



Mark Hook
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Wickepin
PO Box 19
Wickepin WA 6370

18th May 2020

Dear Mr Hook,

RE: ASTROTOURISM FUTURE FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIES

With this correspondence I'd like to share both an update on the Astrotourism Towns Project, and an offer that has delivered economic and community development benefits to fifteen other Local Governments in the Wheatbelt and Mid West Regions.

Like yours, their communities across the regions face the challenge of re-igniting tourism and attracting visitors now that COVID-19 restrictions are being lifted.

I'd like to offer your community a pathway to develop into an Astrotourism Towns destination. I have included our establishment package which provides:

- Assistance to select suitable locations for Astrotourism activities
- A free stargazing event to engage the local community
- Website promotion of your town as an Astrotourism destination; and
- Local visitor servicing upskilling and much more.

Over the year we have a focus to generate local business ideas, build links to tour operators and inclusion on WA's Astrotourism Towns map.

The establishment year is all inclusive and priced at \$8,000 (ex GST). Ongoing years are priced from \$3,000 (ex GST) with a range of customisable service add-ons for Astrotourism business development, training, marketing, community engagement and upskilling.

The Shire of Wickepin is perfectly positioned to benefit from the Astrotourism Towns Project outcomes. Milestones achieved since the project commenced in July 2018 include:

- Tourism WA investment has commissioned Astrotourism Market Research Study. To be released later in 2020, it will estimate the size of the market, uncover economic opportunities and investment requirements for industry;

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- Astrotourism has been identified by the likes of Lonely Planet and AirBnB as a top ten trend market globally and, in WA, is proven to attract tourists to the fifteen existing Astrotourism Towns;
- Two locally based product development initiatives are growing jobs and businesses;
- Requests for stargazing and astro-related products and services have increased from local and inbound bus tour operators. We're working with twelve that have enquired over recent months; and
- Community stargazing events are attracting between 50-120 people including both local and out-of-town visitors.

The Shire of Mingenew in the Mid West is one such town benefiting from the Astrotourism Towns Project. Mr Nils Hay, Chief Executive Officer at the Shire of Mingenew, says,

"As one of WA's most popular wildflower destinations, the Shire of Mingenew has been looking for ways to diversify our tourism offering into attractions that are available year-round. By being a part of the Astrotourism Towns Project, we have gained a better understanding of what a great asset our night skies are, and our community have really enjoyed the opportunity to be a part of stargazing events. We're looking forward to working with Carol and her team in the future to further develop this opportunity."

If you would like to speak to a colleague about how they have benefited, Mr Hay welcomes your call on 9928 1102, mobile 0419 647 661 or email ceo@mingenew.wa.gov.au.

A one-page summary of the return on investment seen by Local Governments participating in the Project is also attached for your information.

The vision for Astrotourism builds in 2023 when WA will be the best place in the world to see the Ningaloo Total Hybrid Solar Eclipse. It will be an international astro-event expected to attract in excess of 50,000 visitors to Exmouth and WA. The global media focus will be on WA and will shine a spotlight on the Astrotourism Town network promoting our world-class dark night sky to international "astrotourists".

If you'd like to have an initial 20-minute call to discuss how, where and what could work for your community, please let me know by contacting me on 0427 554 035 or carol@astrotourismwa.com.au.

Yours sincerely,



Carol Redford
FOUNDER | CEO

