

Coffs Harbour Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022



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Contents

Executive Summary	Page 3	Create and manage vibrant places	Page 20
Strategic planning approach	Page 4	5.0 Place activation	Page 20
About Coffs Harbour	Page 6	Champion business, innovation and technology	Page 23
Why does Coffs Harbour need an economic development strategy?	Page 7	6.0 Digital and Innovation Economy	Page 23
Strategic focus & outcomes	Page 8	7.0 Agri-food Economy	Page 26
Alignment with the Smart Cities Plan	Page 9	8.0 Visitor Economy	Page 30
Alignment with the NSW North Coast Regional Plan 2036	Page 10	9.0 Advocate further sector development	Page 32
Key directions	Page 11	Attract People to Invest, Work, Live, Study and Visit	Page 33
Sector development approach	Page 12	10.0 Investment attraction	Page 33
Manage the planning and provision of regional public infrastructure	Page 13	11.0 Resident attraction	Page 35
1.0 Supporting Council-adopted infrastructure investment	Page 13	12.0 Visitor attraction	Page 37
2.0 Advocate for State and Federal Government infrastructure investment	Page 15	13.0 Event attraction	Page 38
3.0 Support Council Policy Development	Page 17	14.0 Youth retention and attraction	Page 41
4.0 Partner for investment	Page 19	Prepare the future workforce	Page 43
		15.0 Educational and training advocacy	Page 43
		Measurement	Page 45
		Implementation & Timing	Page 47
		Conclusion	Page 55
		Attachment 1: Supporting documents	

executive summary

The refresh of the Coffs Harbour Economic Strategy 2014-2017 has dovetailed with the extensive community consultation and development of the *My Coffs* - Community Strategic Plan (adopted by Council 22 June 2017).

Championing business, innovation and technology is one of the key directions of *My Coffs*, and this refresh has identified three areas of strategic importance. These have been selected where the economy has traditional strength (agriculture, tourism), but which still have growth potential, and those growth industries which drive economic growth and create jobs in shaping a regional city (digital and innovation). In all cases, these sectors are ones in which Council can play a positive role in providing civic leadership to stimulate development, investment and sustainable employment while working collaboratively with the business community.

The three areas of focus are:

- **The digital economy** – which is at the forefront of innovation and technology, and central to a strong services sector. Digital has now become mainstream and “business as usual” rather than merely an appendage to economic development and the creation of jobs.
- **The food manufacturing and agribusiness (agri-food) economy** – the latter a traditional strength of the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area (LGA), but heavily skewed towards blueberries, which needs diversification, especially into value-add products, services and processing.
- **The visitor economy** – a mainstay of the local economy, but which operates in a highly competitive market, and has a history of under-investment within the region.

Whilst three sectors have been identified, Council will remain ready to respond to significant economic development opportunities that may arise outside of these areas, and which have the potential to create jobs.

Numerous economic growth opportunities have been recognised for the Coffs Harbour LGA.

Central to the execution of this strategy is the LGA’s ability to **attract people** – whether to live, work, visit or invest (new businesses, investment or skilled workers). This specifically includes a younger profile of resident, skilled worker, visitor, or student and investors vital to the long-term economic prosperity of the LGA. The retention and attraction of younger people to remain or relocate to the Coffs Harbour LGA is an essential ingredient in diversifying the economic base. Their involvement in the economy will mitigate the economic downsides of an ageing population, and will open new opportunities to drive economic growth and create jobs.

The strategy to attract and retain youth will need to be part of a multifaceted approach, including **place and precinct activation**.

Council will work in a collaborative manner with the community (especially the business community), investors, strategic partners and federal, state and local government agencies to establish partnerships and **develop crucial enabling regional public infrastructure** which will have a lasting positive impact on the region.

Council has a key partnership role to play with the LGA’s education sector and other federal, state and local government agencies in the **preparation of the LGA’s future workforce**.

Properly applied, these plans will guide resource allocation and investment decisions, in both Council activities and its partners in the Coffs Harbour LGA community. The successful implementation of this strategy will rest on the support of Coffs Harbour LGA businesses and the wider community.

strategic planning approach

The [MyCoffs - Community Strategic Plan](#) was prepared by Council on behalf of its community. The plan sets out goals and priorities for the LGA over the next ten years and beyond. It contains, amongst others, five broad economic goals to realise the community vision of a **Connected, Sustainable and Thriving Coffs** (page reference *My Coffs* p5):

- Champion business, innovation and technology to stimulate economic growth and local jobs (B1.1 p14)
- Attract people to work, live and visit (B1.2 p14)
- Prepare to exploit opportunities now and in the future (B2.1 p16)
- Create and manage vibrant public places (C1.1 p18)
- Effectively manage the planning and provision of regional public services and infrastructure (D2.1 p24)

The refresh of the [Coffs Harbour Economic Strategy 2014-2017](#) has dovetailed with the extensive community consultation and development of the *My Coffs - Community Strategic Plan*. A review was conducted in terms of the relevance of assumptions especially about demographic and economic projections. This showed the high level principles remained broadly applicable from the 2014-2017 strategy but the Action Plans were too numerous (175 of which less than 50% were delivered) to be addressed with Council's resources and beyond the immediate ability of Council to deliver / influence.

Other council strategies were considered:

- The [Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020](#) provides the strategic

framework to attract, grow and retain events in the Coffs Harbour LGA. Events play an important role in reflecting the attractiveness of the region and providing significant economic value back to the community.

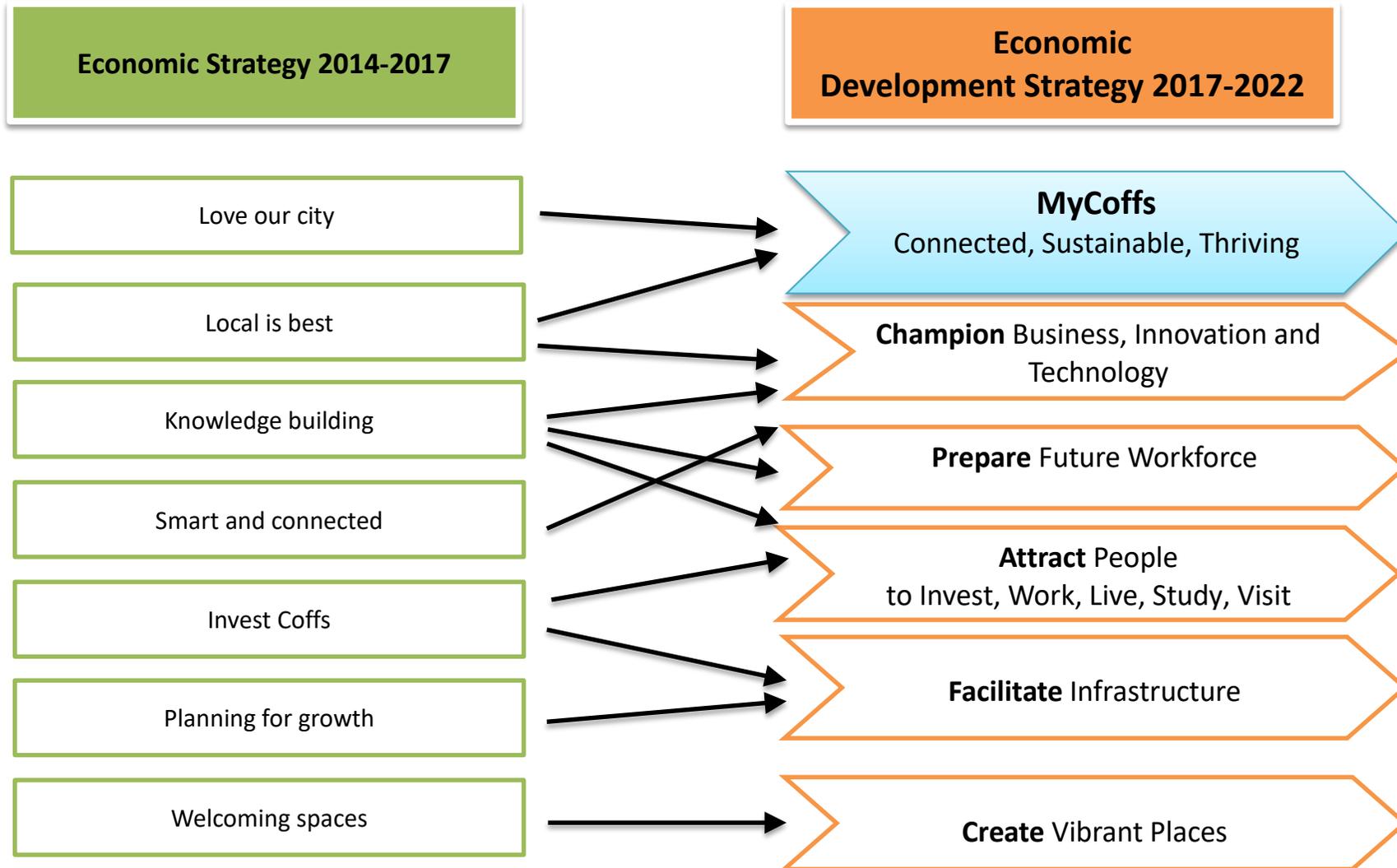
- The [Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020](#) adopted by Council in 2016 aims to strengthen the Coffs Coast visitor economy by increasing overnight visitor stays, length of stay, expenditure, and dispersal across the region. Given the significance of tourism to the Coffs Coast economy it is important that tourism is not only maintained and strengthened as an economic driver, but also planned and managed in a sustainable way.
- The [Creative Coffs - Cultural Strategic Plan 2017-2022](#) highlights the opportunity that the region's creative industries offer, harnessing arts and culture as a significant contributor to the city's social and economic fabric through the creative sector's contributions to employment, consumer spending, festivals and events and cultural tourism.
- Switched On Coffs Digital Strategy 2012, Local Growth Management Strategies, including the Public Realm Strategy (future), Residential Strategy (under development), Industrial Lands 2009, Rural Land Use strategy (LGMS), Coffs City Centre Masterplan, Woolgoolga Masterplan (WOW), Youth strategy (future) and other Council strategies were also considered.

Externally, the Federal Government's [Smart Cities Plan](#) and the NSW Government's [North Coast Regional Plan 2036](#) were reviewed to understand the federal and state regional planning context for the Coffs Harbour LGA and align our strategies.

