



ABN: 72 096 453 410

Ms Melissa Price MP  
Member for Durack

Dear Ms Price

### **Submission - How to Develop the North**

The Tom Price and Paraburdoo Business Association, on behalf of its members submit the following in response to your call on 'How to Develop the North'. Highlighting the unique challenges faced by residents and business operators in both towns and identifying what is needed for these businesses to grow and prosper in the future.

The SME business communities of Tom Price and Paraburdoo face significant constraints to both the growth of existing and entry of new businesses. As a result we have a much lower than state average ratio of SMEs to population, fewer new entrants, higher failure rate for startups and limited growth for existing businesses.

Some of the barriers encountered include:

- The availability and affordability of accommodation (both residential and commercial)
- Difficulties in securing labour in competition with the higher wages of the large resource companies.
- Lack of local small business advice and support
- Limited opportunities for training and development
- Poor telecommunication services and delays in Australia Post deliveries
- Limited child care facilities and therefore access the latent workforce potential.

These constraints, among others restrict economic diversification, growth and therefore the long term sustainability of our towns. What we would like to see, however, is that the economic wealth that has and is being generated in our area, is reflected in the diversification of our local economy through growth of existing SMEs and new market entrants.

Feedback from our members on how they would like to see the North developed include the following:

- Mining companies being directed to adopt a true normalization program. Starting with proper home ownership and continuing with a release of control over contract companies and their ability to service the local community.
- Corporates at all levels, who operate under a Government license or contract required to contribute to development, rather than focusing solely on their business dealings with mining companies.
- Pipe water from mine dewatering sites for business development within town areas
- Development of major man made attractions to grow and sustain tourism together with natural attractions such as Karijini and Millstream Chichester National Parks.



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- Quantifying and capitalizing on opportunities such as residential backfill and affordable rental models to reduce the barriers of housing availability and affordability in our towns, including housing solutions that are family friendly and not just FIFO focused;
- Gaining access to our latent workforce opportunities by identifying and analyzing initiatives such as training, support and childcare (in particular after hours and school holiday care);
- Assisting SMEs to more effectively engage with the large industry players to deliver further economic opportunities for SMEs in the community and address issues such as deconstraining the Mine Road light industrial area
- Building the social capital that is required to support economic growth and the long term sustainability of our towns
- Growing tourism in the region, in particular address the failure of the State Governments Landbank Initiative to see the delivery a proposed resort development in Tom Price.
- Maximise flow through of economic benefit from large corporations operating in the region.

Our local business and community leaders have a long term commitment to our towns, and we look forward to the opportunity to work with the government to start addressing the issues discussed above and would welcome an open dialogue to facilitate this process.

Kind Regards

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On Behalf of the Tom Price and Paraburdoo Business Association

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