



Shire of EAST Pilbara

THE HEART OF THE PILBARA

Social Inclusion Plan

2025 - 2030

Item 13.3.2 Appendix 1

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Shire of East Pilbara would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the land and waters on which we reside and operate.

We respect and recognise their Elders past and present and we are grateful for the privilege of living and working on this country. We recognise and respect their unbroken connection to the lands, waters, and songlines.

We acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that have helped shape the community and the Shire of East Pilbara.

This always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



Shire Presidents Message

On behalf of Council, I'm proud to present the Shire of East Pilbara Social Inclusion Plan 2025–2030.

This Plan is about one simple idea: everyone who calls the East Pilbara home should feel they belong and can take part in community life. Whether you live in Newman, Nullagine, Marble Bar, a remote Aboriginal community or work here as part of our FIFO workforce, inclusion means being able to access opportunities, services and spaces with confidence and respect.



Through this Plan, Council reaffirms its commitment to creating a Shire that is connected, accessible and inclusive. It sets out seven clear goals and a framework built around four key focus areas — Empower, Collaborate, Mentor and Champion — each guiding how we deliver services, engage with the community and support equitable participation.

Importantly, this Plan integrates our Disability Access and Inclusion responsibilities to ensure that inclusion is embedded in everything we do — from infrastructure design and digital communication to employment practices and community programs.

Our goals are not abstract. They represent our promise to reduce barriers, celebrate diversity and work together to make the East Pilbara a place where everyone feels valued. We know that building inclusion takes time, leadership and genuine partnerships — and Council is committed to this journey over the long term.

I would like to sincerely thank the many residents, organisations and community groups who contributed ideas and feedback throughout the development of this Plan. Your voices have shaped our priorities and will continue to guide our actions in the years ahead.

Together, we can build a stronger, more connected and inclusive East Pilbara — one where every person has the opportunity to participate, contribute and belong.

Anthony Middleton

Shire President

An Overview of Our Community

The Shire of East Pilbara is the largest local government area in Australia, spanning approximately 372,571 square kilometres - an area larger than the entire state of Victoria. Travelling across the Shire takes around two days from east to west and six hours from north to south.

Our main townsites include Newman, Marble Bar, and Nullagine, complimented by vibrant Aboriginal communities such as Jigalong, Punmu, Parnngurr, Kiwirrkurra, Warralong, Gooda Binya, Kunawarritji, and Irrungadji. The Shire's administrative centre is based in Newman.

Community Snapshot

- **Estimated resident population (2023):** 10,401.
- **Population density:** 0.03 persons per square kilometre
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population:** 1,742 people (17.9%)
- **Households:** 390, with an average of 4.1 persons per household
- **Employment (2021):** 81.0% employed, 15.9% not in the labour force, 3.1% unemployed.
- **FIFO workforce:** approximately 35,000 people

Our towns have withstood cycles of growth and challenge. The resourcefulness and resilience of our people - combined with thoughtful planning - will continue to sustain our communities well into the 22nd century. The spirit and energy of our people ensure that the heart of the Pilbara will continue to beat strong.

What is The Shire of East Pilbara Social Inclusion Plan?

The Social Inclusion Plan is about ensuring that everything the Shire of East Pilbara does helps make our facilities, programs, activities, and events welcoming, accessible, and inclusive for everyone.

We believe everyone deserves equitable access and equal opportunities to participate in community life. Guided by this belief, our Social Inclusion Plan sets broad and adaptable goals that allow us to respond to the evolving needs of our community. It empowers Shire staff to identify practical ways to enhance access and inclusion through their everyday work.

What is Social Inclusion

The United Nations defines social inclusion as:

“The process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights.” (United Nations, 2016)

Social inclusion can be understood through four key domains of opportunity - the opportunity to:

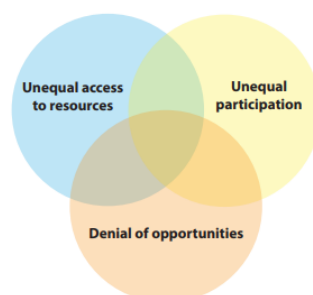
- **Participate** in society through employment and access to services.
- **Connect** with family, friends, and the local community.
- **Manage** personal crises (such as ill health).
- **Be heard** and have a voice in decisions that affect one’s life (Australian Government, 2010).

When viewed as a series of opportunities, social inclusion provides a framework for enhancing participation and connectedness. It represents both a goal to strive for and a guide for understanding where we want to be as a community — and how to get there (Friendly & Lero, 2002).