Council reviewed the latest available census and economic data. Extracts from the specialist reports are contained in Appendices 1b and 1c.

Consultation was undertaken with businesses, residents and key stakeholder groups through workshops, one on one meetings, committee meetings, briefings, focus groups, public forums and online surveys. A summary of the feedback received is contained in Appendix 2.

Mapping of Coffs Harbour Economic Strategy 2014-2017 with Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022



about Coffs Harbour

The Coffs Harbour LGA is located on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales. The LGA encompasses a total land area of nearly 1,200 square kilometres, including substantial areas of national park, state forest, parkland, coastline and beaches. Coffs Harbour LGA is a predominantly rural area, with expanding residential, rural-residential and resort areas, and industrial and commercial land use. Settlement is based around the main city of Coffs Harbour, and the townships of Sawtell, Toormina and Woolgoolga, with many small villages and localities along the coast and inland. Much of the rural area is used for timber production and agriculture, particularly blueberry growing. Tourism is also an important industry.

The Coffs Harbour LGA is highly valued as a place to live, is a popular visitor destination (approximately 1.7 million annually), and continues to attract people seeking a lifestyle change or place to retire. The expected population for the LGA is approximately 94,657 by the year 2036, while the current population is about 73,892. The total workforce in the LGA is an estimated 33,091. Over the period 2011-2016, the employment level grew by 8%, which represents an estimated 2,500 new jobs. The local economy has created an approximate 10,000 additional jobs since 2001.

There are approximately 5,484 local businesses in the Coffs Harbour LGA. The largest industry sector is Health Care and Social Assistance (15% of jobs), which is largely driven by State and Federal Government funding. The second largest sector is Construction at 14.5%, which has been temporarily boosted by the work on the Pacific Highway, and given the eventual

completion of the Pacific Highway on the Mid North Coast, we should consequently expect slower growth in this sector. The Coffs Harbour LGA is in a period of transition from a regional town reliant on traditional economic sectors (agriculture, forestry, fishing, construction, retail, tourism) to a more sophisticated and diverse regional city characterised by a greater focus on services (financial, health, education, technology, cultural), new market opportunities and future workforce needs.

Key employment sectors in the Coffs Harbour LGA include retail trade, health care, accommodation and food services, tourism and education. Coffs Harbour City Centre (including Coffs Central) is the City's major retail centre, with other significant centres being Park Beach Plaza and Toormina Gardens shopping centre. Coffs Harbour LGA features one major public hospital (Coffs Harbour Health Campus) and a private hospital (Baringa Private Hospital). The LGA is home to the Coffs Harbour Education Campus (including Southern Cross University, North Coast TAFE NSW and the Senior College), the University of New South Wales Rural Clinical School (Coffs Harbour Campus), and numerous private and public schools.

Coffs Harbour LGA's Gross Regional Product was \$3.24 billion in the year ending June 2016, growing 0.5% since the previous year. The cost of housing in the area has been slowly rising, growing by approximately 20% over the last 5 years.

why does Coffs Harbour need an economic development strategy?

The Coffs Harbour economy faces a number of development challenges and opportunities. The purpose of the Economic Development Strategy is to prioritise and focus Council resources to address these.

The Coffs Harbour LGA's exports are dominated by construction (increased money flowing in from other areas due to the highway construction), agriculture, forestry, fishing, and tourism. Growth in agriculture is currently driven by the blueberry sector which accounts for over 70% of local agricultural production, and equates to 92% of NSW blueberry production. The growth of this sector, counter-balanced with addressing sustainable land management practices, is very important. Bananas, in contrast, have experienced a relative decline.

The tourism sector is strong, stable, and showing signs of growth in recent years. There is untapped potential especially in the nature-based tourism sector (tours, experiences, soft adventure). There is a legacy of under-investment in tourism, especially with regard to accommodation.

Projected jobs growth is expected to be dominated by sectors focused on population growth (eg. household and personal services, health and age care, residential construction, retail) and tourism (accommodation, food services, retail) (Source: id, see Appendices 1b and 1c). As the LGA continues its transition from a regional town to a regional city, the challenge is to develop the necessary investment in skills development to

drive workforce employability which supports growth. Businesses and skills for the digital economy, in particular, are an important area of future development.

To achieve this transition, the following strategic objectives have been identified:

- **The LGA needs to grow it's capacity to become a more diverse economy.** It is currently overly reliant on a relatively narrow, seasonal and cyclical base (agri-food, tourism, construction) which, in the absence of any remedial strategic action, increases the potential risk exposure of it's growth plans.
- **The LGA needs younger people to provide vitality, fill jobs and provide services, and increase economies of scale.** As the population ages, workforce participation declines and the rate of economic growth naturally slows, while an ageing population creates demand for additional services and infrastructure.
- **The LGA needs to attract business investment and skilled workers, energy and ideas** (eg active Sea and Tree Changers). In order to ensure the Coffs Harbour LGA is not left behind, compared to other regional cities, Council and the community need to proactively identify and exploit sustainable yet untapped opportunities.

One of the principal aims of this strategy is to achieve a degree of sufficient consensus on the key economic development priorities facing the LGA, in order to guide decision making by Council, State and Federal agencies, business and the wider community.

strategic focus & outcomes

An effective economic development strategy must have clear directions and outcomes in order to enhance the competitiveness of existing enterprises and facilitate the development of new and emerging enterprises. To effectively develop an economic development program that meets the needs of the people of the Coffs Harbour LGA and the objectives of Council, the following strategic goals and outcomes have been aligned with the *My Coffs* - Community Strategic Plan and other Council strategies.



Connected

Sustainable

Thriving

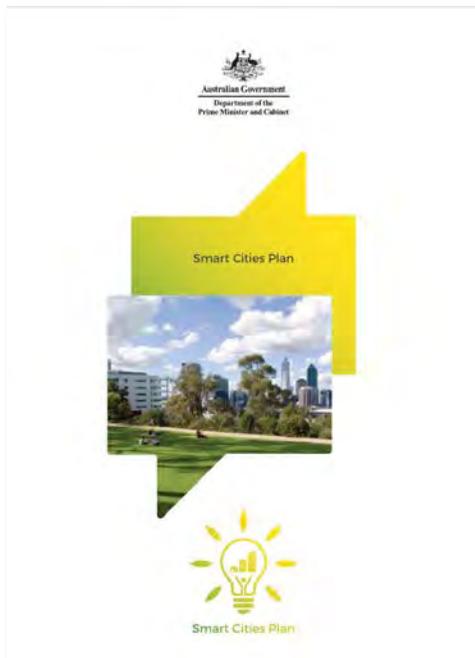
**Align with
Council
Strategies**

- Primary focus (*My Coffs* strategy reference)
- **Champion business, innovation and technology** to stimulate economic growth and local jobs (B1.1)
- **Attract people** to work, live and visit (B1.2)
- Secondary focus:
- **Be prepared** to exploit opportunities now and in the future (training, education) (advocacy role) (B2.1)
- Effectively manage the planning and provision of regional public services and **infrastructure** (D2.1)
- Create and manage **vibrant public places** (C1.1)

- The *My Coffs* - Community Strategic Plan
- The Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020
- The Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020
- Local Growth Management Strategies, including Public Realm Strategy (under development), Residential Strategy (under development), Industrial Lands 2009, Rural Land Use strategy
- Creative Coffs - Cultural Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022
- Coffs City Centre Masterplan
- Woolgoolga Masterplan WOW

alignment with the Smart Cities Plan

This strategy is aligned to ensure the LGA is best placed to capitalise on the Australian Government's 'Smart Cities Plan' and future 'City Deals' opportunities. The 'Smart Cities Plan' sets out the Australian Government's vision for Australian cities, and the plan for maximising their potential. It includes three pillars:



Smart Investment: We will become smarter investors in our cities' infrastructure

- We will prioritise projects that meet broader economic and city objectives such as accessibility, jobs, affordable housing and healthy environments.
- We will treat infrastructure funding as a long term investment not a grant and get involved early to ensure projects create opportunities for urban renewal and raise private capital. By drawing on innovative financing approaches—including value capture—we will leverage our balance sheet and deliver more essential infrastructure sooner.

Smart Policy: We will coordinate and drive smarter city policy

- We will work across all levels of government to develop 'City Deals' that unlock public and private investment in key economic centres. By incentivising reforms we will generate additional benefits for the economy making cities better places to live in and do business.
- We will collect and analyse data about the performance of our cities, so we can measure our policies' success and respond to new needs.

Smart Technology: We will drive the take up of smart technology, to improve the sustainability of our cities and drive innovation

- We will embrace new technology with the potential to revolutionise how cities are planned, function, and how our economy grows. Disruptive new technology in transport, communications and energy efficiency are becoming a reality—we will position our cities to take full advantage.
- We will leverage real time open data driven solutions and support investment in sectors commercialising new innovations to grow Australia's economy.

alignment with the NSW North Coast Regional Plan 2036

This strategy is aligned with the NSW Government's North Coast Regional Plan 2036. The most pertinent section is that covering Goal 2: A thriving, interconnected economy – these directions will be referenced throughout. (Further selected details of the plan may be viewed in Attachment 1)



Goal 2: A thriving, interconnected economy

Direction 5: Strengthen communities of interest and cross-regional relationships

Direction 6: Develop successful centres of employment

Direction 7: Coordinate the growth of regional cities

Direction 8: Promote the growth of tourism

Direction 9: Strengthen regionally significant transport corridors

Direction 10: Facilitate air, rail and public transport infrastructure

Direction 11: Protect and enhance productive agricultural lands

Direction 12: Grow agribusiness across the region

Direction 13: Sustainably manage natural resources

(1) Manage the planning and provision of regional public infrastructure

Council role: Advocate, Partner and Provider

1.0 Supporting Council-adopted infrastructure investment

- Support Council-adopted investment delivering infrastructure eg. Airport Enterprise Park, EPIC Stadium, Cultural & Civic Precinct, others
- Facilitate free public wi-fi in high-visitor traffic areas and entrepreneur start up precincts

2.0 Advocate for State and Federal Government infrastructure investment

- Align with 'Smart Cities Plan', investigate future 'City Deals'
- Align with NSW North Coast Regional Plan 2036
- Advocate for regionally significant investment by working with State and Federal government agencies, and private sector (eg CH Bypass)
- Support completion of NBN and technology infrastructure within LGA
- Lobby Federal and State government to prioritise Coffs Harbour LGA

