



REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2016-2025

Building vibrant regions with strong economies

FOREWORD



Regional development is a core pillar of economic development for our State. Our regions are vital drivers of the State's economy, contributing more than one third of Western Australia's economic activity and 95 per cent of our exports. Given our natural and comparative advantages, innovative and skilled people and growing export markets, there are significant opportunities for the continued growth of regional economies.

The Regional Development Strategy (Strategy) is a plan to build on the potential of our regions for the benefit of all Western Australians. The Strategy is built on the understanding that achieving good regional development outcomes requires a blend of economic and social investment, and ongoing support to ensure the sustainability of our regional communities.

As we move into the next decade, the Strategy harnesses the best knowledge and understanding of what works, and builds on the significant achievements we have made together in recent years. Targeting our regional development effort and investment through the Strategy will deliver the best outcomes.

We are focused on giving greater priority and purpose to the key foundations for economic development and driving new growth and investment in areas where our advantages match national and global opportunity. This will ensure we are focussed not only on our current prosperity but on the opportunities for future generations.

I am proud of the difference the State Government has made so far for regional Western Australians and our State as a whole. As we move into the next phase of our regional development agenda, my ambition is to see the opportunities and success of our regions continue to contribute to our State's prosperity and build the WA of tomorrow.

Hon Terry Redman MLA

Minister for Regional Development

Front cover: Ord-East Kimberley Expansion

Jobs growth

Economic growth

Capable people



*Burton family Ravensthorpe - Drought Reform Pilot. Photo: Dene Bingham,
Photo supplied by: Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia*

BUILDING VIBRANT REGIONS WITH STRONG ECONOMIES

The State Government recognises that building our prosperity begins largely with the lands, waters and natural resources with which our regions are endowed.

This understanding is the basis of the State Government's unprecedented and sustained commitment to developing the potential of our regions, including the Royalties for Regions program.

This commitment to our regions, since 2008, is making a difference in the everyday lives of regional Western Australians across the State.

Regional people are benefitting from improved health services through the Southern Inland Health Initiative, while in the northern-most part of the State, locals enjoy growing economic opportunities through the Ord-East Kimberley Expansion. There have been social, safety and business benefits through investment in regional telecommunications, while the Pilbara has been transformed to match the development of the resources sector.

With the State's economy now changing, the focus of our regional development effort must adapt. The State Government will direct greater resources towards establishing the socio-economic foundations for development while also driving growth and new investment in the regions.



*Karratha City Centre,
Photo supplied by: Travis Hayto*



BRINGING REGIONAL DIVERSITY AND STATE DIRECTION TOGETHER

The Regional Development Strategy, in conjunction with the Regional Investment Blueprints, directs our regional development effort and investment towards building vibrant regions with strong economies.

As the global economy continues to evolve, a range of opportunities arise for which our regions enjoy a comparative advantage. But the competition is fierce, and success is not assured.

The Regional Investment Blueprints provide a comprehensive development plan, prepared by the Regional Development Commissions with their key stakeholders. They outline the imperatives for growth and development in each region and a rich source of potential investment opportunities. Importantly, the Blueprints identify opportunities common across more than one region.

The Strategy provides a framework to prioritise and progress the opportunities with the most potential, emerging from Blueprints and other sources. It is the vehicle to develop a 'whole-of-state' approach to matters of importance across the regions.

Regional development involves many players and is shaped by multiple issues, geographies and industries. All tiers of government, business and communities contribute and share a stake in the development of our regions. The best regional development outcomes are achieved when stakeholders and opportunities are aligned towards a clear common purpose and guided by consistent principles of good regional development.

The Strategy provides the common direction for regional development in Western Australia into the next decade.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT BUILDS VIBRANT REGIONS WITH STRONG ECONOMIES THROUGH ***JOB GROWTH, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CAPABLE PEOPLE***

