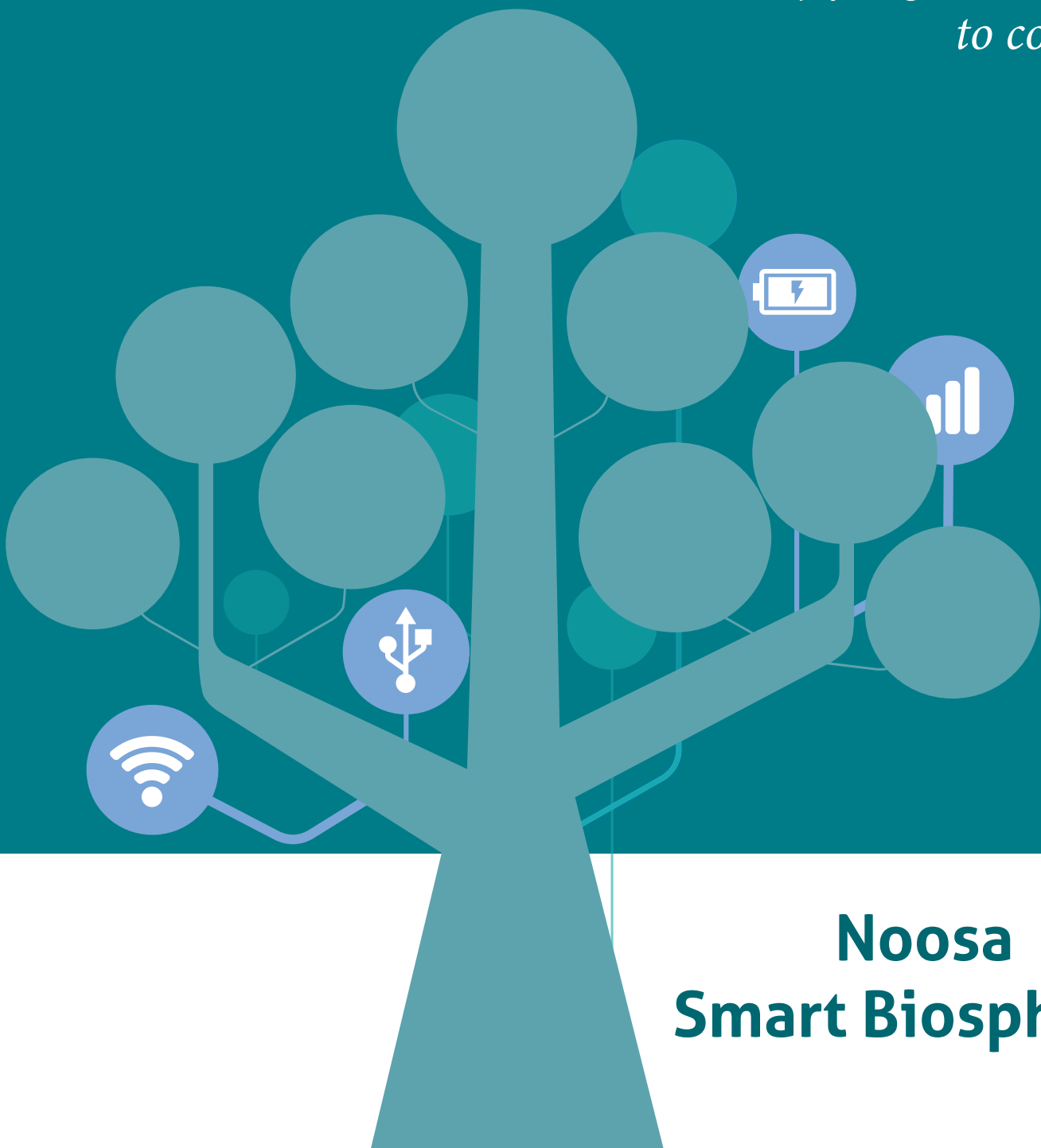


# Noosa Shire Economic Development Strategy 2021-2030

*“A dynamic and resilient  
economy for generations  
to come.”*



**Noosa  
Smart Biosphere!**



## **Acknowledgement of Country**

Noosa Council would like to respectfully acknowledge the Kabi Kabi people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters that form the region we call Noosa. Council pays its respects to elders past, present and future and welcomes the ongoing role that indigenous people play within the Noosa community.

Council wishes to thank all interested stakeholders who have provided their time and energy to help guide the development of this strategy.

## **Disclaimer**

Information contained in this document is based on available information at the time of writing. All figures and diagrams are indicative only and should be referred to as such. This is a strategic document which deals with technical matters in a summary way only. Council or its officers accept no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting in reliance upon any material contained in this document.

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Noosa Shire is located in South East Queensland, approximately 120 kilometres north of Brisbane. The region is bounded by the Gympie local government area in the north and west, and the Sunshine Coast local government area in the south. The Shire encompasses a total land area of 871 sq. km with more than 800 kilometres of roads and nearly 450 kilometres of bikeways. In recognition of Noosa's outstanding values and approach to sustainability, Noosa Shire and its

coastal waters was designated as a Noosa Biosphere® Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) under the Man and the Biosphere Program in 2007.

Noosa is located 30 minutes from the Sunshine Coast Airport, 1.5 hours from the Brisbane Airport and 1 hour 45 minutes from the Port of Brisbane.

# One Page

# Strategy

*This Economic Development Strategy clarifies the aims, objectives and outcomes sought locally within the context of environmental stewardship. It will guide the effort of Council and particularly the Economic Development team whose work seeks to heighten the profile of economic issues, support appropriate business growth, scope out sustainable development opportunities, and nurture conditions conducive to business success in Noosa Shire*

**This Summary Section is designed as a stand-alone piece that provides a high level summary of Economic Development Strategy.**

*Noosa Council's vision is "Noosa: different by nature".*

Historically, the Noosa community has chosen a different path to many other areas from an environmental conservation and destination management perspective and today we are realising the benefits.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognised Noosa's values and approach to sustainability, when it designated the Shire and our coastal waters as a Biosphere Reserve under its Man and the Biosphere Programme in 2007. Noosa Council has strategic oversight of the Noosa Biosphere® and supports the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation in its undertaking of significant innovative conservation and economic sustainability projects.

