

# Stakeholder Advocacy Plan

## 2026-2027



## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Stakeholder Advocacy Plan is to explain how the City of Busselton will advocate for key strategic priorities to deliver meaningful outcomes for its community.

Advocacy is an activity whereby the City's leaders will work to influence political, social, economic and budgetary decisions of government and non-government stakeholders to achieve outcomes that enhance the wellbeing, lifestyle and opportunities of people living, working and visiting the district. This includes advocating for improved services, infrastructure, community safety, environmental outcomes and economic prosperity.

The City's advocacy recognises that a thriving community is underpinned not only by a strong economy, but also by access to quality services, inclusive community facilities, housing, health and social support systems, educational opportunities, and a safe and connected environment.

The City will advocate for State and Federal Government funding, services and infrastructure where this is beyond the City's capacity to deliver alone. This includes ensuring that essential services meet the needs of a growing and diverse population, and that government agencies deliver outcomes aligned with community priorities. The City may also advocate for changes to State and Federal government policy and legislation which are beyond the control of local government.

A key role for the City is to support sustainable economic development for the region; however, this is pursued alongside broader goals of community wellbeing, liveability and long term resilience. The City works collaboratively with industry, government and community stakeholders to achieve outcomes that benefit both the local economy and the people who live within in. These stakeholders include the Margaret River Wine Association, Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association, Australia's South West, Creative Corner, Creative Tech Village, Edith Cowan University, the Busselton and Dunsborough Yallingup Chambers of Commerce.

The City also supports a dedicated Business Development, Events and Marketing Program (BDEMP) to support funding proposals that drive positive economic outcomes across the region, as well as initiatives that enhance community connection, participation and access to services. Two funding streams are available through BDEMP including the Event Sponsorship Program and the Economic Development and Marketing Grants Program. These grants are funded through the Commercial, Industrial and Holiday Home differential rate categories.

This Stakeholder Advocacy Plan details key advocacy priorities, identification of advocacy opportunities, key messages and approach, identification of key stakeholders, roles and responsibilities and links to collateral which will support advocacy activities.

## 2. Policy Objectives

The Council has an adopted Policy which supports the objectives outlined above.

This Council Policy: Advocacy was adopted on 27 May 2026.

### **This Policy's stated purpose is:**

*“...to highlight and facilitate the strategic importance of the City establishing relationships with Federal and State Governments for the purposes of maximising funding opportunities and the promotion of the City of Busselton.”*

### **Policy Statements:**

- 5.1 Advocacy is the act of strategic relationship building, lobbying and promotional activities undertaken to influence State and Federal Government approaches and to attract funding and/or other types of support to enable the City of Busselton to progress and deliver defined outcomes for the betterment of its community.
- 5.2 The City of Busselton will undertake advocacy through a range of mechanisms to promote projects and development opportunities for the purposes of attracting potential government investment for endorsed priorities within the City's Council Plan.
- 5.3 The City's advocacy activities may at times be aligned to efforts to attract commercial, business and industry investment, in addition to the pursuit of funding and support for the delivery of Council Plan priorities and actions.
- 5.4 Advocacy involves regular communication, provision of information and the facilitation of meetings and visits with State and Federal Government Ministers, Politicians, Election Candidates and Departments to effectively lobby for the City's interests.
- 5.5 The City may jointly advocate for matters in partnership with other local governments, industry associations and the community.
- 5.6 The City may send delegations to other locations within Australia where appropriate to meet with Federal Ministers, Members and Departments, noting these are generally not as readily accessible as State Government equivalents by reason of distance and broad areas of responsibility. This Policy supports visits to Canberra or other appropriate intra or interstate locations (annually or as the need arises) by a City of Busselton delegation for the purposes of relationship building and promotion of the City of Busselton to the Federal Government.

- 5.7 Whenever possible, the City's advocacy meetings, including trips undertaken by delegations for advocacy purposes, will include the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer. In some instances, Councillors and/or City Officers may be included as required.
- 5.8 When arranging a delegation, the CEO should have due regard to the following matters:
- a. the promotional activities of other local governments occurring at the time, such that the City's message is not lost or diluted;
  - b. the opportunity to combine a delegation with other development or conference opportunities available at the time;
  - c. the potential for a delegation to be jointly conducted with neighbouring local government/s for projects and development opportunities of regional significance; and
  - d. the potential for visits to be coordinated in conjunction with and supported by the local Federal Member and/or Western Australian Senators to assist with introductions and relevant contacts.
- 5.9 Following any interstate visits by a City delegation for advocacy purposes, a report is to be prepared and provided to Elected Members.
- 5.10 The City may engage suitably qualified external advocacy representatives to support adopted Council advocacy priorities, in accordance with the City's procurement policies and approved budgets.
- 5.11 Significant advocacy activities, associated outcomes and progress against advocacy objectives undertaken under this Policy are to be periodically reported to Elected Members.