3.0 Support Council Policy Development

- Support Quadruple Bottom Line strategies
- Support Local Growth Management Strategies
- Advocate on planning frameworks
- Advocate on policies, land use and zoning

4.0 Partner for investment

- Develop regional and inter-agency partnerships, as appropriate, to support investment, eg RDA, SCU, Chambers of Commerce, NSW DPC, NSW Health, NSW DPI, MIDROC, other councils, TAFE NSW

(2) Create and manage Vibrant Places

Council role: Provider, Partner and Advocate

5.0 Place activation

- Activate precincts to achieve greater economic vibrancy, increase regional amenity, improve community connections, and provide for inclusion
- Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan
- Coffs City Centre Master Plan, Woolgoolga Town Centre Master Plan

(3) Champion business, innovation and technology to stimulate economic growth and local jobs

Council role: Provider, Partner and Advocate

Adopt a strategic and flexible approach to developing key sectors where Council can make a positive difference:

6.0 Digital and Innovation economy

- Grow the footprint of 6 Degrees Co-working Space
- Support the Coffs Harbour Innovation Centre
- Explore Creative Industries Network opportunities
- Deliver a range of activities and capabilities required to develop an innovation ecosystem

7.0 Agri-food economy

- Facilitate development of new and emerging enterprises
- Develop a strong food culture
- Develop a regional agri-food brand
- Develop an agri-food mini strategy
- Re-vitalise the Coffs Coast Growers Market
- Explore opportunities to value add to agricultural product
- Develop agri-tourism activities
- Advocate to diversify the agricultural base

8.0 Visitor economy

- Implement the adopted Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020

Advocate on behalf of other sectors to develop and build capacity:

9.0 Advocate further sector development

- Advocacy role for:
 - health care and social assistance
 - construction
 - advanced manufacturing
 - retail
 - logistics
 - transport sectors

(4) Attract people to invest, work, live, study and visit

Council role: Provider, Partner and Advocate

10.0 Investment attraction

- Develop an investment prospectus, promote the benefits of relocating to Coffs Harbour for business investors and skilled workers

11.0 Resident attraction

- Develop and implement an integrated marketing plan, showcase the better opportunities and quality of life when moving to Coffs Harbour LGA

12.0 Visitor attraction

- Implement destination marketing to key segments

13.0 Event attraction

- Implement the Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020

14.0 Youth retention and attraction

- Develop programs to enhance youth employment prospects and skills, focus on retention to increase workforce participation
- Attract young entrepreneurs to Coffs Harbour LGA
- Attract students to Coffs Harbour LGA
- Develop and implement digital knowledge, skills and entrepreneurship programs for youth

(5) Prepare the future workforce

Council role: Advocate

15.0 Education and training advocacy

- Partner with and support Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW and State and Federal government departments and agencies (eg RDA MNC) to ensure future workforce needs are identified and met
- Support development of young people with knowledge and skills to link them to further employment and economic opportunities

sector development approach

There are many competing demands for Council resources to assist economic development. This strategy represents a strategic and flexible approach to developing key sectors where Council can make a positive difference. These sectors are characterised by:

- Traditional areas of strength in the local economy
- Sectors which unlock further investment, reach new markets and create sustainable jobs
- The degree that they will advance community goals, including alignment with any relevant strategic plans at local, regional or state level
- The investment can have a strong multiplier effect
- A focus on sustainability, in line with Council's commitment to Quadruple Bottom Line principles.

These sectors will be the main focus of Council's capacity-building programs. Council will, however, continue to support all sectors of the Coffs Harbour economy through advocacy. This approach will be periodically reviewed in light of changing economic circumstances.

Within each of these areas of focus, Council approaches sector, industry or business development using the following simple framework:



INSPIRE: is about generating new ideas or identifying new opportunities for a business or an industry

DEVELOP: is about developing an idea and a business model to take it to start up stage (minimum viable product)

GROW: is about launching and commercialising the new business model or industry

SCALE: is about moving the business idea from start up to early stage establishment, achieving some scale, usually coinciding with investment and jobs, and achieving efficiencies

manage the planning and provision of regional public infrastructure

1.0 Supporting Council-adopted infrastructure investment

- Support Council-adopted investment delivering infrastructure eg. Airport Enterprise Park, EPIC Stadium, Cultural & Civic Precinct and others
- Facilitate free public wi-fi in high-visitor traffic areas and entrepreneur start up precincts

Council's own infrastructure investment activities naturally have a significant impact on the economic well-being of the Coffs Harbour LGA. The economic development role of Council in these activities is to:

- provide civic leadership to proactively, where required, and assist in identifying the need for investment
- champion investment on behalf of key stakeholder segments, eg. visitors and the visitor economy stakeholders
- assist with data for the business case for the investment (economic impact analysis)
- liaise with the Coffs Harbour LGA business community to gather their input into decision making
- assist with communicating investment decisions to the business community.

The proposed Airport Enterprise Park is a Council-adopted initiative designed to attract commercial investment and jobs to the Coffs Harbour Regional Airport (CHRA) precinct. This will cement the airport's position as one of the fastest growing regional airports in Australia. It will also contribute to greater connectivity with key markets, including Sydney.

The expansion and refurbishment of the C. ex Coffs International Stadium, under the project name of Building an EPIC Stadium for the Future, will deliver an enhanced sporting venue for the community, attract more visitors to the region, and contribute to job creation and cultural cohesion.

The Council-adopted proposal for a new Library, Gallery, Council administration/chamber and co working space within the new Cultural and Civic Precinct in Gordon Street will deliver greater foot traffic to the CBD, and enhance the activation of the CBD, amongst other cultural and community benefits. This will also enhance cultural tourism in the LGA. The co-working space will also support the Coffs Harbour LGA start up community.

The study into the viability of a Performance Arts Space in the LGA will also be supported, as this could potentially generate community and economic benefits.

The Council will also progressively roll out free public wi-fi in visitor- and start up- intensive precincts, which will support the growth of the tourism and digital and innovation sectors, respectively.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S1.1	Support Council infrastructure investment decisions (eg. Airport Enterprise Park, EPIC Stadium, Cultural & Civic Precinct, others) through economic analysis and consultation	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S1.2	Champion investment to support the identified sectors in the EDS 2022: digital innovation, agri-food, tourism	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S1.3.	Support feasibility study of Performance Arts Space	Provider	●	●	●		
S1.4	Provide for rollout of free public wi-fi in visitor- and start up - intensive precincts across the LGA	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S1.5	Actively seek funding to improve public infrastructure	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●

2.0 Advocate for State and Federal Government infrastructure investment

- **Align with 'Smart Cities Plan', investigate future 'City Deals'**
- **Align with NSW North Coast Regional Plan 2036**
- **Advocate for regionally significant investment by working with State and Federal government agencies, and private sector (eg Coffs Harbour Bypass)**
- **Support completion of NBN and technology infrastructure within LGA**
- **Lobby Federal and State government to prioritise Coffs Harbour LGA**

Local government is a key partner for State and Federal Government in identifying local infrastructural and investment needs. An open dialogue is required to identify medium to long term needs in a timely fashion. The role of Council is to advocate to State and Federal Government on behalf of the Coffs Harbour LGA community for investment by government within the LGA.

Council will establish and maintain close relationships with key State and Federal Government departments to ensure that the economic needs of the Coffs Harbour LGA community are at the forefront for consideration.

In some situations, Council will collaborate with partners to prepare joint submissions or grant applications, and advocate on behalf of the community. Partners may be other agencies or neighbouring councils. More often than not, a successful grant application will mean that Council becomes the State or Federal Government's implementation partner in managing the grant project.

As mentioned on page 9, the Federal Government has developed a 'Smart Cities Plan' together with proposed future 'City Deals' opportunities.

A key issue impacting on the development of the Coffs Harbour regional economy is the proposed Pacific Highway Bypass, which, in conjunction with air and rail networks, is vital in terms of the Coffs Harbour LGA economy's trade links. Council has a central role to play in advocating to Federal government on the urgent prioritisation of this project, and the State government on the funding, design and location of this vital infrastructure. Council will continue to

support RMS in preparation of the Coffs Harbour Bypass Business Case. Council will also prepare an interim plan to mitigate congestion associated with the delay in the completion of the Bypass construction.

A key reference document in this regard is the North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (as per page 10). This plan, prepared by the NSW Department of Planning in 2016, clearly identifies Coffs Harbour LGA as a future regional city (see Appendix 2 for selected extracts).

Council will seek to work collaboratively and develop partnerships with NSW and Federal government agencies, industry, the Chambers of Commerce, the Destination Coffs Coast Committee, regional bodies and neighbouring local authorities, to advocate on potential investments.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S2.1.	Explore the Federal Government 'Smart Cities Plan', identify opportunities for future 'City Deals'	Partner	●	●	●		
S2.2	Lobby the NSW State Government and the Commonwealth Government on behalf of the LGA about matters pertaining to economic development related infrastructure, to prioritise the Coffs Harbour LGA	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S2.3	Prepare and support submissions and Council grant applications that directly impact economic development in the LGA , to ensure the best possible chance for the Coffs Harbour LGA to benefit from State and Federal Government investment	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S2.4	Continue to advocate to NSW and Federal Governments for the earliest possible prioritisation of funding for the Coffs Harbour Bypass	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S2.5	Support RMS in preparation of the Coffs Harbour Bypass Business Case	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S2.6	Develop interim plan to mitigate congestion due to the delay in Coffs Harbour Bypass construction	Provider	●	●			
S2.7	Advocate to Federal Government and NBN Co to accelerate rollout of the NBN across the whole LGA	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●

3.0 Support Council Policy Development

- Support Quadruple Bottom Line strategies
- Support Local Growth Management Strategies
- Advocate on planning frameworks
- Advocate on policies, land use and zoning

Council will continue to advocate for, and support, sustainable business practices, in line with its commitment to Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) principles and practices of sustainability. Council will explore the opportunities to develop commercial opportunities in the waste management space.

One of the key methods by which Council can influence economic development outcomes in the Coffs Harbour LGA is through the use of planning instruments, including land use and zoning, as well as strategies, plans and policies which impact on economic activity. This might include environmental considerations in agriculture land management, height restrictions, parking arrangements, traffic management, the activation of pedestrian footpaths and other policy areas which might either encourage or discourage investment in the LGA.