People visit and fall in love with Noosa's pristine beaches, national parks, lack of city symbols, open spaces, low scale development, the connection between the built and natural environment, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status, the high level of services offered by local businesses and the lifestyle that these elements enable.

Noosa has over time attracted an agglomeration of skilled and talented people - entrepreneurs, remote workers, investors and a myriad of leading edge experts forging development in their field of technical expertise.

COVID-19 has accelerated this. The result is a spike in inward migration from capital cities (particularly Melbourne and Sydney), to safe lifestyle orientated regional areas such as Noosa.

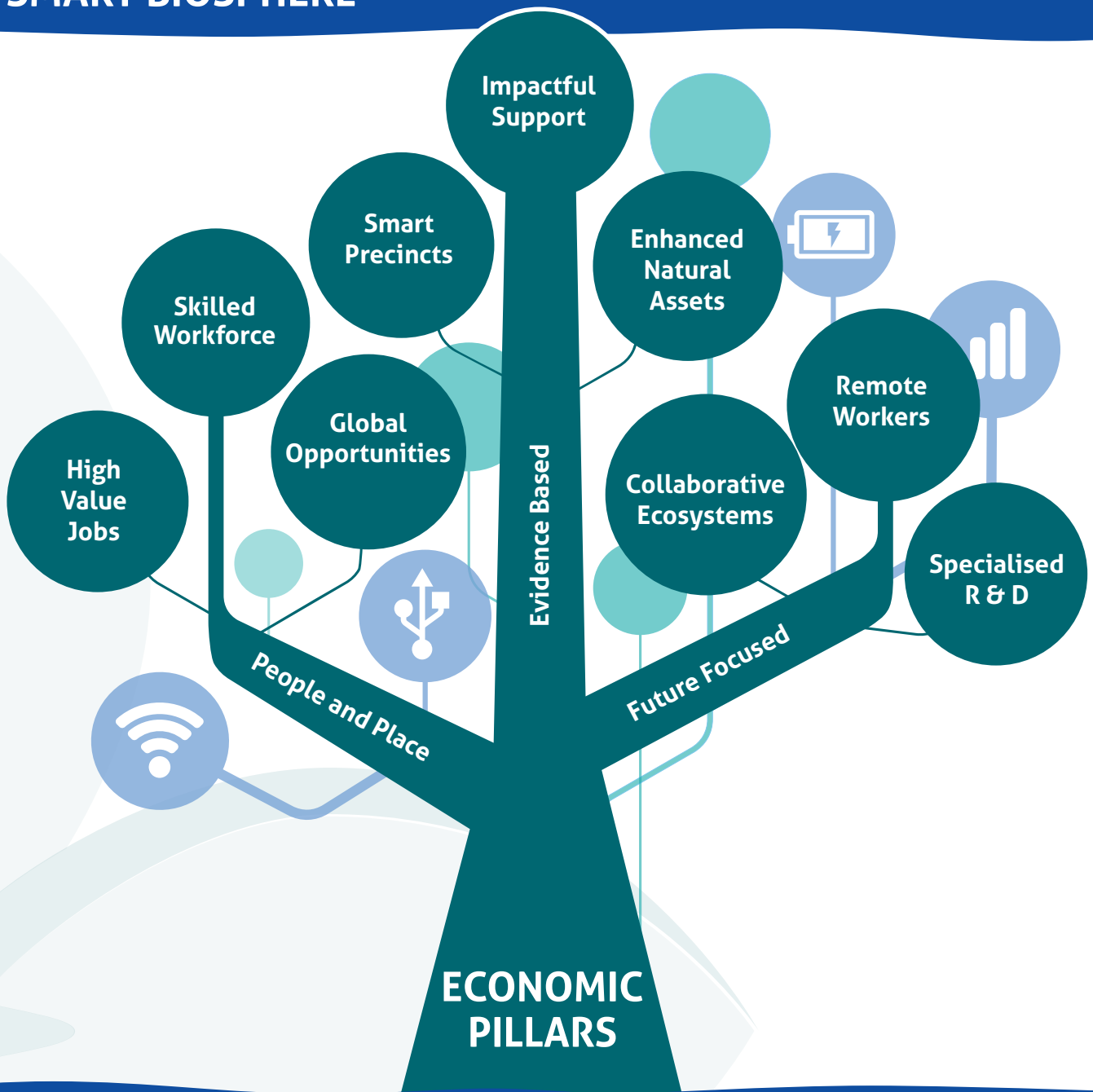
In the absence of population driven economic growth and an unwavering commitment to thoughtful management of our destination for locals and visitors, Noosa is focused on developing the means to generate economic activity that supports higher export of goods and services and/or the replacement of imports, is sustainable and low environmental impact and is future focused.

Technology has had a significant impact on the Noosa economy over the past 20 years and will continue to. Additionally the impacts of Covid-19 are expected to have a significant influence on the economic environment now, and into the future.

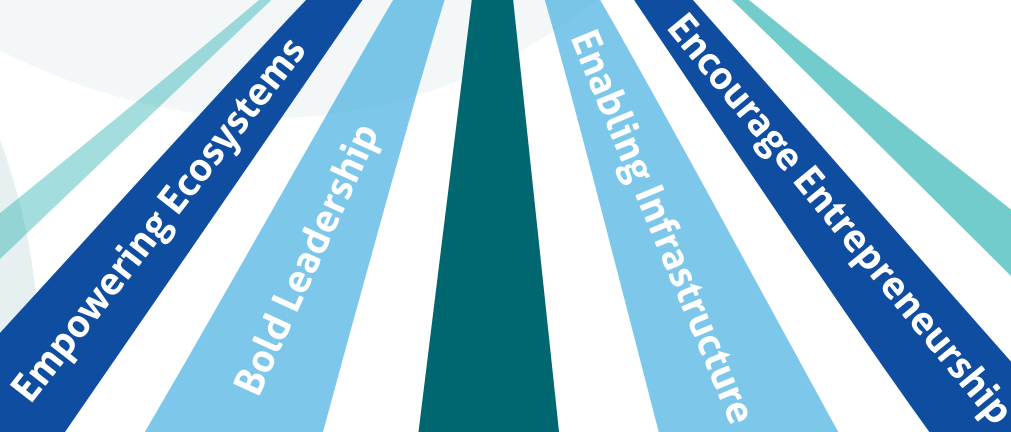
Council is committed to pursuing a robust, diverse and resilient local economy that recognises the importance of skilled and talented people; has the necessary infrastructure to accelerate employment growth; supports the sustainability of businesses, industries and technologies; and creates a sustainable business environment that provides a range of diverse employment opportunities.