Our focus	Our priorities	Our results
Establish the socio-economic foundations for development	1. Develop people's capability to drive growth and prosperity Capable people thinking about the future and actively participating in the economy will drive regional prosperity.	- People are job ready and available to take up regional employment opportunities. - Local leadership owns and drives local development agendas.
	2. Enhance key regional centres to capture investment A network of well developed regional centres across WA will create self sustainable economic activity and real choices for regional people.	- Increased investment and population growth in key regional centres. - WA has an established and effective network of towns linked to regional centres. - New businesses establish and prosper in key centres.
	3. Invest in economic infrastructure to drive growth Integrated common-use infrastructure that underpins economic growth.	- Improved supply chains and logistics for regional organisations. - More co-investment secured for Royalties for Regions funded regional infrastructure projects. - Regional people and businesses can adopt economically beneficial technologies.
	4. Drive policy and service reform to remove barriers to growth Smart regulation and services will improve wellbeing and increase the capacity of people and businesses to contribute to the economy.	- Service delivery models that support the economic success and well being of regional people. - Business and economic regulatory practices support market innovation and growth.
Drive growth and new investment	5. Foster the growth of emerging industries Targeted cross-sectoral approach to grow the most prospective industries.	- Whole of government development plans are in place for target industries. - The growth rate in target industries is greater than the regional average. - Target industries that create long term job opportunities in multiple regions.
	6. Support change capability in existing major industries Better capability, knowledge and networks will improve the resilience of existing industries.	- Regionally significant industries have the capability to endure external shocks. - Industries understand and act on opportunities for growth and reform.
	7. Identify and promote opportunities for investment Regional development priorities attract private sector capital and capability.	- Increased external investment in the regions to support innovation and growth.
An ongoing commitment to communities	The challenges of distance, remoteness and sparse population mean regional communities face barriers not experienced in larger urban centres. Supporting communities and building their capacity to respond to unforeseen challenges will mitigate the impact of these challenges. A select set of initiatives that focus on access to services will remain a key pillar of the Strategy.	

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

INVESTING *ROYALTIES FOR REGIONS* TO BUILD VIBRANT REGIONS WITH STRONG ECONOMIES

Our approach

We will invest in major programs that deliver on our strategic priorities to maximise value for money and regional development outcomes



Investment structure

Socio-economic foundations for development
Allocation for programs that deliver on strategic initiatives that establish the socio-economic foundations for development.

Growth and new investment
Allocation for programs that deliver on strategic initiatives that drive growth and investment.

Example programs / initiatives

- Regional Mobile Telecommunications Program
- Regional Services Reform
- Regional Centres Development Plan
- Pilbara Cities
- Southern Inland Health Initiative
- North West Health Initiative

- Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture
- Ord Stage 2
- Growing Our South
- Regional Blueprint Initiatives

We will support locally driven social and economic innovation



Small Grants
Funds allocated to each Regional Development Commission to deliver local priorities.

- Regional Grants Scheme
- Community Chest Fund

We will continue to support existing commitments that address service access challenges



Access to Services
Funding for established programs will continue into the future.

- Patient Assisted Travel Scheme
- Community Resource Centres
- Country Age Pension Fuel Card

We will maintain the capacity to respond to opportunity and unforeseen priorities



Opportunity
A flexible portion of the fund will be available to respond to unpredicted regional and government priorities as they emerge.



Geraldton Universities Centre

THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

The State Government's regional development commitment is led by the Minister for Regional Development and coordinated through an integrated Portfolio comprising the Department of Regional Development (DRD) and nine Regional Development Commissions (RDCs).

The RDCs are a dedicated "front door" for regional development in each region.

Together the RDCs and the DRD take responsibility for the effective planning, coordination and delivery of the State Government's regional development agenda. This includes the management of the Royalties for Regions investment program and maintaining effective relationships with key partners across government agencies, industry and communities.

The Portfolio is supported by two statutory advisory bodies. The Regional Development Council brings the chairs of the nine RDC boards together to provide leadership and promote liaison across the Portfolio. The Western Australian Regional Development Trust provides independent advice to the Minister on the Royalties for Regions program.

We will invest in major programs

We will maximise value for money

Department of Regional Development
www.drd.wa.gov.au

Gascoyne Development Commission
www.gdc.wa.gov.au

Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission
www.gedc.wa.gov.au

Great Southern Development Commission
www.gsdc.wa.gov.au

Kimberley Development Commission
www.kdc.wa.gov.au

Mid West Development Commission
www.mwdc.wa.gov.au

Peel Development Commission
www.peel.wa.gov.au

Pilbara Development Commission
www.pdc.wa.gov.au

South West Development Commission
www.swdc.wa.gov.au

Wheatbelt Development Commission
www.wheatbelt.wa.gov.au



Ord-East Kimberley Expansion