Council already plays a 'listening post' role with the Small Business Friendly Council advisory group which, amongst other things, identifies systemic and policy issues which Council can address to improve the smooth functioning of the local economy. This group represents, among others, the local Chambers of Commerce and other small business owners. Council has initiated work with this group on educating business about procurement policies and procedures (doing business with Council) and Development Applications (educating business about the application and decision making process, helping Council staff to understand the legitimate needs of business).

A core component of Council's policies which will impact on future economic development in the Coffs Harbour LGA are the Local Growth Management Strategies (LGMS) which outline city development to 2031 and beyond. The Urban Lands Component (previously Our Living Settlement Strategy) outlines key guiding principles for future development.

The **key directions of LGMS** may be summarised as follows:

- A compact city, to protect the environment, in-fill development, no more urban sprawl
- Building ‘places’ – quality public realm and precincts which reflect the unique characteristics of the surrounding area, walkable neighbourhoods, promoting healthy and active lifestyles
- A business centre hierarchy in planning
- Explore the need and composition of industrial land vs business parks vs other commercial estates
- Protecting the region’s food bowl (Rural Lands Strategy)
- Encouraging a culture of innovation and design excellence (design with abundance, giving back to the streetscape) in both public and business realms
- An integrated transport plan for the LGA is to be developed in or about 2020/21.

The Rural Residential component is now the Large Lot Residential component, which will see the addition of relatively few large lot homes in the LGA.

The Business Lands component (2010) outlines how much business and what type of business development (commercial, retail, industrial) will be permitted in areas. This is encapsulated in the LEP (Local Environment Plan) which details the hierarchical relationship between business districts.

The Industrial Lands component (2009) will ultimately be reviewed, recognising there is currently a shortfall of 50ha of traditional industrial land.

The Rural Lands Strategy is also currently under review. A Public Realm Strategy is currently under development.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S3.1	Advocate for and support QBL sustainability principles and practices	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S3.2	Explore commercial opportunities in the waste management space	Provider	●	●	●		
S3.3	Support and contribute to Council policy development, land use and zoning which impacts on business and economic development	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●

S3.4	Continue to support the Small Business Friendly Council initiative, collaboratively identify areas for Council improvement and business engagement	Provider	•	•	•	•	•
S3.5	Support the Local Growth Management Strategies (and sub-strategies)	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•
S3.6	Support the development of an Integrated Transport Plan	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•

4.0 Partner for investment

- **Develop regional and inter-agency partnerships, as appropriate, to support investment, eg RDA, SCU, Chambers of Commerce, NSW DPC, NSW Health, NSW DPI, MIDROC, other councils , TAFE NSW**

Council will seek to develop and maintain regional investment partnerships where this makes sense, to ensure regional investment opportunities are pursued for mutual gain for both the LGA and the investment partner.

Similarly, Council will partner with the NSW State government and the Federal Government, and their related departments and agencies to identify investment opportunities which will benefit the Coffs Harbour LGA. Council will collaborate as required with the following organisations (not an exhaustive list):

- NSW State Departments: DPC, DNSW, Health, DPI, Jobs NSW, Education, OEHL, RMS, NPWS, Forestry Corporation
- Federal government departments: Industry, Innovation
- RDA
- MIDROC councils
- Other councils on the Mid North Coast
- Southern Cross University (SCU)

- TAFE NSW
- Chambers of Commerce: Coffs Harbour, Woolgoolga and Northern Beaches, Sawtell

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S4.1	Partner with Federal Government and its agencies in investment opportunities	Partner	•	•	•	•	•
S4.2	Partner with NSW State Government and its agencies in investment opportunities	Partner	•	•	•	•	•
S4.3	Continue to develop partnerships with key stakeholders eg Chambers of Commerce, RDA, Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW	Partner	•	•	•	•	•

create and manage vibrant places

5.0 Place activation

- **Activate precincts to achieve greater economic vibrancy, increase regional amenity, improve community connections, and provide for inclusion**
- **Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan**
- **Coffs City Centre Master Plan, Woolgoolga Town Centre Masterplan**

There are many community benefits from activated precincts which have a defined identity, and meet the needs of specific groups across the LGA. In most cases there are economic benefits and implications as well. The principle is generally that if people frequent an activated precinct, they will spend more time there, and hence more money (eg. coffee, drinks, food and so on), which in turn results in increased economic vibrancy.

Council's role is to advocate for greater economic vibrancy, where appropriate, and also support decisions aimed at attracting some of the key target groups mentioned: visitors, new residents, skilled workers, investors, start up businesses.

A number of these precincts may be driven predominantly from a cultural or an economic perspective – for example an arts precinct, innovation precinct and a visitor precinct, and so on. The development of a sustainable night time economy in key precincts should also be explored.

Council will support and facilitate creative expression and public space activation through art. Council will actively promote arts, heritage and culture programs to residents and visitors using traditional and digital media channels.

The Coffs City Centre Master Plan covers a key element of the LGA’s economic (and cultural) infrastructure. Council will support the continued implementation of the Coffs City Centre Masterplan to increase economic vibrancy in the Coffs Harbour CBD. The development of the draft Woolgoolga Town Centre Masterplan will also contribute to economic vibrancy in that town centre.

Place making is a central tenet of the Local Growth Management Strategies (LGMS), and will ensure that precincts are developed to their full potential, while being reflective of the unique characteristics of that place. This will also support implementation of the Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan 2020 (see key directions on the following page).

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S5.1	Support Council place activation initiatives	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.2	Support implementation of Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.3	Support implementation of Coffs City Centre Masterplan, Woolgoolga Town Centre Masterplan	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.4	Support and facilitate creative expression and public space activation through art	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.5	Explore the development of a sustainable night time economy in key precincts	Provider		●	●	●	●

Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022: Key Directions

To achieve our vision “A vibrant and creative Coffs lifestyle enriched by its natural beauty, diverse people and capacity for innovation”

Engage our community and visitors in the cultural life of the area	Create and maintain vibrant cultural and public spaces	Understand and celebrate our Aboriginal and diverse cultural heritage	Value and support our creative industries	Encourage connections, collaboration and partnerships
<p>Broaden program and audience development and participation</p> <p>Develop and promote dynamic cultural activities/ programs.</p> <p>Actively engage the wider community.</p>	<p>Increasing public art</p> <p>Integrate public art and design into all future major Council capital improvement projects</p> <p>Facilitate creative expression and public space activation.</p>	<p>Support for improved cultural collections</p> <p>Support the development, preservation and promotion of Coffs Harbour cultural collections in particular physical and online library, museum and gallery collections.</p>	<p>Sustainable cultural & creative industry endeavours</p> <p>Advocate for individuals and organisations to manage facilities, programs & projects.</p> <p>Foster creative industries and cultural network(s) to build cultural capital.</p> <p>Advocate education and training, to build capability.</p>	<p>Partner and collaborate</p> <p>Partner with organisations to strengthen our cultural assets, programs and facilities.</p> <p>Develop programs to maximise potential of small halls across local communities.</p>
<p>Advocacy for improved transport options</p> <p>Advocate for improved transport options for the community and visitors.</p>	<p>Better community and cultural facility planning and maintenance</p> <p>Deliver community infrastructure that aligns with the 2030 Plan, a 'place making approach' and the Local Growth Management Strategy.</p>	<p>Walk together with the Aboriginal community</p> <p>Honour, share and communicate Aboriginal stories, heritage and culture.</p>	<p>Tracking cultural and creative industry impacts</p> <p>Undertake cultural mapping, data collection and research to understand the impact of creative industries.</p>	<p>Sister city connections</p> <p>Strengthen international connections and cultural understanding with our Sister City – Sasebo, Japan.</p>
<p>Improving promotion and information</p> <p>Increased sharing of local arts and cultural collections, trails, events and tourism initiatives.</p>	<p>A new Cultural and Civic Space</p> <p>Deliver an upgraded Harry Bailey Memorial Library, Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery and digital/co-working space as the core of a Cultural and Civic Precinct at 23-31 Gordon St.</p>	<p>Dual language signage</p> <p>Provide relevant signage in the dual languages of Gumbaynggirr and English.</p>	<p>A focus on cultural tourism</p> <p>Develop increased capabilities in product, business development and promotion, in particular re cultural tourism.</p>	<p>Continue Council arts and cultural grant program</p> <p>Continue program and investigate options for matched funding arrangements.</p>
<p>Explore Cultural Ambassador and school programs</p> <p>Investigate the development of programs.</p>	<p>Performance Arts Space Feasibility</p> <p>Finalise options development, needs and feasibility analysis for future performance and/or conference venue(s) that include a Performing Arts Space.</p>	<p>Heritage and culture</p> <p>Celebrate and promote our diverse, intercultural and refugee stories and culture.</p> <p>Aim for best practice for heritage interpretation/ conservation.</p>	<p>Arts, Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Support development of programs which use the arts to improve mental health and healthy ageing.</p> <p>Support education and tertiary qualifications in arts and health.</p>	<p>Support Cultural Reference Group and cultural volunteers</p> <p>Support to take active roles in cultural planning and capacity building.</p>

Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan 2017-2022



champion business, innovation and technology

6.0 Digital and Innovation Economy

- Grow the footprint of 6 Degrees Co-working Space
- Support the Coffs Harbour Innovation Centre
- Explore Creative Industries Network opportunities
- Deliver a range of activities and capabilities required to develop an innovation ecosystem

The digital and innovation economy is globally one of the fastest growing business sectors. Digital technology has now become mainstream in business and increasingly services (including government services) are delivered via the Internet. The access to Internet technology has also seen the rise of entrepreneurs establishing micro businesses, often working from home. The growth of contracting has fuelled this trend. These trends are also evident in the Coffs Harbour LGA, and will play a central role in the LGA's economic future. Relative to many other regions, the LGA has mostly received access to the NBN, and thus has a platform on which to develop this sector. The further rollout of the NBN will accelerate the importance of this sector.