Our new economic vision seeks to transition to a "Smart Biosphere".

# SMART BIOSPHERE



# GROWTH ENABLERS



# Table of Contents

One Page Strategy	4
2. Introduction & Background	7
3. The Planning and Policy Context	9
3.1. Council's Corporate Plan	9
3.2. Noosa Planning Scheme (Noosa Plan 2020)	10
3.3. Council & Economic Development Role	11
4. The Economic Context	12
4.1. The Noosa Economy	12
4.2. Key Statistics	15
4.3. Key Facts and Trends	16
4.4. Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities	18
4.5. Factors & Trends Influencing Our Future	22
5. Economic Development Strategy	23
5.1. Value Proposition – People and Place	23
5.2. Economic Development Framework	24
5.3. What is a Smart Biosphere?	25
5.4. Economic Pillars	26
5.5. Economic Growth Enablers (Summary)	27
5.6. Economic Growth Enablers (Detailed)	28
5.6.1. Bold Leadership - Economic Development	28
5.6.2. Empowering Business Ecosystems	29
5.6.3. Enabling Infrastructure	31
5.6.4. Encouraging Entrepreneurship and Innovation	32
5.7. Outcomes & Benefits	33
5.8. Engagement & Stakeholders	34
5.9. Implementation, Monitoring & Reporting	35

# 2

## Introduction & Background

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The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognised Noosa's values and approach to sustainability, when it designated the Shire and our coastal waters as a Biosphere® Reserve under the Man and the Biosphere Program in 2007. Noosa Council has strategic oversight of the Biosphere and supports the Noosa Biosphere Reserve® Foundation in its undertaking of significant innovative conservation and economic sustainability projects.

These strengths also form the basis of our economy as people travel from all over the world to enjoy Noosa's natural, urban and hinterland environments. Many business owners and skilled and talented people have moved to Noosa after experiencing the area as a visitor.

Previous Economic Development Strategies have pursued economic diversification to build a more resilient economy that looks beyond tourism and population driven economic growth. This approach continues to resonate with the community and this strategy builds on the success of the previous Local Economic Plan. This strategy focuses on the next evolution of economic development in Noosa and provides a greater concentration on areas where we have a distinct competitive advantage, to embrace innovation, accelerate industry development and benefit from potential opportunities.

*"If you don't have a competitive advantage, don't compete."*

Jack Welsh  
former CEO of General Electric.

*(Note: Competitive Advantage - a competitive advantage is the attribute that allows an organization to outperform its competitors)*

## Noosa



## Smart Biosphere!

Core elements of previous Noosa Council Economic Strategies that resonate with the community have been retained in this strategy; including:

- The desire to strive towards a more diversified and resilient local economy focused on knowledge-based and high-value sectors of the economy i.e. “value, not volume”.
- Achieving growth in ‘smart’ industry sectors that have high economic value and at the same time have low environmental impact, where there is a competitive advantage.
- Being globally connected and with a particular focus on products and services that can be exported outside the region.
- An appreciation of, and strong commitment to maintaining and protecting the quality of our natural assets as an underlying driver for much of the investment and economic activity in the Shire

The world has changed since the last strategy was adopted in 2016 and there are a number of factors that have a significant influence on the economic environment, now and into the future: These factors present both opportunities and challenges to the resilience of our economy and include:

- Rapidly changing technology (Industry 4.0)
- A highly mobile workforce
- The unpredictable nature of COVID-19
- The emerging challenges of talent, workforce availability and accommodation shortages.

*The rate of change calls for an unwavering focus on initiatives dedicated to evolving the Noosa economy to be sustainable and resilient, ready for any future.*

This strategy aims to respond to the call to action in a targeted and innovative way.



### Definition of Economic Development

*“The sustainable increase of living standards that deliver higher incomes, better education, health and well-being as well as environmental protection resulting from conscious and applied effort. At its core economic development is about improving the quality of life experienced in your community.”*

*LGAQ Economic Development Guidelines 2020 handbook*



# 3

## The Planning and Policy Context

### 3.1 Council’s Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan communicates Council’s purpose and defines Council’s role - “Working with our community to shape Noosa Shire’s future”.

While the Corporate Plan is best viewed in its entirety, it has a clear focus on the economy and a goal for the economy to become more diverse and resilient (as highlighted below).