This Policy may be found on the City's website:

[Policies » City of Busselton](#)

### 3. Key Advocacy Priorities

The Council adopted its Council Plan 2024–2034 (and integrated Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan) in October 2024 and completed an annual review and update in August 2025. In this Plan, the City’s purpose is defined through five roles and responsibilities:

- Lead
- **Advocate**
- Facilitate
- Provide
- Regulate

The Plan details key strategic priorities and a range of matters of importance to the community which require the City to advocate. A full strategic review of the Council Plan 2024-2034 is scheduled to be undertaken in 2027-2028 to ensure priorities remain aligned.

The City’s primary advocacy efforts will focus on the five main strategic priorities detailed in the Council Plan 2024-2034 (Review 1: 2025), which align to the community feedback outlined below:

#### **a. Sport and Recreation**

*With increasing demand for facilities, the community would like a new district sports and recreation facility with a 50m pool, indoor courts, and gym facilities, along with upgrades to existing sporting facilities, reserves and ancillary infrastructure.*

#### **b. Rivers and Waterways**

*The community would like the health of the Lower Vasse River, Toby Inlet and wetlands restored for environmental conservation and improved recreation.*

#### **c. Responsible Development and Housing**

*The community would like sustainable growth and responsible development, aligned with local character. More housing diversity and stock is required to meet different needs, with adequate supporting infrastructure and amenities.*

**d. Airport Services**

*The community would like the airport terminal upgraded, improved facilities, more flights to more destinations, better parking and more taxis and shuttle buses.*

**e. Community Safety**

*The community would like more police, CCTV, lighting and mental health support services to alleviate concerns with anti-social behaviour, crime and homelessness.*

In addition, the following areas have also been identified as advocacy needs, and progressing these also remains core business for the City:

**f. Coastal Protection**

**g. Future Transport and Infrastructure**

**h. Expanded Higher Education Offerings**

**i. Telecommunications Connectivity**

These advocacy topics have been identified to support successful community wellbeing, growth, liveability and business development within the district.

A table detailing the advocacy approach for each of these is attached.

## 4. Stakeholder Advocacy vs Investment Attraction

This Stakeholder Advocacy Plan is focused specifically on government advocacy, but it should be noted that there is a difference between government advocacy and investment attraction. Investment attraction (as detailed below) will often require a level of government support to enable outcomes, so the two are not mutually exclusive. Government advocacy may therefore be aligned to efforts to attract commercial, business and industry investment, as well as to pursue the Council Plan priorities for the community.

### Investment Attraction Goals

- Private sector investment for commercial development
- Attracting new industry opportunities to diversify activities in the district
- Attracting new businesses to establish in the district
- Enabling growth and innovation opportunities to evolve and flourish for industries and businesses already established within the district
- Attracting business and partnerships for Saltwater Busselton
- Ongoing relationship building with businesses and key industry stakeholder groups
- Leveraging economic and community opportunities from the Busselton Margaret River Airport

### Government Advocacy Goals

- Gaining government agency support to enable commercial opportunities identified as investment attraction opportunities
- Achieving changes to policy or legislation (eg planning regulations)
- Forging government agency partnerships and/or gaining approvals to bring about specific community outcomes
- Securing cash funding through election commitments or funding rounds for various projects and activities detailed in the Council Plan 2024-2034.
- Ensuring government agencies deliver infrastructure and services which are their role and responsibility

- Improving access to essential services including health, housing, community safety, education and social support systems.

### **Non-Government Stakeholder Advocacy Goals**

- Gaining community, business and industry stakeholder support for City advocacy activities
- Securing cash funding or entering into joint ventures with community, business and industry partners.
- Business and commercial investment to grow employment opportunities.
- Strengthening partnerships that deliver social, cultural and community wellbeing outcomes.

## **5. Identification of Advocacy Opportunities**

### **Government Elections**

Elections provide the opportunity to advocate for specific outcomes which a candidate for election may be prepared to lend support to, if elected. This opportunity can result in significant funding commitments for priority projects and services. It is critical that the City meets with key election candidates and their political party colleagues to ensure they have a full understanding of the key strategic priorities and to seek their support for specific outcomes. In particular, the City may choose to seek financial support for major projects, something that election candidates may be able to offer as an election commitment.

### **Ongoing Advocacy**

With the use of the Stakeholder Advocacy Table (attached), key City representatives will engage in ongoing advocacy for key strategic priorities and other positive community outcomes on an ongoing basis. This may also include participation in joint advocacy efforts with other organisations (please see list in section 6 below).