The World Bank (2024) notes that:

“In every country, some groups confront barriers that prevent them from fully participating in political, economic, and social life. These groups may be excluded not only through legal systems, land, and labour markets, but also through discriminatory or stigmatizing attitudes, beliefs, or perceptions. Disadvantage is often based on gender, age, location, occupation, race, ethnicity, religion, citizenship status, disability, and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), among other factors. This kind of social exclusion robs individuals of dignity, security, and the opportunity to lead a better life. Unless the root causes of structural exclusion and discrimination are addressed, it will be challenging to support sustainable inclusive growth and rapid poverty reduction.”

Symptoms of Exclusion



Focus Areas Social Inclusion

The Shire has identified four key focus areas to guide our commitment to social inclusion: **Empower, Collaborate, Mentor, and Champion.**

These pillars shape our objectives and ensure that everything we do helps strengthen inclusion, participation, and belonging within our community.

Empower

We strive to design and deliver events, programs, and activities that consider the needs of all community members. By engaging the right people, organisations, and service providers, we ensure our approach remains inclusive and community led. Empowering our community means supporting people to decide how they wish to participate and what resources they need to thrive.

Collaborate

Collaboration is about building strong connections between the community and local service providers who can offer support. By fostering partnerships and shared initiatives, we create stronger networks and better outcomes for everyone.

Mentor

We aim to provide Shire staff and community members with the knowledge and tools they need to make their events, programs, and projects accessible and welcoming to all. Mentoring helps build awareness, confidence, and capability across our organisation and community.

Champion

As a Shire, we play an active role in amplifying the voices of our community. We advocate to organisations, government departments, and agencies to ensure that the community's access and inclusion needs are recognised, respected, and acted upon.

Why did we create this Social Inclusion Plan

Our community is constantly changing. As we grow in both size and diversity, we want to ensure that everything we do is inclusive and accessible for everyone - including the large and often overlooked 'Hidden Disability' sector within the Shire.

This plan has been designed to be broad in scope, allowing flexibility for the Shire's teams and the community we serve to adapt initiatives as needs evolve.

We recognise that social, physical, and economic barriers can impact individual and community well-being (Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee, 2025; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2024). Social isolation, for example, has been linked to mental illness, emotional distress, dementia, premature death, and unhealthy behaviours such as smoking and physical inactivity — as well as biological effects including high blood pressure and impaired immune function (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015).

Statistics show that more than one-quarter (27% or 1.1 million) of people with disability aged five and over do not leave their homes as often as they would like, and a further 38,000 people (0.9%) never leave home at all (ABS, 2019).

"Implementing solutions to strengthen social connection in community settings is complex" (Ending Loneliness Together, 2022). The Shire's Social Inclusion Plan acknowledges this complexity and sets out seven key goals to enhance social inclusion across the East Pilbara.

This plan also incorporates all elements of the Shire's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), as required under the *Disability Services Act 1993*. The Act mandates that all local governments and selected State Government agencies develop DAIPs to improve access and inclusion across seven outcome areas:

- Services and events
- Buildings and facilities
- Information
- Quality of service
- Complaints
- Consultation processes
- Employment

These outcomes benefit not only people with disability but also older adults, parents with young children, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

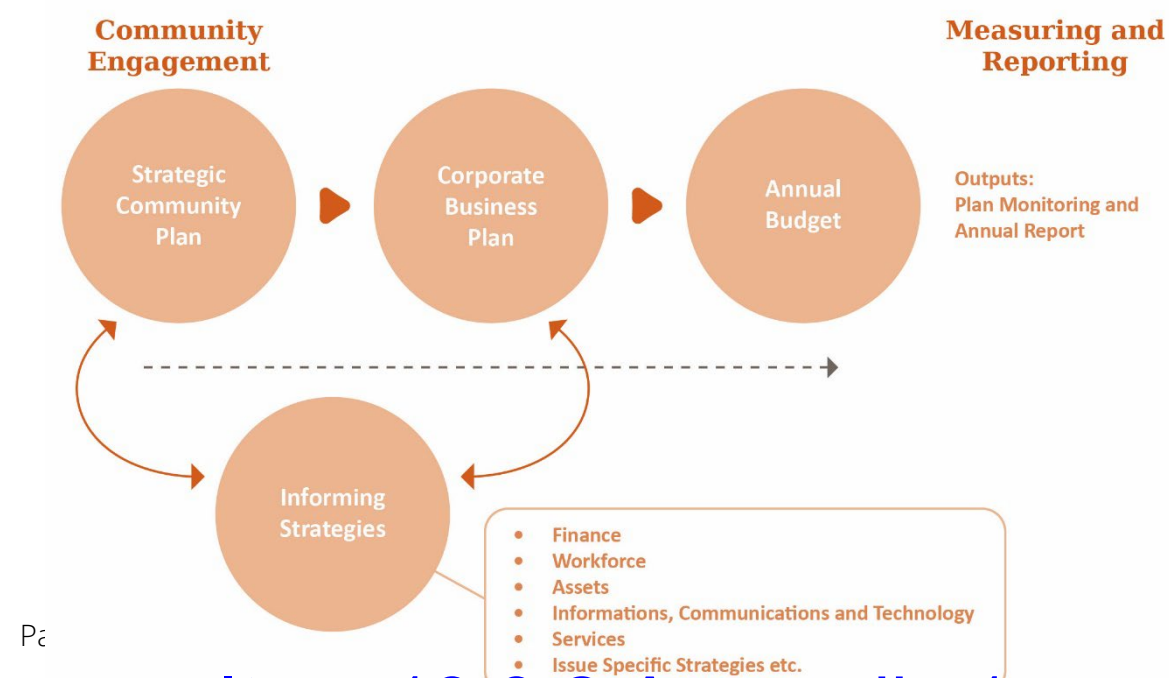
Local governments play a vital role in supporting inclusion because of their broad and multi-functional responsibilities across property, community, and human services.