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The Council-led 6 Degrees Co-Working space program has played a key role in **encouraging start ups** and building an entrepreneurial culture. Apart from providing low-cost temporary working space, the co-work space also meets the social needs of entrepreneurs. The networking function of the 6 Degrees program provides the launch pad for entrepreneurs to hone their pitching skills, vital when looking to establish collaborative ventures and attract investors. In 2017 the NSW Department of Industry Future Towns program, partnered with Council and the Woolgoolga and Northern Beaches Chamber of Commerce to successfully launch and establish the 6 Degrees Woolgoolga Co-Working space. A crucial ingredient in this success was finding the right local partners

who have the passion and experience to take the idea and run with it. This is an example which can be used as a model for future partnerships. Other precincts in the LGA, most notably Sawtell, have the potential to also sustain co-working hubs.

The development of an **entrepreneurial culture**, digital or otherwise, begins at school. School students and other youth have previously participated in the StartUp Alley component of the annual 'StartUp Coffs' competition run by Council. Given the importance of retaining youth within Coffs, and facilitating career pathways in digital technologies for youth employment and study, Council will look to partner with other agencies (eg. NSW Department of Education, Regional Development Australia), as appropriate, to provide young people with the knowledge and skills to link with training and job opportunities. These will be tested on a pilot basis before wider implementation, which will most likely require government funding. An example of a successful VET program targeting high school youth has been run in Gladstone, Queensland (EQIP). Other examples of success nationwide, especially in the digital space, will also be explored.



The Coffs Harbour Innovation Centre (CHIC) currently at the SCU campus is a key component of the Coffs Harbour LGA and regional innovation ecosystem. CHIC is currently seeking government funding to establish an incubator/ accelerator program. These programs are designed to help improve the prospects of start ups by delivering a range of activities to develop the capabilities required to realise and grow their economic potential, and attract investors for future growth. This investment is usually the catalyst for expansion, and hence jobs growth. Council will continue to support CHIC both financially and in-kind.

The creative industries sector, specifically incorporating both digital businesses servicing the digital “content” industry (eg. film, gaming) and non-digital (eg. performing arts, graphic arts) plays an important role in the cultural fabric of the Coffs Harbour LGA economy. It contributes to place making, cultural tourism, and supports the creation of an innovation culture. Council will work with Creative Industry partners, (eg. Creative Industries Network, Arts Mid North Coast, Create NSW) to identify investment opportunities in this arena. This will contribute to Council’s support for the Creative Coffs Cultural Strategy 2017-2022, and regional creative arts programs.


GROW

The development of an innovation ecosystem will be a core platform for the future economic development of Coffs Harbour LGA. The LGA has a competitive advantage in this area, relative to other regional towns and cities. The challenge is to amplify the emerging entrepreneurial ecosystem by increasing investment that fosters the development of start ups. This can be done by leveraging important partner relationships to access funding opportunities at both a state and federal level. These funds can then be deployed to bring in specialist consultants, facilitators and suppliers from Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane on a more regular basis, and to contribute as mentors to local emerging businesses.

While much of the progress to date has been in the area of digital-related innovation, there is also a significant opportunity to promote non-digital innovation eg in the waste and recycling sector space.

The Digital Strategy for Coffs Harbour (previously called Switched On Coffs) should be refreshed to identify focused Action Plans which will support the objectives for this sector.

All the above opportunities will be addressed in a regionally collaborative manner, working constructively with neighbouring local government areas.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S6.1	Explore opportunities to secure State / Federal funding to further grow innovation thought leadership and technical skills in the digital and innovation space	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S6.2	Support the Coffs Harbour Innovation Centre to develop an incubator/ accelerator program	Partner	●	●	●	●	●
S6.3	Expand the 6 Degrees Co-working space footprint by rolling it out to Sawtell and other LGA precincts to broaden the uptake and participation in start up activities	Provider	●	●			
S6.4	Develop/ source and implement an entrepreneurship program for youth including high schools	Partner		●	●		
S6.5	Refresh the Coffs Harbour Digital Strategy Action Plans to support the use of digital technology within the LGA's economy.	Provider	●				

S6.6	Explore opportunities to support the Creative Industries Network	Partner	•	•	•	•	•
S6.7	Support implementation of the Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

7.0 Agri-food Economy

- Facilitate development of new and emerging enterprises
- Develop a strong food culture
- Develop a regional agri-food brand
- Develop an agri-food mini strategy
- Re-vitalise the Coffs Coast Growers Market
- Explore opportunities to value add to agricultural product
- Develop agri-tourism activities
- Advocate to diversify the agricultural base

The agri-food economy is a mainstay of the Coffs Harbour LGA economy. It accounts for 5% of jobs, and \$178m of annual exports. The main crop is blueberries, which account for 70% of agricultural output in the LGA, and 92% of the NSW blueberry production. The agri-food economy extends through the food value chain to include distributors, processors, retailers, and restaurant and food outlets.

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The current 'start-up' strategy offered through the 6 Degrees program can also be expanded to encourage a broader range of businesses and entrepreneurs (local and future local) who are looking to create businesses in the agri-food sector. These new businesses can also come from programs such as NEIS conducted locally by providers including ETC and Nortec who report up to 40% of participants are working on food related start-ups.

Council's strategy will be to assist existing Coffs Coast and regional businesses (both those currently involved in agri-business and those not involved) to identify and explore new opportunities not just to grow their current business, but also to create and invest in new areas of the agri-food industry. The annual Mid North Coast Food Forum, an initiative of Coffs Harbour City Council, will be expanded to continue its role as a forum for exchange of ideas and networking within the Coffs Harbour LGA and regional agri-food industry.



Developing a strong food culture is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the success of the regional agri-food economy. Council can play a role in working with other councils and partners in encouraging all parts of the value chain, including customers, to support each other.

Engagement with producers, distributors, value adders, retailers and commercial users (eg. tourism and hospitality) is required to develop a collaborative network committed to encouraging the preference and demand for locally produced food. To build supply and demand between local producers and local residents and visitors to the region, the strategy needs to address blockages in the regional supply chain, build and maintain consumer confidence in regional products, and increase yield and improve margins and supply links for producers.

There is a clear trend of heightened consumer interest in the quality and origins of food, with the authenticity of local food a key element to creating and satisfying market demand. The industry needs to tell its local region food story to highlight what makes it special and create connections between growers, distributors and consumers, and to grow understanding and confidence in local product. Sustainable food production, and environmentally sensitive agriculture techniques are becoming more significant in community discussions around this industry, and better industry communication is required.

By developing and utilising a Coffs Coast regional food brand in local food and food tourism marketing, provenance is clear to consumers and reinforces the link between product and place. This is important for both local trade and for tourism, where food can differentiate destinations in a competitive marketplace.

**GROW**

The long-established Coffs Coast Growers Market, organised and run by Coffs Harbour City Council, is an important opportunity for small producers and start ups in the agri-food space to showcase their products, and gain valuable market feedback. It also adds to economic vibrancy in the Coffs Harbour City Centre. The Market needs to be progressively transformed into more of an incubator for new businesses in agri-food and related products, by applying some of the start up principles developed over time from 6 Degrees and other entrepreneurial programs. Marketing and training support will be developed in conjunction with partners and provided to assist businesses to grow their offering.

**SCALE**

Recognising that the availability of agricultural land in the Coffs Harbour LGA is likely to remain a constraint to physical expansion, the sector needs to increase its ability to value-add (through processing, packaging, transport) to agricultural products. As technology moves into agriculture it is now cheaper to value-add to existing products. The industry needs to identify the trends, demand and efficiencies, as well as new methods of distribution available through online technologies. In addition, value added processing has potential to offer increased job opportunities.

Horticulture on the Coffs Coast and in the surrounding region has traditionally comprised smaller, family run farms rather than large broadacre crops (with the exception of the Costa Group in Upper Corindi). With the explosion in the demand for blueberries and the short turnaround time required to produce a viable crop, a number of these smaller farms have converted from crops such as bananas, avocados and macadamias to blueberries.

Other agricultural/on-farm activities and industries need to be explored to fully utilise the available land and to broaden the base of industry to mitigate for any potential adjustment in the blueberry industry. This will help build on the industry's focus on year-round crops, attracting both staff and visitors.

The Council will continue to support the industry and its partners in realising the significant export potential of this sector.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S7.1	Finalise and commence implementation of an agri-food mini-strategy for the Coffs Harbour LGA	Provider	●	●			
S7.2	Develop a comprehensive plan for Coffs Coast agri-food tourism, to promote a strong food culture	Provider	●	●			
S7.3	Identify suitable/future trending crops and agricultural activities with assistance from DPI and LLS and work to communicate these opportunities to farmers	Partner		●	●	●	●
S7.4	Develop a full listing of local food producers and sellers to identify opportunities for diversification	Provider		●			
S7.5	Explore the establishment of regional food co-operatives to increase strength in the market and centralise marketing and distribution	Advocate			●	●	
S7.6.	Develop an investment attraction package for food and agricultural businesses and their supply chain	Provider		●	●		
S7.7.	Create a Coffs Coast local food brand that can be used across multiple marketing platforms	Provider		●	●		
S7.8	Explore the opportunities for value-add to agricultural products	Advocate			●	●	●
S7.9	Continue to grow the Coffs Coast Growers Market as a showcase for sustainable regional produce	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S7.10	Expand the Mid North Coast Food Forum as an event for exchange of agri-food ideas and networking	Provider	●	●	●	●	●

8.0 Visitor Economy

- Implement the adopted Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020

SCALE

Tourism is one of the most significant economic sectors in Coffs Harbour, accounting for approximately \$490m of value added per annum. The sector draws an estimated 1.7 million visitors per annum. The sector is led by the Destination Coffs Coast Committee (DCCC), comprised of tourism industry and Council representatives from across the Coffs Coast (Coffs Harbour and Bellingen Shire LGAs).

In May 2016 Council adopted the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020 which lays out the industry's strategy for the next 5 years to 2020. A central element was the decision to position the Coffs Coast region using a nature-based strategy, and it also acknowledged the importance of both events and cultural tourism and the opportunities therein.

The strategy lays out detailed directions for destination management, destination development and destination marketing. The reader of this document is referred to the original [Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020](#). The key directions in the strategy are shown below:

Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020: Key Directions



Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S8.1	Implement the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

9.0 Advocate further sector development

- **Advocacy role for healthcare and social assistance, construction, advanced manufacturing, retail, logistics, transport sectors**

Council will also play a capacity-building role in supporting other sectors of the Coffs Harbour LGA economy. This will consist of advocacy to the NSW State and Federal governments on behalf of businesses, including advice on grant applications, training and investment opportunities.

