning, evidence, Traditional Owner or stakeholder engagement, partnership formation or project readiness, and matters where the Shire's role may be to monitor, support, partner or elevate concerns to the responsible agency.

Council maintains visibility of these opportunities; however, responsibility for progressing project or issue development remains with the relevant service units, project teams and subject matter experts. Opportunities may be elevated to Advocacy Priorities through the annual review process, Council direction or in response to a significant funding, policy or partnership opportunity.

9. Governance and Decision-Making

Clear governance is required to ensure advocacy priorities are transparent, credible and aligned with Council direction.

Council's role:

- Endorse the Advocacy Framework and Advocacy Agenda.
- Confirm Advocacy Priorities and any significant changes to priorities.
- Consider any financial, delivery or long-term operational commitments through separate Council reports and budget processes.
- Support advocacy with Ministers, Members of Parliament, government agencies, regional partners and the community.

Chief Executive Officer's role:

- Recommend priorities for Council consideration based on the evaluation criteria.
- Coordinate cross-organisational advocacy effort and resourcing.

- Ensure advocacy positions are consistent, evidence-based and aligned with adopted strategies.
- Oversee targeted advocacy strategies for Advocacy Priorities.

Advocacy and Economic Development service unit's role:

- Lead coordination of Council-endorsed Advocacy Priorities.
- Develop and maintain advocacy strategies, project briefs, submissions, campaign materials and stakeholder engagement plans for Advocacy Priorities.
- Maintain the Advocacy Agenda and supporting records, including the Broader Advocacy Opportunities list.
- Monitor relevant funding, policy, budget and election-cycle opportunities that may support Advocacy Priorities.
- Coordinate quarterly reporting on Advocacy Priorities, advocacy activity, progress and emerging issues.

Service units, project teams and subject matter experts' role:

- Retain responsibility for managing, monitoring and progressing their respective projects or issues listed as Broader Advocacy Opportunities.
- Progress planning, feasibility, technical evidence, engagement and readiness requirements for their respective projects or issues.
- Identify delivery risks, operational implications and partnership opportunities.
- Monitor relevant funding, policy and partnership opportunities for their projects or issues.
- Provide subject matter input to advocacy submissions, briefings, campaign materials and reporting where required.
- Advise the Advocacy and Economic Development service unit of material changes, emerging opportunities or issues that may warrant reassessment or elevation of matters to Advocacy Priorities.

Inclusion of a matter in the Broader Advocacy Opportunities list does not transfer project ownership or monitoring responsibility to the Advocacy and Economic Development service unit. Responsibility remains with the relevant service unit, project team or subject matter expert unless otherwise determined by the CEO or Council.

Emerging or urgent advocacy matters

Emerging or urgent advocacy matters may be considered outside the annual review cycle where there is a significant funding opportunity, policy window, community concern, Council direction or material change in circumstances.

10. Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

Effective advocacy depends on strong partnerships and coordinated messaging. The Shire will seek to work constructively with relevant partners, including:

- Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.
- State and Federal Ministers, Members of Parliament and government agencies.
- Kimberley regional partners, neighbouring local governments and regional development bodies.
- WALGA, local government sector bodies and relevant peak organisations.
- Industry, business groups, investors and major project proponents.
- Community organisations, service providers, schools, health providers and not-for-profit organisations.

Engagement will be tailored to the nature of the advocacy matter and may include early partner briefings, letters of support, joint submissions, working groups, community meetings, evidence-sharing and coordinated regional advocacy campaigns.

11. Advocacy Campaigns and Communications Assets

The Advocacy Agenda will be supported by a suite of communication and engagement materials to strengthen the Shire's advocacy efforts and provide consistent messaging.

11.1 Campaigns and Assets

- A dedicated advocacy webpage on the Shire's website providing accessible project information and, where appropriate, community participation tools such as petitions, template correspondence and social media resources.
- Advocacy Prospectus in PDF and print formats.
- Council, CEO and Executive campaign packs or toolkits, including presentations, key messages, speaking notes, graphics and project summaries.
- Community engagement materials and meetings where appropriate.

11.2 Project-Specific Material

For high-priority matters, additional materials may include:

- Detailed project briefs and business cases.
- Economic, social, cultural or environmental impact summaries.
- Concept designs, maps, visual material and project staging information.
- Letters of support, partnership summaries and funding asks.

11.3 Targeted Advocacy Strategies

For priority matters, tailored advocacy strategies will be developed, including:

- Identification of key stakeholders, partners and decision-makers.
- Alignment with government priorities, funding programs, budget cycles and election commitments.
- Coordinated engagement, communications and campaign approach.
- Timing aligned to funding rounds, policy windows, parliamentary inquiries, ministerial visits, election cycles and budget processes.

12. Monitoring, Reporting and Review

The Advocacy Priorities and Broader Advocacy Opportunities will be reviewed annually, or as required in response to emerging issues, funding opportunities, election cycles, policy changes or Council direction.

Administration will report quarterly on advocacy activity and progress. Reporting may include:

- Progress against Advocacy Priorities and Broader Advocacy Opportunities.
- Funding applications submitted, funding secured and partnership commitments achieved.
- Ministerial, parliamentary, agency and stakeholder engagement undertaken.
- Submissions lodged, policy representations made and inquiries supported.
- Project readiness improvements, including business cases, designs, approvals or evidence development.
- Community engagement, media, campaign activity and stakeholder support.
- Emerging risks, opportunities, barriers and recommended changes to priorities.

13. Outcomes

This Advocacy Framework positions the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley to advocate effectively for investment, policy support and partnership action that delivers lasting regional benefit.

By focusing on clearly defined priorities, supported by evidence and aligned to strategic outcomes, the Shire will strengthen its ability to secure funding, influence policy, build partnerships and deliver meaningful outcomes for the community.

Implementation of this Framework will result in:

- A clear and prioritised set of transformational advocacy priorities.
- A supporting pipeline of projects and issues ready to respond to funding, policy and partnership opportunities.
- Improved success in securing external funding, policy support and partnerships.
- Greater consistency and transparency in decision-making.
- Improved reputation and stronger positioning of the Shire with State and Federal decision-makers, supported by clear messaging and increased community confidence in advocacy priorities.
- Stronger alignment between strategy, investment, policy advocacy and community outcomes.
- A clearer understanding of the Shire's role in direct investment projects and broader policy or community advocacy matters.