## 6. Key Messages and Advocacy Approach

### **Nature of advocacy approaches**

Stakeholder advocacy activities should:

- Support and enable positive relationship building with key agencies and politicians
- Inform and be clear on goals (have a specific, tangible request)
- Have a clear justification for the request (eg business case, data, feasibility study, demonstrated community need)
- As far as possible, demonstrate alignment with the goals of the stakeholder being approached to attract their interest (eg political goals, government programs and objectives, delivering local community needs, encouraging enablement)
- Clearly demonstrate the community need and the direct benefits to people, including improved services, wellbeing and quality of life outcomes.
- Demonstrate the negative impact on the community and economy if funding or support isn't achieved (the South West specifically and WA as a whole, if relevant)
- Include arrangement for a follow up discussion

## Key Advocacy Stakeholders

The City may be required to advocate to (or with) a number of different stakeholders depending on the issue. Key stakeholder categories may be grouped as follows:

| Stakeholder                                             | Capabilities                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Federal Government Politicians / Agencies               | Legislation / policy / laws / funding / land / infrastructure / services / approvals                                                                        |
| State Government Politicians and Agencies               | Legislation / policy / laws / funding / land / infrastructure / services / approvals                                                                        |
| Other Local Governments                                 | Shared stake in the outcome / pool resources / access to additional networks                                                                                |
| Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)          | ALGA can lobby for local government sector issues at a Federal level                                                                                        |
| Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) | WALGA's State Council lobbies on local government sector issues and the South West Zone can provide regional advocacy support to matters affecting the City |
| Non-Government Stakeholder Organisations                | Shared interest in project outcomes or enabling/philanthropic approach to community                                                                         |
| Community                                               | Provides lived experience, can identify service needs and priorities, and can contribute to shaping advocacy objectives                                     |
| Industry organisations                                  | Direct interest in the outcomes and can add support for advocacy efforts                                                                                    |
| Businesses                                              | Direct interest in the outcomes and can add support for advocacy efforts                                                                                    |
| Media                                                   | Ongoing interest in progress and can help to share information / encourage discussion                                                                       |

## Economic Development and Partnership Opportunities

The City's economic development priorities ensure that officers have a strong visible presence amongst the community, coupled with ongoing relationships with key stakeholder groups. These priorities include investment attraction and business development which are progressed through relationships with Tourism Western Australia, industry forums and events, Chamber of Commerce functions and local foreshore businesses, who meet on a regular basis.

The City also owns, operates and manages key assets such as the Busselton Margaret River Airport, Busselton Jetty and Saltwater Performing Arts and Convention Centre. The City also has land holdings of strategic significance which can be considered for use in joint ventures and collaborations to maximise their potential.

These activities also contribute to community outcomes, including employment opportunities, social connection, cultural vibrancy and access to services.

## Communication Approaches

|                                                                | Meetings, Briefings, Forums, Tours & Delegations | Letters & Emails, invitations to events | Media Releases & Public Statements | City of Busselton Website & Publications |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Federal Government Politicians/ Agencies</b>                | ✓                                                | ✓                                       | ✓                                  | ✓                                        |
| <b>State Government Politicians/Agencies</b>                   | ✓                                                | ✓                                       | ✓                                  | ✓                                        |
| <b>Other Local Governments</b>                                 | ✓                                                | ✓                                       |                                    | ✓                                        |
| <b>Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA)</b> | ✓                                                | ✓                                       |                                    | ✓                                        |
| <b>Non-Government Stakeholder Organisations</b>                | ✓                                                | ✓                                       | ✓                                  | ✓                                        |
| <b>Community</b>                                               | ✓                                                | ✓                                       | ✓                                  | ✓                                        |
| <b>Media</b>                                                   |                                                  |                                         | ✓                                  | ✓                                        |
| <b>Local Business Community</b>                                | ✓                                                | ✓                                       | ✓                                  | ✓                                        |

**NOTE:** Politicians include elected officials and election candidates.

### **Other Advocacy Options**

The City may also advocate for various matters through other methods on a case by case basis:

- Making formal submissions to government consultation processes
- Use of professional lobbyist to act on the City's behalf for specific matters

## **7. Advocacy Collateral**

Individual Position Papers have been created for each of the key priorities identified in this Stakeholder Advocacy Plan. These are available on the City's website and in printed form to support various advocacy meetings and approaches.

In addition, a template presentation containing up to date slides and speaking notes is maintained and regularly updated. This will enable City representatives to present formally to government and other stakeholders, as well as potential investors.

## **8. Regular Review**

The Stakeholder Advocacy Plan should be reviewed in line with the review schedule for the Council Plan 2024-2034 to ensure that as the City progresses with delivery against each priority the advocacy approach is tailored accordingly.