There is significant opportunity for targeted engagement and action to empower community groups who may benefit most from additional support - by addressing the social and environmental factors that influence health and access to services. These include, but are not limited to:

- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds
- People experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.
- People living in rural and remote areas.
- People with disability
- People living with a mental health condition.
- LGBTIQ+SB people
- Older people

Improving accessibility benefits everyone — from people with disability to parents with prams and seniors. When access considerations are built into planning from the outset, they can often be achieved with little or no additional cost, ensuring a more inclusive and connected community for all.

The Plan forms part of the Shire's suite of informing strategies as shown below.



Community Engagement Feedback

Community members were invited to give input on actions that would enhance the Shire of East Pilbara's inclusivity. Promotion was undertaken online via the Shire of East Pilbara website, social media, flyers, hard copy surveys, posters and in-person at engagement events.

Feedback was received via:

- Community Survey
- 1:1 meetings with community members, stakeholder organisations and government agencies
- Community BBQ's in Newman, Nullagine & Marble Bar
- Fortescue Festival
- Remote community visits

Topics raised included:

- Road conditions, a priority for our remote communities.
- Housing – condition and availability.
- Infrastructure conditions.
- Community events, programs, and services inclusivity.
- Support services availability in community.
- Promotion & awareness of Shire inclusivity actions and advocacy.

Full results are available in the Social Inclusion Plan Community Engagement Report.

How will we make sure the goals of our Plan are achieved?

This Social Inclusion Plan outlines a series of broad goals, each supported by guiding aims. Every aim is allocated to a specific Shire team — for example, Community Development or Infrastructure.

While the goals are intentionally broad, the practical steps for achieving them by 2030 will be detailed in a five-year *Action Plan*. Each team will develop their Action Plan in consultation with staff and the community, allowing them to innovate, brainstorm, and identify achievable, affordable, and practical ways to make their work more inclusive and accessible.

Success measures will be used to evaluate how effectively the Plan has been implemented and whether its goals have been achieved.

Shire of East Pilbara Social Inclusion Plan Goals

Goal 1: Encourage all of community to participate in social, economic, and civic life.

Goal 2: Ensure equitable access to Shire of East Pilbara buildings, facilities, events & programs.

Goal 3: Ensure all Shire communications are inclusive and accessible.

Goal 4: Ensure Shire staff are equipped with knowledge and resources to ensure service received by community is inclusive and accessible.

Goal 5: Increase Diversity of representation in the Shire of East Pilbara.

Goal 6: Increase Diversity in Employment and Civic Participation and Volunteering.

Goal 7: Enhance and Improve Housing, Transportation and Health Services.

Shire of East Pilbara Social Inclusion Plan Actions

Goal 1: Encourage all of community to participate in social, economic, and civic life							
	Who is responsible?	By when?	Social Inclusion Focus Areas				Success Measures
			Empower	Collaborate	Mentor	Champion	
(a) Continue to present accessible and inclusive events, activities, and services for all members of the community, and better promote for community awareness.	All Organisation	Ongoing	✓	✓		✓	Number of accessible events. (Annual). Number of accessible activities. (Annual). Number of Accessible services (Annual) .