#### CORPORATE PLAN THEME 3 - THE NOOSA ECONOMY

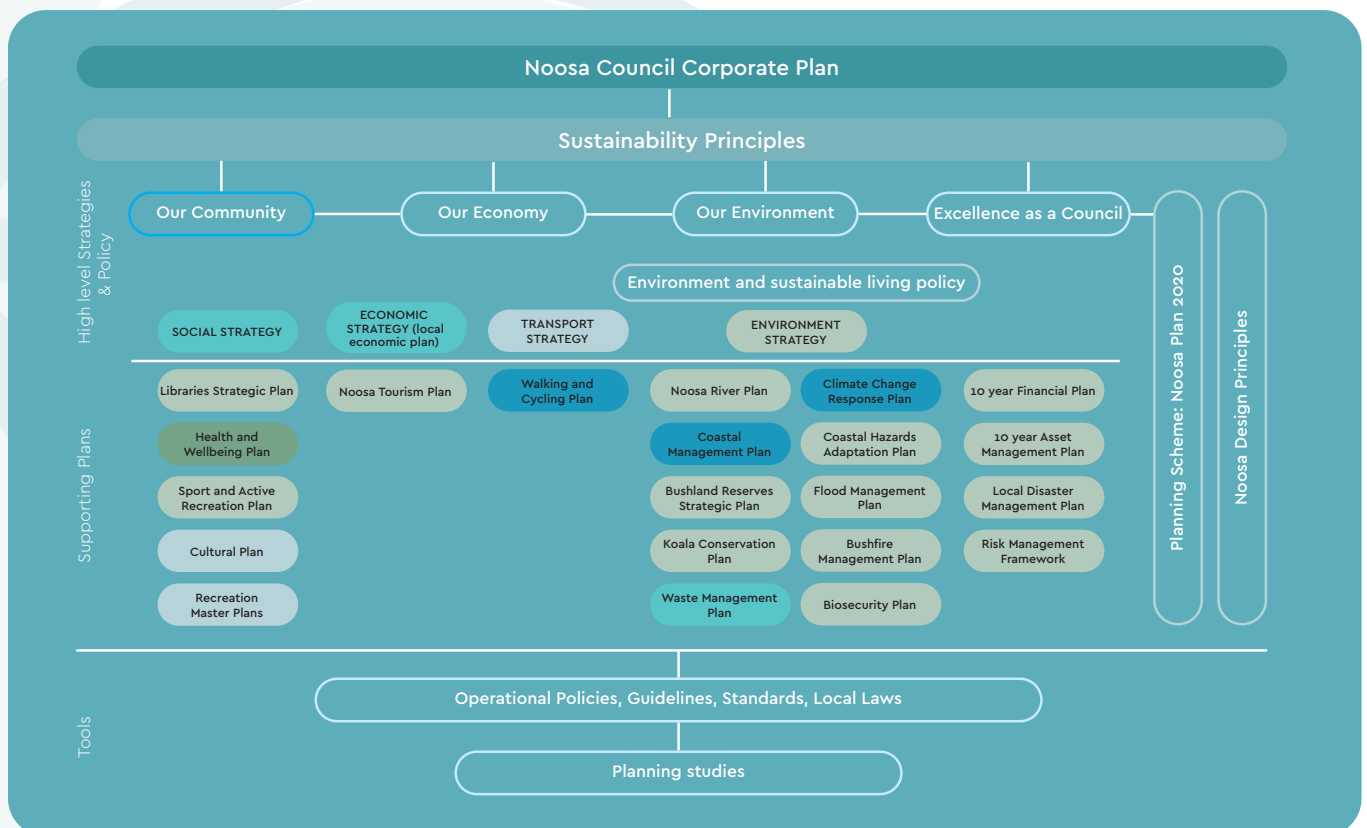
20 Year Goal - Our Economy is diverse and resilient

#### KEY FOCUS AREAS

- Implement the Noosa Local Economic Plan
- Provide support for a sustainable tourism sector
- Develop programs to foster growth in key industry sectors by working collaboratively
- Support the growth of our education and research sector

Council has a number of key principles, plans and strategies that support the Corporate Plan and provide residents and commercial operators with clear insight into Council’s strategic goals and key priorities that seek to deliver an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable Noosa. The Economic Development Strategy is one of these strategies sitting alongside the Noosa Planning Scheme (Noosa Plan 2020), the Environment, Social and Transport Strategies.

### Noosa Council Policy Framework



## 3.2 Noosa Planning Scheme (Noosa Plan 2020)

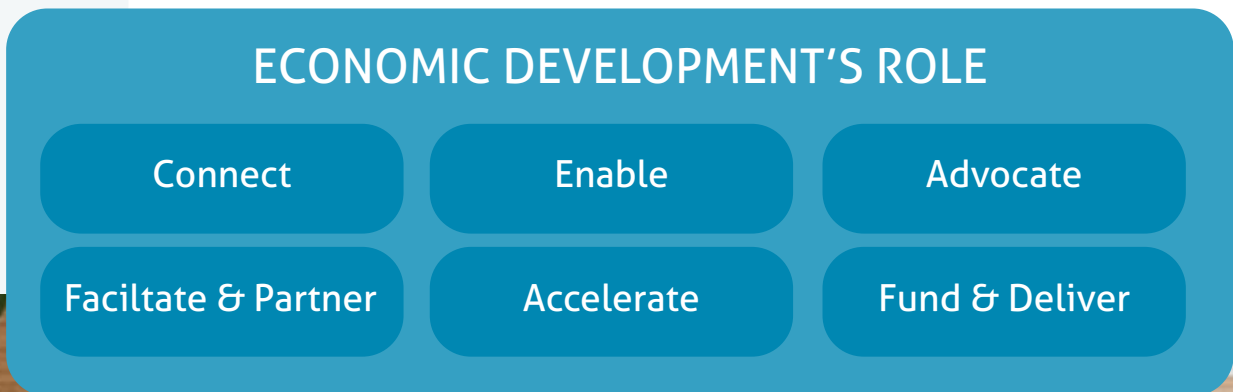
The strategic outcomes sought by the Noosa Planning Scheme for economy and employment by 2041 are:

<b>RESILIENT ECONOMY</b>	Noosa's economy is diverse and resilient and development supports both established and emerging priority industry sectors by providing business growth pathways.
<b>FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT</b>	Development supports positive business outcomes that are aligned with Noosa's point of difference and the 'Noosa Brand' and is focused around high levels of amenity, natural character and environmental sustainability.
<b>LOW IMPACT</b>	Development is encouraged that caters for industries with high economic yield and low environmental impacts, and where sustainable practices are the norm.
<b>SMART INDUSTRIES</b>	Smart, innovative and sustainable businesses and industries are promoted and provided for, which are responsive to new technologies and changing market conditions.
<b>DIVERSE BUSINESSES</b>	Noosa's diversified economy is underpinned by a complementary mix of business activities that support new technologies, new enterprises, new ways of doing business and flexible work arrangements. Opportunities for affordable workspaces, convenient work from home enterprises, shop-top housing and co-working spaces are encouraged. This includes providing a variety of business spaces that allow for natural growth from home-based businesses to small premises and then to larger premises.
<b>BUSINESS CLUSTERS</b>	Co-location and industry clusters with flexible shared floor space and enterprise precincts are encouraged as they provide an opportunity to create hubs of creativity and support new business needs of the future.
<b>MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT</b>	Employment areas, education/ training and mixed-use developments are provided to meet the needs of the current and next generation.
<b>ACTIVITY CENTRES</b>	Activity centres are vibrant hubs of activity with appropriate mixed uses creating diverse enterprise and housing opportunities, as well as access to good transport, community services and well-connected fast communication and digital services.
<b>ENHANCED IDENTITY</b>	Buildings and spaces further enhance the individual sense of identity, character, role and function of centres.
<b>WELL-DESIGNED SPACES</b>	Centres provide well designed spaces for community interaction and vitality and include high levels of streetscape appeal, outdoor meeting areas, and effective interface between public spaces and private development, consistent with the Noosa Design Principles.
<b>INCLUSIVITY</b>	Development provides non-discriminatory accessibility to open space, community uses and business developments.
<b>INCOMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT</b>	Coal exploration, coal mining, coal seam gas exploration or coal seam gas production within the Shire are not supported due to associated environmental and social impacts and incompatibility of such activities with Noosa's natural assets and lifestyle.

In many ways, the Planning Scheme sets desired outcomes for the Shire for its economy, while the Economic Development Strategy sets a direction and outlines the priorities for investment and action to achieve the desired sustainable growth and development.

### 3.3 Council & Economic Development Role

Council has a variety of roles across the community and the economy and many of these align to the role of Economic Development as highlighted in the following diagrams.



# 4

## The Economic Context

### 4.1 The Noosa Economy

The vibrant Noosa economy has experienced consecutive growth for most of the last twenty years. This growth has been largely due to the desirability of our unique destination as a place to live, work, visit and connect, and driven by the high level of awareness of the Noosa brand. This brand evolved from a strong history of environmental protection thanks to history of strong leadership and a community committed to the environment and sustainability.

By design, population growth in the Noosa Shire is much lower than many areas in the State and South East Queensland, where economic growth is due in a large part to high rates of population growth. To date in the Noosa Shire, the rate of economic growth has been above that of population growth. To support the continuation of this trend we are seeking economic growth from high value, low environmental impact and knowledge based industry sectors.



While the economy has performed well over time, it has been traditionally reliant upon tourism, retail and the construction industry, all of which can (and have) experienced volatile swings up and down. The traditional desire to encourage a more diverse economy has paid off with other sectors including healthcare and professional business services increasing greatly over recent years.



Even with these gains, our community has median income levels below the State average and pockets of high socio-economic disadvantage. We have an older population where the average age is increasing at a faster rate than the rest of the State. This can have positive and negative effects on the economy. The negative effects focus around a declining workforce, lower birth rates and high service's needs. The positive, in OECD countries where retirement incomes are higher, this can translate to higher spend.

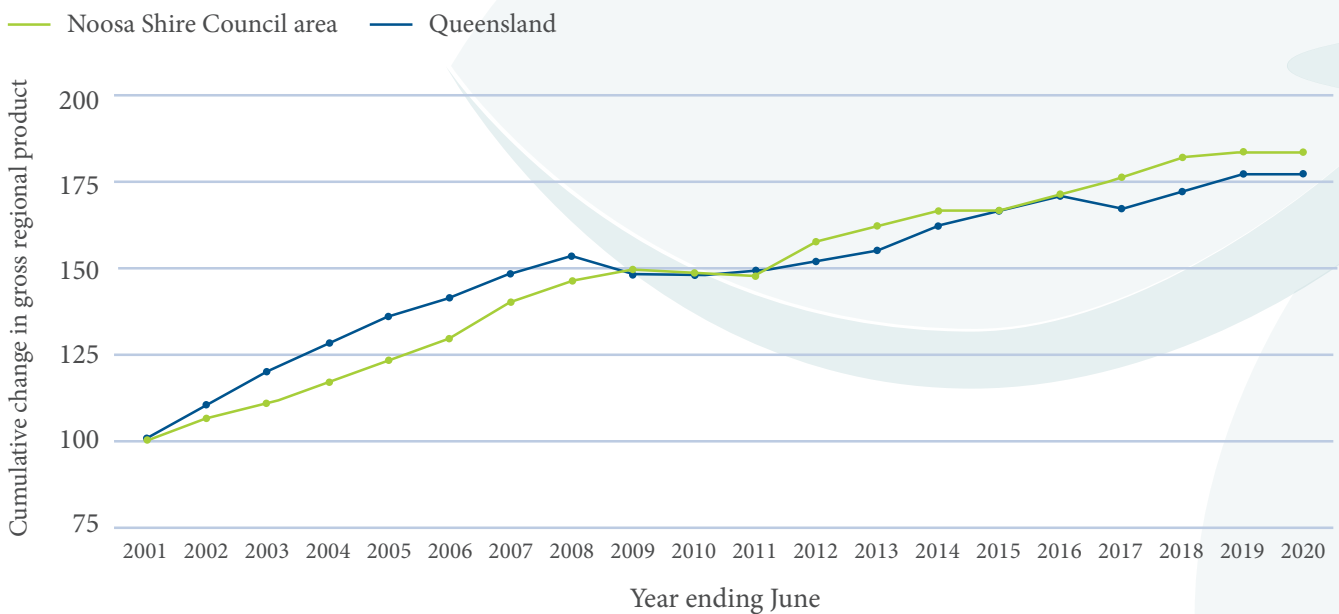


The housing market has boomed recently as record numbers of residents relocate from Melbourne and Sydney as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Housing prices have increased rapidly, affordability has declined significantly (double the house price to income ratio of the State) and residential vacancies have been below 1% for most of 2021. Some businesses are reporting staff shortages, while at the same time experiencing strong trading conditions.