Subject to resources, support will be provided to, amongst others, the following sectors:

- health care and social assistance
- construction
- advanced manufacturing
- retail
- logistics
- transport

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S9.1	Support capacity-building and advocate for the range of Coffs Harbour LGA economic sectors	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•

attract people to invest, work, live, study and visit

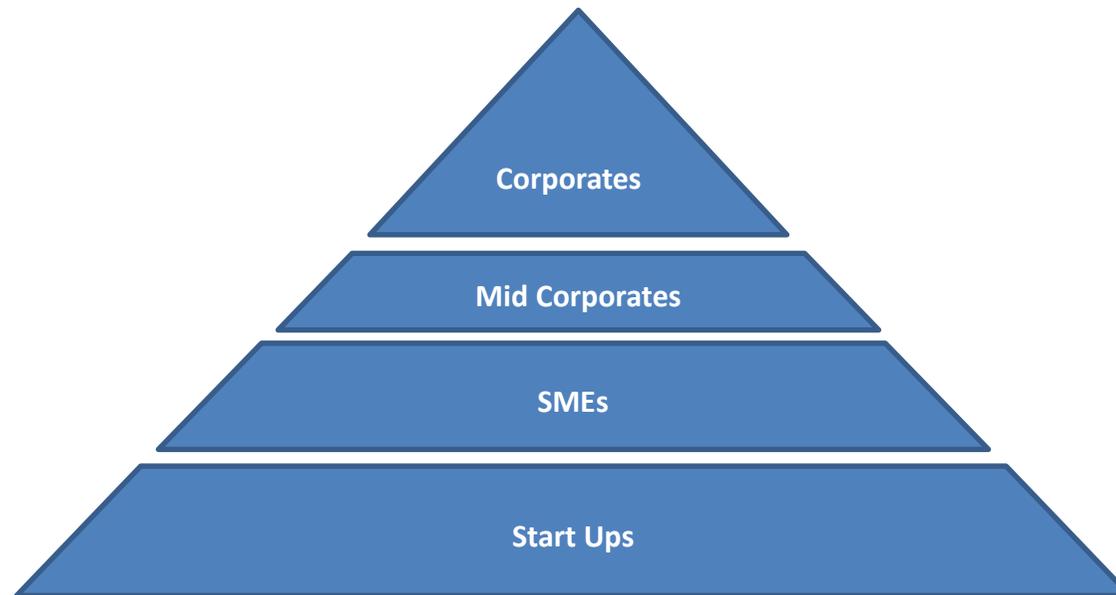
10.0 Investment attraction

- **Develop an investment prospectus, promote the benefits of relocating to Coffs Harbour for business investors and skilled workers**

The Coffs Harbour LGA operates in a competitive landscape with other investment options – for local and non-local investors alike. There appears to be a burgeoning interest in regional investment, and a significant amount of State funding available for infrastructural investment. The Coffs Harbour LGA needs to develop a focused approach to targeting desirable investment.

From both an effectiveness and a risk management perspective, it is desirable to adopt a multi-pronged, yet focused approach tailored to different segments:

- (1) **Corporates** - Larger investors – typically with requirements for a large footprint, preferably in growth (not sunset) industries like logistics, technology, health services, and pharmaceuticals. Air links and digital infrastructure, low occupancy costs, and lower wage costs will be important, as would be proximity to Southern Cross University and the Coffs Harbour Health Campus.
- (2) **Mid-Corporates** - medium sized investors – typically smaller corporates with 50-100 staff, for whom our strategic location between Sydney and Brisbane is important. These might include technology, logistics and aviation-related businesses which require the advantages listed above, but with a much smaller footprint.
- (3) **SMEs** – Small and medium sized enterprises – typically family-owned businesses, with <50 staff, which will service either a regional market (eg. Mid North Coast) or an interstate market, eg. Eastern Seaboard. Some of these might already be relatively local or regional.
- (4) **Start Ups** - Entrepreneurs, start-ups or micro-businesses – typically the founder – either looking to buy a business or start a business from home or a co-working space. This might be part of the residential relocation market (see below). In addition, some of these businesses might also already be relatively local or regional.



Essentially this approach reflects a **pyramid model**, with fewer, but higher value prospects at the top, who are also the most difficult to dislodge (this might require incentives, and long lead times). The further up the pyramid, the more difficult it will be to personally access decision makers, and a greater investment will be required to generate a qualified prospect. At the bottom of the pyramid, there is a greater volume of prospects, but of a lesser quality in terms of immediate economic benefit, but who are also much more mobile. For the latter group, soft benefits such as lifestyle, network and a supportive innovation ecosystem are very important. At the bottom of the pyramid, first contact is often at a personal level (eg. at a technology trade show like StartCon).

Given Council's level of resourcing, and the likely receptivity of each segment to the Coffs Harbour LGA offer, Council's approach should in the first instance be tailored to attract SMEs and Start Ups, and then ultimately Corporates and Mid-Corporates, once the LGA has built a track record of successfully attracting investment (using case studies).

Council needs to develop a series of investment packages which are tailored to the needs of the segments.

Each segment will require its own B2B marketing campaign, with digital media important in both, albeit of a different flavour (eg. LinkedIn vs Facebook). The initial part of the marketing campaign should be designed to learn as much as possible about the different segments and how they view the Coffs Harbour LGA.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S10.1	Develop investment prospectus targeting SMEs and Start Ups promoting the benefits of business in the LGA	Provider	●	●			
S10.2	Develop and execute pilot marketing campaigns for SMEs and Start Ups	Provider	●	●			
S10.3	Develop investment prospectus for Corporates and Mid-Corporates promoting the benefits of business in the LGA	Provider	●	●			
S10.4	Develop and execute marketing campaigns for Corporates and Mid-Corporates	Provider		●	●	●	●
S10.5	Produce a quarterly economic report on the LGA using publicly available research to assist investors	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S10.6	Attend Startcon and other relevant business-related expos to make personal contact with investors	Provider	●	●	●	●	●

11.0 Resident attraction

- **Develop and implement an integrated marketing plan, showcase the better opportunities and quality of life when moving to Coffs Harbour LGA**

The Coffs Harbour LGA needs population growth to deliver economic growth, as well as economies of scale in infrastructure and amenities.



Source: *My Coffs* pp 6-7

The Coffs Harbour LGA is well placed to attract Sea and Tree Changers from major cities, especially Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. Our nature-based regional lifestyle is a primary drawcard, supported by relatively affordable housing compared to metro areas, good education, health facilities and transport links. Digital infrastructure via the NBN is also important. The market for attracting new residents fleeing the high property prices and congestion in major cities is, however, extremely competitive.

The core target market is 25-44 year old couples and families [similar to the Visitor Attraction target market]. The current destination advertising collateral will thus be useful in terms of attracting attention and building awareness. This will be targeted at both skill gaps in growth sectors, and freelancers or the self-employed.

Council needs to develop a resident attraction prospectus on the LGA, including, but not limited to, one-stop information and assistance as well as information on important community, sport, active recreation and cultural facilities and programs on offer.

The international student market is an important potential export market for the Coffs Harbour LGA economy. Council will support and advocate for accredited education providers in this space.

This needs to be part of a comprehensive marketing programme, backed with logistical support to handle and direct enquiries and new resident welcome to Coffs Harbour LGA procedures and systems within Council, and in partnership with local businesses and agencies.

Council will also explore the potential opportunities to engage or support the ageing economy.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S11.1	Develop a Coffs Harbour LGA resident attraction prospectus, including digital	Provider	●				
S11.2	Develop a pilot marketing campaign to target Sydney metro areas including digital and face to face expos for relocation	Provider		●			
S11.3	Roll out a modified marketing campaign to Brisbane and the SEQ market	Provider			●		
S11.4	Roll out a modified marketing campaign to the Melbourne metropolitan market	Provider				●	
S11.5	Explore the opportunities to engage or support the ageing economy	Provider				●	

12.0 Visitor attraction

- **Implement destination marketing to key segments**

In May 2016 Council adopted the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020 which lays out the industry's strategy for the next 5 years to 2020. A central element was the decision to position the Coffs Coast region using a nature-based strategy, as referenced above.

The core target market for destination marketing has been identified as young couples and families aged 25-44 years who are nature-lovers, from Sydney metro, Brisbane metro and the Gold Coast, and Melbourne metro areas. The same demographic in regional NSW towns is an important secondary market.

This is the core target group for all Coffs Coast destination marketing activity across all media, including digital, social media, regional TV, magazine, and outdoor.

(Note: this is essentially the same target market for communications aimed at attracting new residents and entrepreneurs, which delivers some economies of scale, see above).

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S12.1	Implement the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