							Increased awareness of inclusivity features (Event Feedback).
(b) Increase the number of events specific to diverse and/or vulnerable groups	Community Development	Ongoing		✓		✓	<p>Minimum of 3 diversity events per year.</p> <p>Number of campaigns undertaken to celebrate and value diversity.</p> <p>Celebration of Harmony Day.</p>
(c) Expand the range of our service and program offering to include remote communities within the East Pilbara Shire, where-ever possible.	Community Experience Community Development	Ongoing	✓	✓	✓	✓	Number of services or programs introduced.
(d) Promote local service providers and Champion for additional services that help the community.	Community Development Media & Comms Advocacy	Ongoing	✓	✓		✓	<p>Number of services promoted.</p> <p>Increase awareness & patronage of current services.</p> <p>Number of new services available in the Shire of East</p>

							Pilbara.
(e) Mentor and encourage our community groups to include access and inclusion requirements when hosting events, activities, and programs for the community.	Coordinator SIP Community Development Events and Activation	Ongoing Feb Annually		✓	✓	✓	Number of external events activities and programs which are accessible. Minimum one workshop per year to promote access and inclusion. Development of an Accessible events Guide.
(f) Register to participate and support the Sport4All program, creating better awareness of diversity in sport	Coordinator SIP Aquatic, Recreation & Club Development	2025	✓	✓	✓	✓	Increase in sports clubs and recreational facilities offering programs for people with a disability
(g) Increase cultural competency.	People & Culture Community Development Community Engagement	Ongoing			✓	✓	Cultural Awareness and language training conducted for staff and community.

Goal 2: Ensure equal access to Shire of East Pilbara buildings and facilities							
	Who is responsible?	By when?	Social Inclusion Focus Areas				Success Measures
			Empower	Collaborate	Mentor	Advocate	
(a) Ensure new and redevelopment building, and facility works result in equal access for all our community	Regulatory Services	Ongoing					Number of new and redeveloped buildings and facilities which have improved access. Number of new and redeveloped buildings as per the Strategic Recreation Master Plan
	Infrastructure Services	Ongoing	✓			✓	
	Recreation Aquatic and Leisure Planning						
(b) Continue to improve external infrastructure including pathways, parking, transport, playgrounds, street scapes, benches, and public open spaces	Infrastructure Services	Ongoing	✓			✓	Number of each external infrastructure category that is improved to increase accessibility each year.
(c) Audit of current infrastructure and recommendations for Access and Inclusion	Infrastructure Services	Annually	✓			✓	Reported annually in line with required SIP reporting.
(d) Encourage developers of non-Shire buildings and facilities to consider access and inclusion when planning	Regulatory Services	Ongoing			✓	✓	Number of discussions and case studies of outcomes.
(e) Ensure compliance with Australian Standards ensuring accessibility of new buildings.	Regulatory Services	Ongoing					Compliance achieved for all new buildings.

Goal 3: Ensure all Shire communications are inclusive and accessible							
	Who is responsible?	By when?	Social Inclusion Focus Areas				Success measures
			Empower	Collaborate	Mentor	Advocates	
(a) Ensure all information, marketing and promotional materials from the Shire can be easily accessed in a range of formats and use clear and concise, simple language	Media & Comms All Teams	Ongoing	✓				Sample examples to be provided for SIP reporting, annually.
(b) Continue to improve accessibility to the Shire's website, online booking, and engagement tools for all our community	Media & Comms Community Experience	June 2026	✓				AAA and AA Compliance in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
(c) Increase inclusion of interactive screens, hearing and sight impaired devices in Shire services and facilities	Community Experience	June 2026	✓			✓	Number of additional devices.

Goal 4: Ensure Shire staff are equipped with knowledge and resources to ensure service received by community is inclusive and accessible							
	Who is responsible?	By when?	Social Inclusion Focus Areas				Success Measures
			Empower	Collaborate	Mentor	Advocates	
(a) Mentor Shire staff, contractors, and community regarding customer service best practise	Customer Experience	Ongoing		✓	✓		Community Feedback received
(b) Promote the Shire's achievements in improving access and inclusion	Media & Comms Community Development	Ongoing	✓			✓	Documented examples for SIP reporting.
(c) Raise awareness and understanding among staff, new employees and Councillors about access and inclusion	People and Culture Internal Comms	Ongoing			✓		Staff Training and Councillor Briefings
(d) Source & include relevant training for frontline staff to have better awareness and skills to support all disabilities.	People and Culture	2026	✓		✓	✓	Inclusion of relevant training in programmed staff training.
(e) Register in the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program to create an inclusive welcome to all services and facilities	Coordinator SIP All Teams	2025	✓	✓		✓	All teams aware and involved in the program
(f) Encourage feedback from community to assist with improvements and the removal of barriers to access and inclusion	All Teams, Community Engagement	Ongoing	✓	✓			Feedback received and actioned.