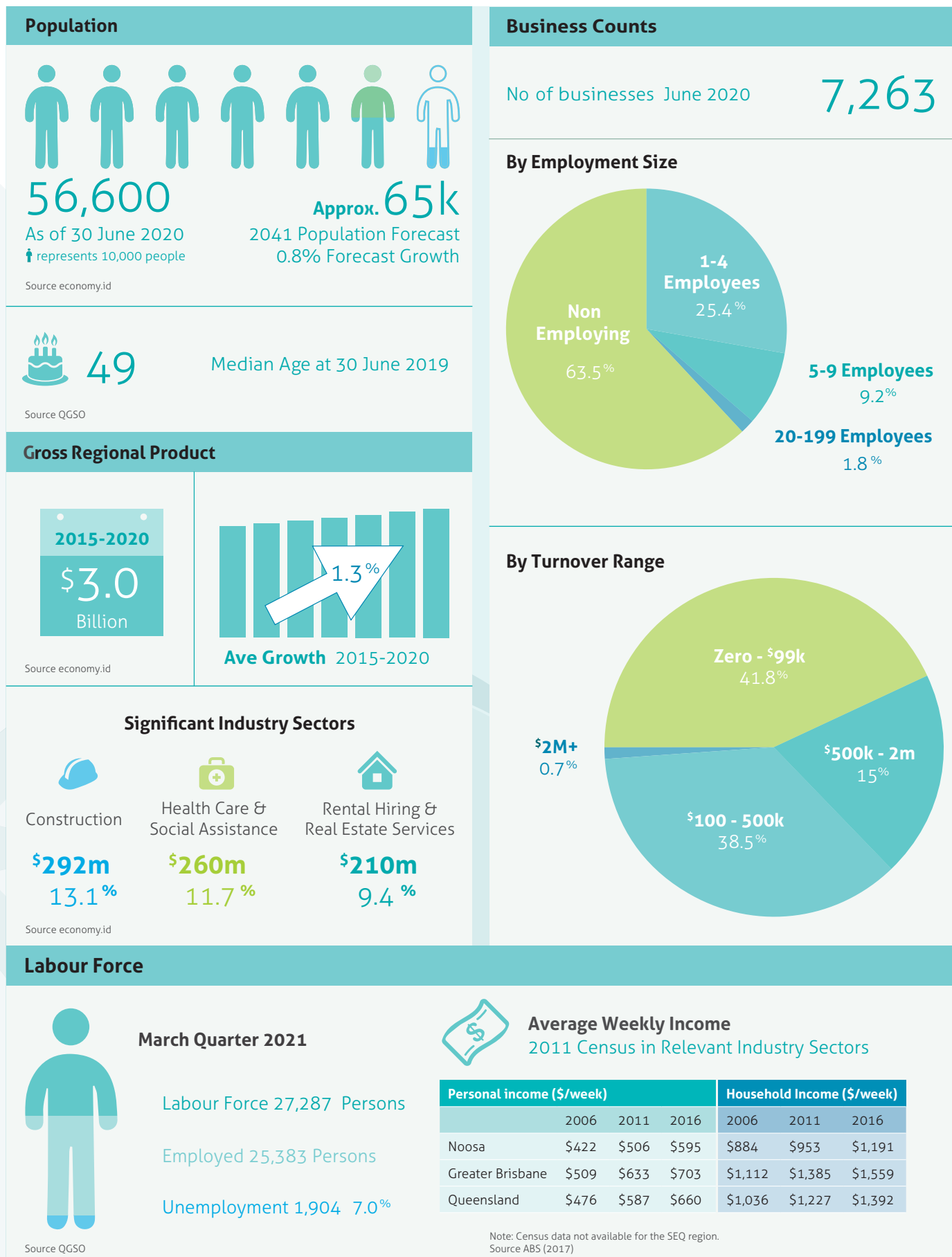


## Cumulative change in Gross Regional Product

Noosa Shire Council area



## 4.2 Key Statistics



## 4.3 Key Facts and Trends



The Noosa region's median weekly personal and household income levels were both significantly lower than the Queensland medians from 2006 to 2016. This is likely due to Noosa's reliance on the local tourism sector (retail trade and accommodation and food services), which is generally a lower paying sector for workers. On a positive note, average annual growth in household median weekly income from 2011-2016 in the Noosa region (4.6%) was stronger than the Queensland (2.6%) average.



Historically the Noosa economy has been driven by population and tourism growth. However, given the slower population growth that Noosa has experienced when compared to the state average, economic growth will need to come from other sources such as increased investment in the high value industry sectors and / or the adoption of improved technology.



Noosa has an older population that is ageing at a faster rate than the rest of the State and is projected to see an increase in the proportion of residents aged 65 years and over through to the year 2041. This equates to residents aged 65 years and over being expected to increase between 2016 and 2041 by 8,850 residents, a 70% increase on 2016 levels. It is unclear how the recent growth in population will affect this equation. This presents opportunities for the provision of care and support services to older people, but has workforce implications for employers. <https://profile.id.com.au/rda-sunshine-coast/age-sex-pyramid?WebID=100>



Construction has long been the largest contributing sector to GRP but has had some volatility over time. Another interesting trend is the strong growth of the healthcare industry over the last three years, growing at an average annual rate of 7.4% during this time. Professional services has also demonstrated strong growth over the last five years, growing at an average annual rate of 3.1%.



Noosa has a much higher proportion of employment in accommodation and food services, retail trade and construction compared to Queensland. Healthcare and social assistance is also a key employing sector. In terms of economic development, growing high value-adding jobs will have greater benefit to the overall economy than increases in low value-adding jobs due to a greater ability to spend more in the local economy and increased flow on effects. This does not mean that lower value-adding jobs are not important, however understanding the balance should guide the balance of effort and resources.



The Noosa economy is dominated by small businesses (98.2% of all businesses have 19 employees or fewer). This structure is similar to most regional economies in Australia. Most of the top industries by number of businesses (construction, 'rental, hiring and real estate' and professional services) are typical industries where there is a great number of individual traders, owner/operators and small businesses.