13.0 Event attraction

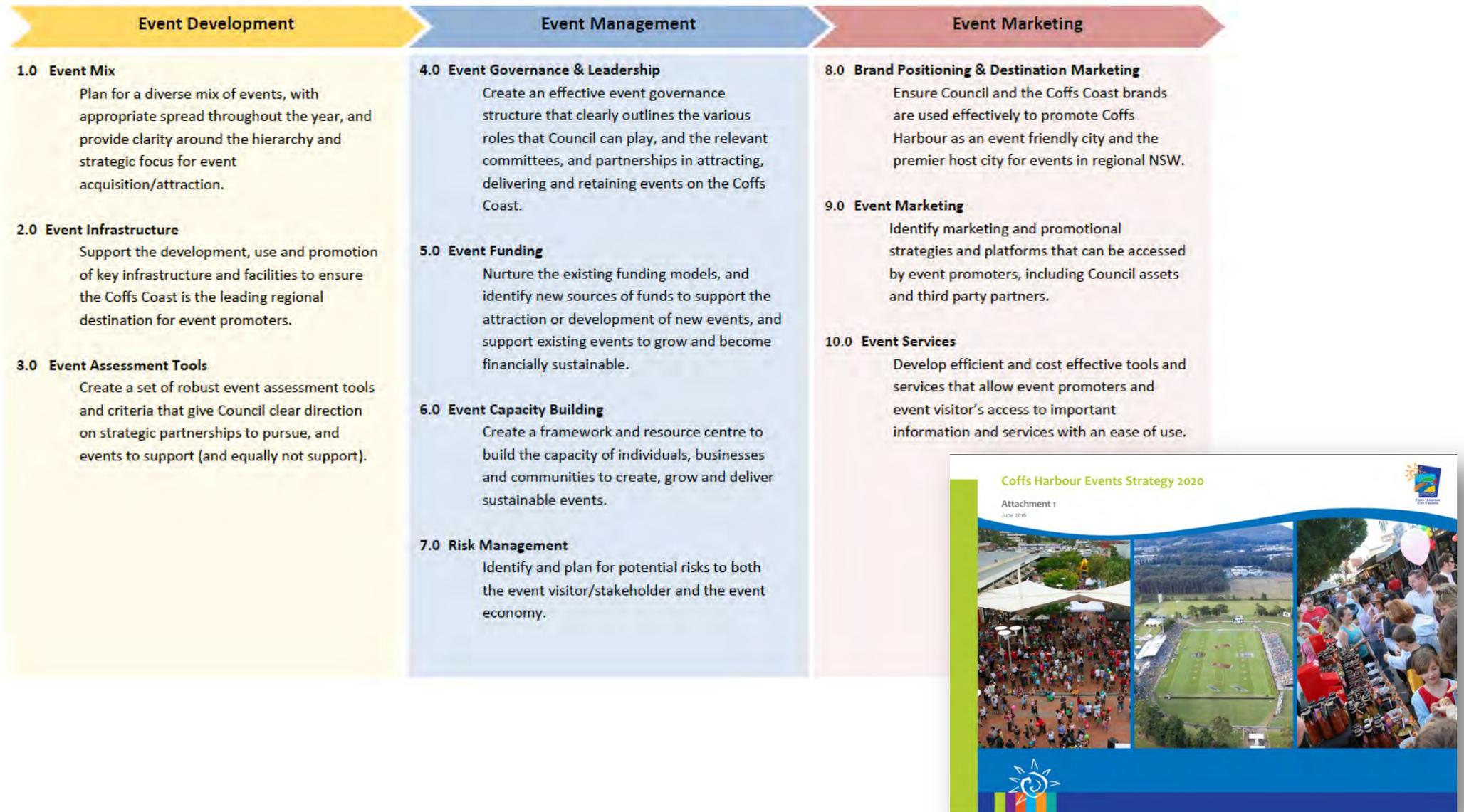
- **Implement the [Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020](#)**

Events play a major role in the economic prosperity of the Coffs Harbour LGA and the surrounding region. Event owners invest in the LGA, jobs are created and there are positive impacts in terms of accommodation and service demand in the tourism and broader visitor economy sectors. The visitors associated with events also help sustain amenity and economic infrastructure within the LGA.

Attracting new events and their retention within the Coffs Harbour LGA, in the light of a very competitive events attraction market, is a key point of economic leverage for the city. Sports tourism delivers more than \$35m value annually to the LGA economy. While the Coffs Harbour LGA is strong in this area, without investment to upgrade infrastructure (primarily the Coffs C.Ex Stadium, as per the Building an EPIC Stadium for the Future proposal), we may lose our competitive advantage. The key directions of the Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020 are shown below.

Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020: Key Directions

An effective events strategy must have clear direction and outcomes in order for it to be implemented successfully. Council has identified the following key directions that are reviewed in depth throughout this document, resulting in measurable strategic actions.



Strategic Actions	Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/212
S13.1 Implement the Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S13.2 Continue to seek funding for further infrastructure upgrades relevant to events, for example: C.ex Coffs International Stadium 'Building an EPIC Stadium for the Future' Coffs Coast Sport and Leisure Park Masterplan Jetty Foreshores stages 2-4 and 5-6 New Cultural and Civic Precinct at 23-31 Gordon Street including new Library, Gallery, Council administration/chambers and co-working space Coffs City Centre Masterplan including Brelsford Park Masterplan Woolgoolga WOW Masterplan Cultural facilities Parks & Reserves that are regularly used for event activation	Provider	●	●	●	●	●

14.0 Youth retention and attraction

- **Develop programs to enhance youth employment prospects and skills, focus on retention to increase workforce participation**
- **Attract young entrepreneurs to Coffs Harbour LGA**
- **Attract students to Coffs Harbour LGA**
- **Develop and implement digital knowledge, skills and entrepreneurship programs for youth**

Current and forecast demographic trends show a continual decline in the 18-24 year age group in the Coffs Harbour LGA and the surrounding region as they leave the area to pursue education and job opportunities in other regions (mainly Sydney, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Newcastle). While some do return from larger centres on completion of their education, many do not.

This dynamic presents a few challenges for the Coffs Harbour LGA:

- Lost retail spending power, resulting in fewer businesses catering for this segment, reinforcing the trend.
- An under-representation of youth in the community, resulting in a subtle bias in decision making towards the older age groups.
- A lack of youthful energy and vitality in the CBD and other important precincts in the LGA, in turn making the city less attractive for people in this age group.
- Fewer workers for service establishments especially in the food and tourism sectors.
- Lower workforce participation results in slower economic growth

Without a turnaround or deceleration of this trend, Coffs Harbour LGA, in line with many Australian communities, runs the risk of becoming a city dominated by the needs of the aged, which will ultimately have an impact on the nature of investment in the LGA.

The community (as referenced in *MyCoffs*) is concerned about the current lacklustre job prospects for young people in the LGA. At the same time a common complaint from local employers is that young people are ill-prepared for the modern workplace, in terms of both skills and culture.

Education partners and stakeholders as well as 'start up' business support programs have an opportunity to create career pathways directly into the food (including food tourism) and agricultural industries, and the emerging digital economy and creative industries for this age group in the LGA.

In addition, there is a need (previously mentioned above) to begin to build an innovation culture at high school level. The digital skills will increasingly become minimum requirements for many jobs, and will also assist students in any tertiary studies, while those with an entrepreneurial bent will benefit from an environment more supportive of self-employment as a valid career choice.

The challenge is multifaceted, and Council alone will not be able to deliver the required change. Council can, however, play a role in stimulating interest in this area, by working with like-minded partner agencies, including the State and Federal Governments, to facilitate programs aimed at high-school, school-leaving and other youth.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S14.1	Develop or source youth entrepreneurship programs, work with relevant partners (eg Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW, RDA) to pilot test these	Partner	•	•			
S14.2	Source and facilitate VET programs for youth, work with partners and industry mentors to pilot test these	Partner		•	•		
S14.3	Source and facilitate digital learning programs for youth, work with partners and industry mentors to pilot test these	Partner		•	•		
S14.4	Source and facilitate youth employment readiness programs, work with partners and industry mentors to test these	Partner		•	•	•	•
S14.5	Prepare and implement a marketing program aimed at attracting young entrepreneurs to Coffs Harbour LGA	Provider		•	•		
S14.6	Support Council place-making initiatives and growth strategies aimed at creating youth-friendly precincts	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•

prepare the future workforce

15.0 Educational and training advocacy

- **Partner with and support Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW and State and Federal government departments and agencies to ensure future workforce needs are identified and met**
- **Support development of young people with knowledge and skills to link them to further employment and economic opportunities**

In common with many areas on the NSW Mid North Coast, the Coffs Harbour LGA has a demographic and economic profile characterised by an under-representation of youth (18-24 years age group) in the LGA population, and high youth unemployment. The ageing population is also likely to remain economically active for longer periods than in previous generations. These are two generational dynamics influencing the future supply of the Coffs Harbour workforce.

Council has an important advocacy role in working in partnership with Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW, and State and Federal government departments and agencies to prepare Coffs Harbour's future workforce. A key challenge is to strategically join up the learning and action in schools, with training providers and universities through a holistic approach to address the workforce needs of the industry sectors identified above (digital and innovation, visitor economy, agri-food economy), and other sectors of the economy. This will take a holistic approach comprising formal and non-formal learning across ages and generations.

SCU, TAFE and the Coffs Harbour Educational Campus (CHEC) have a vital role to play in workforce training and preparation. The marine education and allied health areas, and the campus proximity and co-location in the Coffs Coast Sports and Leisure Park, are additional fertile areas for future collaboration.

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S15.1	Partner with and support Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW and other education providers in the LGA to advocate a holistic approach to LGA workforce planning and provision regarding the industry sectors identified (digital and innovation, agri-food, visitor economies)	Partner	●	●	●	●	●
S15.2.	Partner with Southern Cross University, NSW Health and others to leverage the learning opportunities around the facilities in specific precincts and sectors eg allied health, marine education, sports tourism and events.	Partner	●	●	●	●	●

measurement

To monitor the success of the identified strategies, regular monitoring and measurement of the actions and the goals of this strategy are vital.

My Coffs contains the following adopted measures of success (*My Coffs* p15):

Measuring our progress - A thriving & sustainable local economy		
Indicator	Measures	Desired Direction
WE CHAMPION BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY TO STIMULATE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND LOCAL JOBS	Employment figures Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR)	Increase
	Value of regional exports Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR)	Increase
	Gross Regional Product Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR)	Increase
	Value of agricultural production Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced	Increase
	Business vacancy rates Source: Coffs Harbour City Council	Decrease
WE ATTRACT PEOPLE TO WORK, LIVE AND VISIT IN THE COFFS HARBOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	% of our community 20-34 years old Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics	Greater than projected trend
	Tourism Visitor numbers Source: Coffs Harbour City Council	Increase
	Coffs Harbour local government area tourism Gross Regional Product Source: Coffs Harbour City Council	Increase
	Destination NSW investment in the Coffs Harbour local government area Source: Regional Cooperative Tourism Marketing Program; Regional Tourism Product Development Program; Regional Flagship Event Program	Increase

These* will be supplemented by the following measures of success for the Coffs Harbour Economic Development Strategy 2017 – 2022:

Measure (annual)	Source	Desired Direction
#start ups/ new businesses	ABR	Increasing
Labour force participation rate % **	NIEIR	Increasing
Dependency ratio %***	NIEIR	Stable, decreasing
Value of visitor economy (tourism and hospitality)	NIEIR	Increasing
Value of agricultural exports (\$m)	NIEIR	Stable, increasing
Investment: #DA's	CHCC	Increasing
Investment: # in business enquiry pipeline	CHCC	Increasing
Residents: # in resident enquiry pipeline	CHCC	Increasing

* Listed in *MyCoffs* p.15

** The labour force (persons employed or unemployed) expressed as a percentage of the population

*** Number of dependents per 100 people aged 15-64 years

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S16.1	Annual report on achievement of actions	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

implementation and timing

The table below summarises the key strategic actions identified through the *Coffs Harbour Economic Development Strategy 2017 - 2022* and the time frame anticipated for implementation.

