

LIVING AND WORKING WITH YOU

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is an Australian Government initiative which seeks to grow and strengthen the regions of Australia. The 55 Committees of the RDA network cover rural, remote and metropolitan regions across the Country and strengthen partnership across all three tiers of Government, regional business and the wider community to boost the economic capability and performance of regions.

RDA Wheatbelt is guided by a ten point Charter and is proud to offer local solutions to local issues through identification, partnerships, collaborations and the sourcing of resources and funding.

The Wheatbelt, in all its diversified faces, is the authentic heart and backbone of Western Australia and RDA Wheatbelt is dedicated to helping all who represent it be supported and liberated to harness competitive advantages, seize on economic opportunity and attract investment.

- We are the only regional/economic federal conduit and therefore the primary point of contact for any issues or initiatives that need highlighting or driving.
- We attract funding to the region - supporting local government, businesses, and not for profit organisations looking to build, invest, develop and grow the region socially and economically.
- We connect, facilitate, and engage as your collaborative partners to effectively and positively get things done.
- Our Committee is selected to cover skills in a wide range of disciplines including finance, health, small business, tourism, agriculture, regional development, education, transport, and local government, and with expertise in care and services for people of all kinds through all lifestages.

OUR WONDROUS WHEATBELT

With an area of 154,862 sq kms, the Wheatbelt comprises five sub-regions, 42 shires (30% of all WA shires) and over 200 towns and settlements. The Great Eastern, Great Southern and Great Northern Highways traverse the region and help to make it the gateway between Perth, Northern and Southern WA and the East Coast of Australia. Nearly 75,000 discerning people have chosen to make the Wheatbelt home, making it the third most populous region in the State. That number continues to grow as people recognise the opportunity to be involved in the region's wide array of industries. Primary produce is our calling and varies from cereal crops to vine fruits to livestock, with mining, commerce, retail, manufacturing, fishing and tourism all contributing to our rich and dynamic tapestry.

This is evidenced by the 9300 small and medium enterprises registered in the Wheatbelt, helping to propel employment and economic growth.

Other aspects of our organic and lively status are evident in the growth of activity and investments in:

- Renewable energy - existing large scale solar and wind renewable energy generation projects are being bolstered by new thinking and enterprises
- Aged care - a trend for metro retirees to move to a peri-urban location and free up capital has necessitated an "Aging in Place" model and associated plan to provide realted services
- Tourism - Our natural attractions and authentic experiences are drawing over 700,000 visitors each year, with an annual turnover of \$245 million.

Retail trade is reaching \$200 million, construction is valued at over \$400 million, education and training \$196 million. And at our heart, integral to the Wheatbelt's DNA, the greatest contribution to our Gross Regional Product is Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing which is getting close to \$2.5 billion. Our future is looking buoyant and vibrant, and is requiring increased services, passionate advocacy and energetic commitment.



CONNECT WITH US TODAY

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PROGRESSING ACHIEVING TOGETHER

**WE ARE YOUR PARTNERS
IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

www.rdawheatbelt.com.au



An Australian Government Initiative



WHAT WE CAN DO

RDA Wheatbelt supports the 42 Local Government Authorities, stakeholders and our broader community in every way we can.

- Federal funding application assistance with data, relevance, legitimacy and criteria compliance
- Working one-on-one to develop skills to improve application success
- Matching projects to possible funding streams, and to the Wheatbelt region's promise of being the place to live, work, visit and invest in, to improve the project's potential to proceed and succeed
- Partnering with small business to leverage opportunities to secure Government funding and to participate in such initiatives as the Aboriginal Enterprise Development, the Wheatbelt Business Network or unique programs like "Build Your Business"
- Information exchange and networking through the provision of e-newsletters and email communications, through social media channels, and by participating in events and meetings
- Connecting people with people, opportunities with solutions, ideas with implementation

THE WHOLE IS MORE THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

To be truly effective, we need to share. We encourage you to view us as your partners, advocates, and the people to help you achieve and influence your desired outcomes through a collaborative approach and facilitation.

We want you to share your issues and opportunities with us so we can implement, or lobby for, action and can address them together.

The responsibilities and roles of Local Government Authorities are highly respected, and we value the endeavours of collegiate bodies like the Wheatbelt Development Commission, knowing that together as a collective, anything is possible.

Please contact us. We are committed to ensuring our amazing Wheatbelt is recognised as a leading, progressive and inspirational region integral to the livelihood and wellbeing of Western Australia and need your insights, participation and help.

HOW WE HAVE HELPED

We have worked on a diverse range of issues in response to Wheatbelt needs and wants, with some of the projects being:

- Build your Business
- Youth Connections
- Building Better Region Funds Resource Vimeos
- Women Leading Change
- Cost Benefit Analysis Workshops
- Lithium Study (RDA collaboration)
- Aboriginal Enterprise Development
- Wheatbelt Regional Children's Services
- Developing Infrastructure Funding Proposals (RDA collaboration)
- Early Years Program
- Enterprising Communities
- Digital Action Plan
- Road to Riches Ag Resource Directory
- Y20 Wheatbelt Summit
- Wheatbelt Youth Strategy

Submissions we have made that have generated positive outcomes:

- Telecommunications enquiry
- Telecommunications universal service obligation enquiry
- Enquiry into national freight and supply chain priorities
- Agricultural competitiveness issues paper
- Mobile program coverage discussion paper
- Independent review into regional, rural and remote education

Recent significant projects we have driven:

- **WHEATBELT SECONDARY FREIGHT NETWORK (WSFR)**
As a result of research for a Transport submission, and after extensive consultation, RDA Wheatbelt funded the initiation of data and intelligence collection to inform the preliminary business case critical to securing state support and therefore National consideration. An incredible collaboration with the 42 Local Government Authorities and with North and South Wheatbelt Roads Groups generated three comprehensive applications for funding for the final planning stage for 80 connecting routes covering 4657kms. Importantly, this deservedly resulted in securing funding of \$70 million.
- **CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS**
Sending those involved in the National Stronger Regions Fund applications to a Local Government Authorities Seminar we hosted at Muresk. Following this, continuing to help develop stronger applications which resulted in a rise from 3.6% of National approved applications in Round 2 to 8.9% in Round 3.
- **ABORIGINAL SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
We identified that Wheatbelt Aboriginal people did not have access to support for small business skill development, and after consulting with representatives, established mentoring and training programs which could be passed on. Funding was sourced through the Australian Government Department of Social Services inclusive Communities grants, and continues to surpass expectations.

With thanks and acknowledgement to the following people for their beautiful photographs:-

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