Land zoned for business and industry is a finite resource in the Noosa Shire. Demand for business premises is reported to be at an all-time high. This demand is expected to accelerate the development of remaining sites.



The Noosa housing market has been growing at an extremely rapid pace, making it one of the fastest growing markets in Queensland. In 2020, house prices grew by a staggering 11.6% from 2019, representing the single largest annual increase over the last 15 years. The median house price in Noosa is well above Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast, demonstrating the strength of the market and the high level of appeal that the community has from buyers. The high growth in median house prices is linked to a phenomenon of various households leaving 'the City'. This trend has accelerated following the increase in 'work-from-home arrangements' resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Given Noosa's high housing prices but below average household incomes, housing affordability has intensified as an ongoing issue for the region, impacting on workforce availability particularly in tourism and hospitality related sectors. Analysis shows that the house price to income ratio (median house price divided by the median annual household income) for Noosa has increased from 9.6 in 2016 to 12.0 in 2020. This is almost twice the house price to income ratio for Queensland in 2020 (6.2).

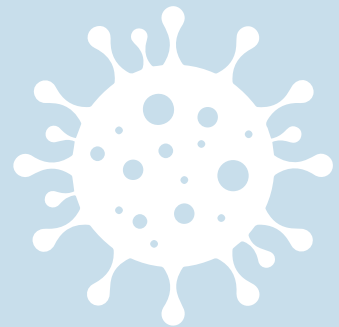


## 4.4 Factors & Trends Influencing Our Future

Technology has had a significant impact on the Noosa economy over the past 20 years as demonstrated below, and will continue to in future. Additionally the impacts of Covid-19 are expected to have a significant influence on the economic environment now, and into the future. The follow three pages outline these factors including a ‘Tech Disruption Timeline’.

### Covid – 19

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 forced 6 billion people into lock down in early 2020. Many commentators believe the impacts of Covid – 19 will be felt for many years to come and that this virus has changed the world and our ‘way of life’ for years to come.



From a business perspective Covid – 19 has driven significant changes:

- Accelerated ecommerce – changes to the way we purchase as the surge in online shopping demonstrates.
- Changes to the way we work – McKinsey & Co. estimated that more than 20% of the global workforce (most of which are in high skilled jobs), could work remotely.
- Tech upskilling – with these changes to the way we work comes the challenge of workforce adaptation and ensuring strong technology skills across the board.
- The rise of regions – ‘safe’ locations has seen population and demographic change.
- The importance of being agile – moving fast, being able to pivot and restructuring in order to build resilience is a fact of life in the Covid world.
- Profit for purpose – this crisis has emphasised the interconnectedness of businesses and their community which has seen an increasing trend in business where there is profit with a sense of purpose.
- Climate action drives recovery – Governments across the world are firmly and decisively putting climate and environmental action at the heart of their recovery plans, investing heavily to stimulate action.
- Changing travel behaviours and latent pent up travel demand in response to closed international borders.

## Technology



Historically technology has had a significant impact on the economy of the Noosa Shire (see info graph below), and the future is firmly based in technology across all industry sectors. The early adoption and take up of these advances in technology and the tools, systems and operating models they enable will be imperative if businesses and organisations are to remain competitive

- Covid-19 has sparked a wave of innovation, tremendous growth in digitisation and accelerated the rate of digital transformation as businesses strive to improve operations
- The Covid-19 crisis has seen an amazing acceleration in medical innovation and astounding accomplishments in the early roll out of vaccines
- This disruption has created space for entrepreneurs and innovators to develop solutions to drive productivity

This again confirms the need for extreme connectivity in regions in order to take advantage of the tech revolution that is now

## Mobility



In 2019 the Covid -19 pandemic forced an experiment in which 6 billion people stayed at home to avoid the virus and used online collaboration technologies like Zoom, to work remotely and keep the global economy afloat.

Two years later, with proof that knowledge workers can be productive away from the office, the geographical link between employer and employee was broken. Job opportunities are now highly mobile. It is now feasible for someone to live in a regional location and work for organisations based on the other side of the country or the world.

Whereas Noosa residents were once limited to the employment opportunities offered locally, they now have the potential to participate in a far larger job market where having the appropriate skills is far more important to an employer than proximity to the office.

Socio-economic impacts of this professional mobility on Noosa is profound, with a rapidly growing proportion of the community earning a living from employers, clients or markets based elsewhere and the influx of knowledge workers who are choosing to relocate to Noosa and bring their jobs with them.

- While in a global context the movement of people has put pressure on labour markets (we are seeing this trend locally particularly in the accommodation and food services sector), and goods has put pressure on supply chains, according to the Regional Australia Institute, in the March 2021 quarter, Noosa Shire saw the largest annual percentage growth in inward migration from capital cities among all LGA's across the country in the March quarter 2021.
- From an investment mobility perspective, Smart Company report that the value of investment funding was up in the second quarter of 2020 in Australia. Additionally Deloitte's suggest that \$13 billion in private equity funds is poised to be deployed.

**Early 2000's**  
TECH DISRUPTION:  
ONLINE TRAVEL



Puts Noosa on global travel map. Becomes an Aus itinerary highlight. Surge in visitor numbers  
Demand for new hotels, restaurants and retail offerings  
Thriving tourism economy with a growing services sector generating employment for local residents.

**2004**  
TECH DISRUPTION:  
ONLINE LOW COST AIRLINES



Possible to instantly book flights to/from Melbourne, Sydney, etc for \$89  
Growth in short stay visitors for weekend trips. Also makes it possible to live in Noosa and commute to the major metros for work.  
Execs & other professionals could choose to live in Noosa and travel to their companies or clients in major metros. And start of FIFO's

**2007**  
TECH DISRUPTION:  
ONLINE PROPERTY



Global market of prospective buyers can find Noosa properties online, tour them virtually & connect with The agent to arrange a viewing  
Increased domestic and international demand results in elevated property prices & investment in new builds/renovations  
Growth in residential & construction services sectors, supporting many self employed tradespeople and SMEs.