Goal 5: Increase Diversity of representation in the Shire of East Pilbara.							
	Who is responsible?	By when?	Social Inclusion Actions				Success Measures
			Empower	Collaborate	Mentor	Advocates	
(a) Ensure the Shire's complaints procedures are accessible to all and are available in alternative formats	Customer Experience	2026	✓	✓			Procedures made easily accessible.
b) Increase awareness of diversity.	Media & Comms	Ongoing	✓		✓		Education undertaken and increase in awareness
	All Teams						
(c) Create a policy on Access and Inclusion in the Shire of East Pilbara	Executive Coordinator SIP	2026			✓	✓	Policy Developed
(d) Promote and advocate for diverse representation across Council, Shire Committees, reference, and Advisory Groups	S&DO, Community Services	Ongoing	✓	✓			Promotion undertaken
(e) Increase knowledge of Aboriginal Languages spoken in the Shire of East Pilbara	People & Culture Media & Comms	Ongoing			✓	✓	Language training conducted and practiced.
(f) Develop a Community Advisory Group for Access and Inclusion	Community Experience – Community Development	Mar 2026	✓	✓	✓	✓	Committee is developed and operational.

Goal 6: Increase Diversity in Employment and Civic Participation and Volunteering							
	Who is responsible?	By when?	Social Inclusion Actions				Success Measures
			Empower	Collaborate	Mentor	Advocates	
(a) Equal opportunity/providing employment, work experience, traineeship, and volunteering opportunities that are both accessible, inclusive and supported.	People and Culture	Ongoing	✓	✓			Reportable number of trainees, work experience and volunteering opportunities created.
(b) Develop and maintain positive relationships with disability and other employment agencies	People and Culture Coordinator SIP	Ongoing		✓			Regular Stakeholder meetings Invites to Interagency Meetings
(c) Increase number of people with Disability employed in the Shire	People and Culture	2027				✓	Percentage People with a Disability employed.
(d) Increase participation of groups currently underrepresented in the workforce, including first nations people.	People and Culture	2027		✓		✓	Percentage of underrepresented people employed.
(e) Enhance employment promotion to clearly indicate ATSI are encouraged to apply.	People and Culture	2026			✓	✓	All employment includes relevant comment.

Goal 7: Enhance and Improve Housing, Transportation and Health Services							
	Who is responsible?	By when?	Social Inclusion Actions				Success Measures
			Empower	Collaborate	Mentor	Advocates	
(a) Improve accessibility to transport for all community	Regulatory Services	2027				✓	
(b) Advocate for Improved access to housing that encourages community linkage to social and community health services.	Regulatory Services	Ongoing					Reportable changes.
	Executive Services						
	Advocacy		✓	✓		✓	
	Community Experience						
(c) Advocate for improved roads throughout the Shire, improving access to social, enterprise, health, and other services	Executive Services	Ongoing					Reportable number of \$'s received, and roads improved.
	Infrastructure Services		✓	✓		✓	
	Regulatory Services						
	Advocacy						
(d) Increased localised presence of health and other social service providers in our community	Regulatory Services	Ongoing		✓		✓	
	Advocacy						

Evaluation

Implementation and monitoring of the **Social Inclusion Plan** will be led by the Shire of East Pilbara Community Experience team, with actions undertaken by relevant departments and supported by senior management.

The Shire is required to report annually to the Department of Communities on the progress of Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) implementation by employees, contractors, and agents. This report is due by July each year.

An annual review of the Plan will be conducted to:

- Confirm that actions are achieving the intended outcomes;
- Fulfil all mandatory reporting obligations;
- Ensure implementation remains on schedule;
- Review key data and performance measures;
- Identify where adjustments are needed to address changing community needs;
- Report and celebrate achievements;
- Reassess strategic direction and priorities;
- Inform future resource allocation; and
- Identify opportunities for new networks and partnerships.

Mandatory Reporting Requirements - Under Schedule 3 of the Disability Services Regulations 2004, a DAIP must address the following six desired outcomes:

1. People with disability have the same opportunities as others to access the services of, and attend events organised by, a public authority.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as others to access the buildings and facilities of a public authority.
3. People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that enables equal access.
4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from staff as other members of the public.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as others to make complaints to a public authority.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as others to participate in public consultation undertaken by a public authority.

The Shire will report annually, by July, on progress against these six outcomes using the prescribed reporting form provided by the Department of Communities.

Progress on the Social Inclusion Plan will be monitored quarterly through the Corporate Business Plan and reported in the Shire's Annual Report. At the conclusion of the five-year period, a full evaluation will be undertaken, and a new five-year Plan will be developed to guide the next phase of implementation.

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