1.0 Supporting Council-adopted infrastructure investment

Strategic Actions	Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S1.1 Support Council infrastructure investment decisions (eg. Airport Enterprise Park, EPIC Stadium, Cultural & Civic Precinct, others) through economic analysis and consultation	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•
S1.2 Champion investment to support the identified sectors in the EDS 2022: digital innovation, agri-food, tourism	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•
S1.3. Support feasibility study of Performance Arts Space	Provider	•	•	•		
S1.4 Provide for rollout of free public wi-fi in visitor- and start up - intensive precincts across the LGA	Provider	•	•	•	•	•
S1.5 Actively seek funding to improve public infrastructure	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•

2.0 Advocate for State and Federal Government infrastructure investment

Strategic Actions	Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S2.1. Explore the Federal Government 'Smart Cities Plan', identify opportunities for future 'City Deals'	Partner	•	•	•		
S2.2 Lobby the NSW State Government and the Commonwealth Government on behalf of the LGA about matters pertaining to economic development related infrastructure, to prioritise the Coffs Harbour LGA	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•
S2.3 Prepare and support submissions and Council grant applications that directly impact economic development in	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

	the LGA , to ensure the best possible chance for the Coffs Harbour LGA to benefit from State and Federal Government investment						
S2.4	Continue to advocate to NSW and Federal Governments for the earliest possible prioritisation of funding for the Coffs Harbour Bypass	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S2.5	Support RMS in preparation of the Coffs Harbour Bypass Business Case	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S2.6	Develop interim plan to mitigate congestion due to the delay in Coffs Harbour Bypass construction	Provider	●	●			
S2.7	Advocate to Federal Government and NBN Co to accelerate rollout of the NBN across the whole LGA	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●

3.0 Support Council Policy Development

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S3.1	Advocate for and support QBL sustainability principles and practices	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S3.2	Explore commercial opportunities in the waste management space	Provider	●	●	●		
S3.3	Support and contribute to Council policy development, land use and zoning which impacts on business and economic development	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S3.4	Continue to support the Small Business Friendly Council initiative, collaboratively identify areas for Council improvement and business engagement	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S3.5	Support the Local Growth Management Strategies (and sub-strategies)	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●
S3.6	Support the development of an Integrated Transport Plan	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●

4.0 Partner for investment

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S4.1	Partner with Federal Government and its agencies in investment opportunities	Partner	●	●	●	●	●
S4.2	Partner with NSW State Government and its agencies in investment opportunities	Partner	●	●	●	●	●
S4.3	Continue to develop partnerships with key stakeholders eg Chambers of Commerce, RDA, Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW	Partner	●	●	●	●	●

5.0 Place activation

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S5.1	Support Council place activation initiatives	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.2	Support implementation of Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.3	Support implementation of Coffs City Centre Masterplan, Woolgoolga Town Centre Masterplan	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.4	Support and facilitate creative expression and public space activation through art	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S5.5	Explore the development of a sustainable night time economy in key precincts	Provider		●	●	●	●

6.0 Digital and Innovation Economy

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S6.1	Explore opportunities to secure State / Federal funding to further grow innovation thought leadership and technical skills in the digital and innovation space	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S6.2	Support the Coffs Harbour Innovation Centre to develop an	Partner	●	●	●	●	●

	incubator/ accelerator program						
S6.3	Expand the 6 Degrees Co-working space footprint by rolling it out to Sawtell and other LGA precincts to broaden the uptake and participation in start up activities	Provider	●	●			
S6.4	Develop/ source and implement an entrepreneurship program for youth including high schools	Partner		●	●		
S6.5	Refresh the Coffs Harbour Digital Strategy Action Plans to support the use of digital technology within the LGA's economy.	Provider	●				
S6.6	Explore opportunities to support the Creative Industries Network	Partner	●	●	●	●	●
S6.7	Support implementation of the Creative Coffs Cultural Strategic Plan	Provider	●	●	●	●	●

7.0 Agri-food Economy

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S7.1	Finalise and commence implementation of an agri-food mini-strategy for the Coffs Harbour LGA	Provider	●	●			
S7.2	Develop a comprehensive plan for Coffs Coast agri-food tourism, to promote a strong food culture	Provider	●	●			
S7.3	Identify suitable/future trending crops and agricultural activities with assistance from DPI and LLS and work to communicate these opportunities to farmers	Partner		●	●	●	●
S7.4	Develop a full listing of local food producers and sellers to identify opportunities for diversification	Provider		●			
S7.5	Explore the establishment of regional food co-operatives to increase strength in the market and centralise marketing and distribution	Advocate			●	●	
S7.6.	Develop an investment attraction package for food and agricultural businesses and their supply chain	Provider		●	●		

S7.7.	Create a Coffs Coast local food brand that can be used across multiple marketing platforms	Provider		•	•		
S7.8	Explore the opportunities for value-add to agricultural products	Advocate			•	•	•
S7.9	Continue to grow the Coffs Coast Growers Market as a showcase for sustainable regional produce	Provider	•	•	•	•	•
S7.10	Expand the Mid North Coast Food Forum as an event for exchange of agri-food ideas and networking	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

8.0 Visitor Economy

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S8.1	Implement the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

9.0 Advocate further sector development

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S9.1	Support capacity-building and advocate for the range of Coffs Harbour LGA economic sectors	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•

10.0 Investment attraction

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S10.1	Develop investment prospectus targeting SMEs and Start Ups promoting the benefits of business in the LGA	Provider	•	•			
S10.2	Develop and execute pilot marketing campaigns for SMEs and Start Ups	Provider	•	•			
S10.3	Develop investment prospectus for Corporates and Mid-Corporates promoting the benefits of business in the LGA	Provider	•	•			

S10.4	Develop and execute marketing campaigns for Corporates and Mid-Corporates	Provider		•	•	•	•
S10.5	Produce a quarterly economic report on the LGA using publicly available research to assist investors	Provider	•	•	•	•	•
S10.6	Attend Startcon and other relevant business-related expos to make personal contact with investors	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

11.0 Resident attraction

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S11.1	Develop a Coffs Harbour LGA resident attraction prospectus, including digital	Provider	•				
S11.2	Develop a pilot marketing campaign to target Sydney metro areas including digital and face to face expos for relocation	Provider		•			
S11.3	Roll out a modified marketing campaign to Brisbane and the SEQ market	Provider			•		
S11.4	Roll out a modified marketing campaign to the Melbourne metropolitan market	Provider				•	
S11.5	Explore the opportunities to engage or support the ageing economy	Provider				•	

12.0 Visitor attraction

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S12.1	Implement the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

13.0 Event attraction

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/212
S13.1	Implement the Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
S13.2	Continue to seek funding for further infrastructure upgrades relevant to events, for example: C.ex Coffs International Stadium 'Building an EPIC Stadium for the Future' Coffs Coast Sport and Leisure Park Masterplan Jetty Foreshores stages 2-4 and 5-6 New Cultural and Civic Precinct at 23-31 Gordon Street including new Library, Gallery, Council administration/chambers and co-working space Coffs City Centre Masterplan including Brelsford Park Masterplan Woolgoolga WOW Masterplan Cultural facilities Parks & Reserves that are regularly used for event activation	Provider	●	●	●	●	●

14.0 Youth retention and attraction

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S14.1	Develop or source youth entrepreneurship programs, work with relevant partners (eg Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW, RDA) to pilot test these	Partner	●	●			
S14.2	Source and facilitate VET programs for youth, work with partners, business and industry mentors to pilot test these	Partner		●	●		
S14.3	Source and facilitate digital learning programs for youth, work with partners and industry mentors to pilot test these	Partner		●	●		
S14.4	Source and facilitate youth employment readiness	Partner		●	●	●	●

	programs, work with partners and industry mentors to test these						
S14.5	Prepare and implement a marketing program aimed at attracting young entrepreneurs to Coffs Harbour LGA	Provider		•	•		
S14.6	Support Council place-making initiatives and growth strategies aimed at creating youth-friendly precincts	Advocate	•	•	•	•	•

15.0 Educational and training advocacy

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S15.1	Partner with and support Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW and other education providers in the LGA to advocate a holistic approach to LGA workforce planning and provision regarding the industry sectors identified (digital and innovation, agri-food, visitor economies)	Partner	•	•	•	•	•
S15.2.	Partner with Southern Cross University, NSW Health and others to leverage the learning opportunities around the facilities in specific precincts and sectors eg allied health, marine education, sports tourism and events.	Partner	•	•	•	•	•

16.0 Measurement

Strategic Actions		Role	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
S16.1	Annual report on achievement of actions	Provider	•	•	•	•	•

Conclusion

The Coffs Harbour Economic Development Strategy 2017 – 2022 (EDS 2022) process has identified the following:

- There are numerous economic growth opportunities for the Coffs Harbour LGA.
- The LGA needs to build on, and diversify its base beyond the traditional areas of strength: agri-food (specifically blueberries), construction and tourism.
- The development of a significant digital technology sector and enhanced digital capabilities across all businesses is central to a successful transition from a regional town to a more sophisticated regional city which offers a wide range of services, commercial and job opportunities.
- Digital has now become mainstream and “business as usual” rather than merely an appendage to economic development and the creation of jobs.
- Council has a role to play in investment attraction.
- The retention and attraction of younger people to remain or live in the Coffs Harbour LGA is an essential ingredient in diversifying the economic base. Their involvement in the economy will mitigate the economic downsides of an ageing population, and will open up new opportunities to drive economic growth and create jobs.
- The strategy to attract and retain youth will need to be accompanied by a multifaceted approach, including place and precinct activation.
- Attracting people to the Coffs Harbour LGA – whether they be investors, new residents, skilled workers, students or visitors – will be another vital element of the successful development of the LGA.
- The strategic action plans outlined in this document will ensure Council is able to contribute positively to the economic prosperity of the Coffs Harbour LGA.
- Properly applied, these plans will guide resource allocation and investment decisions, in both Council activities and its partners in the community.
- The successful implementation of this strategy will rest on the support of Coffs Harbour LGA businesses and the wider community.

The concerted implementation of this economic development strategy will contribute positively to achieving *My Coffs* community vision of our city as a place which is:

Connected, Sustainable and Thriving

Notes

Notes

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