**> 2014**  
TECH DISRUPTION:  
SOCIAL MEDIA

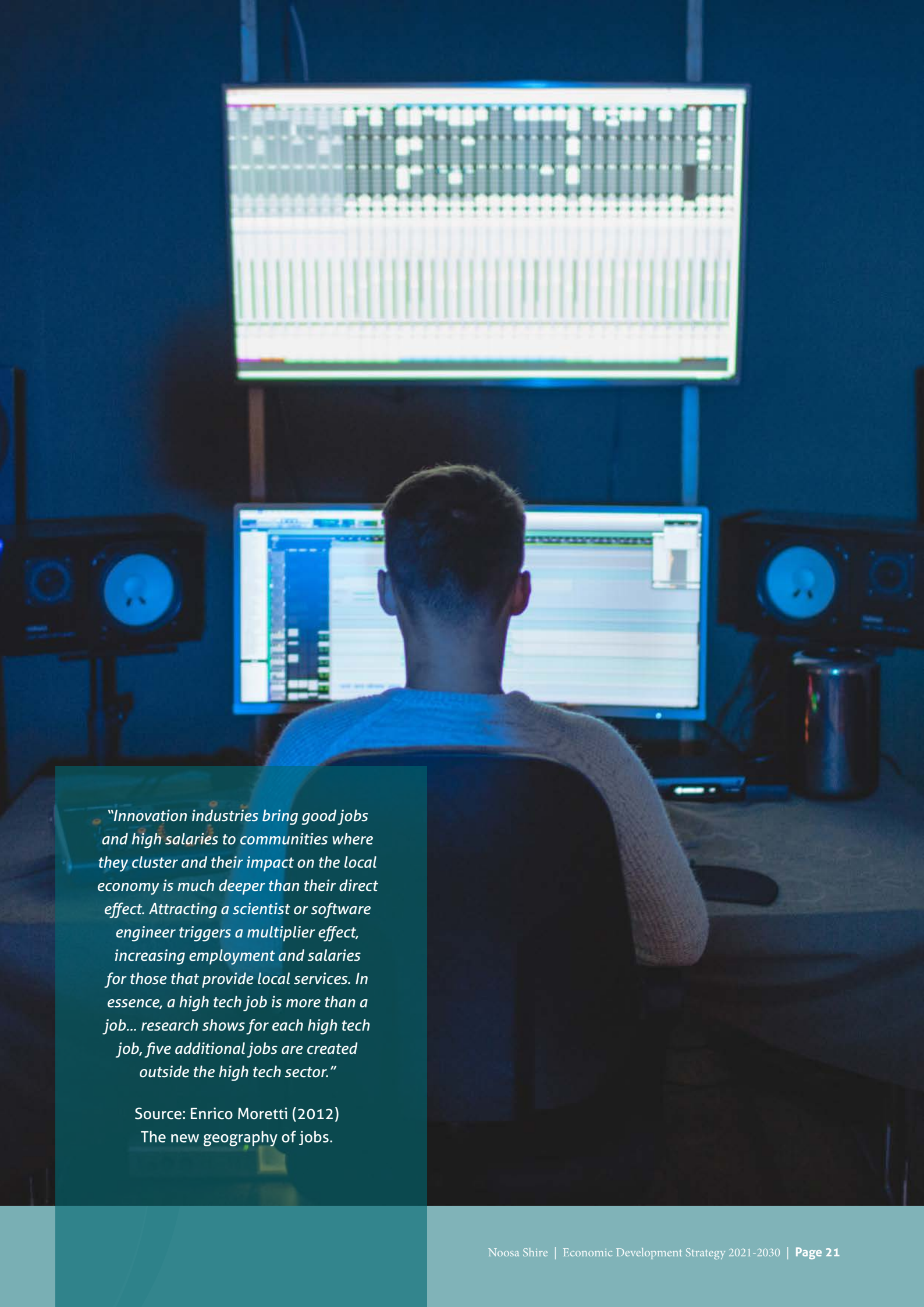


Social media use goes mainstream & becomes predominant platform for communications & content  
Facebook enables anyone to promote their services to audience of followers & market to millions of users  
Huge growth in self-employment via local micro-business services from yoga classes to home-cooked lasagne

**2020's**  
TECH DISRUPTION:  
CLOUD COLLABORATION



Covid forces 6bn people home to avoid the virus. Instant take up of cloud collaboration tools like Zoom to work remotely and keep the economy afloat  
Massive cultural shifts: The geographic link between employer & employee is broken.  
*I can be productive without being present.*  
Unprecedented levels of mobility. People can move to Noosa and bring their jobs with them.



*"Innovation industries bring good jobs and high salaries to communities where they cluster and their impact on the local economy is much deeper than their direct effect. Attracting a scientist or software engineer triggers a multiplier effect, increasing employment and salaries for those that provide local services. In essence, a high tech job is more than a job... research shows for each high tech job, five additional jobs are created outside the high tech sector."*

Source: Enrico Moretti (2012)  
The new geography of jobs.

## 4.5 Place – Managing Success

Tourism is an important sector of the Noosa local economy and has played a key role in its development.

Noosa has a clear competitive advantage when it comes to tourism, attracting over 1 million visitors annually who spend just under \$1B. Visitors are drawn to our pristine beaches, national parks, lack of city symbols and low key development, and enjoy the high level of amenity and services provided by Noosa businesses.

Noosa is a high profile visitor destination, and to guide this success, a Destination Management Plan (DMP), will be developed.

Destination management is a practice that draws together all aspects of a destination and its stakeholders – government, tourism, industry, and community; to plan for the future.

In this way, industry aims are planned and managed to meet the needs and aspiration of stakeholders.

Effective DMP is based on research and evidence to adopt a holistic management approach to a place and tourism.

DMP is important in ensuring the ongoing sustainability and success of Noosa, it will assist by developing clear plans that define stakeholder roles and the allocation of resources. Well managed destinations; protect and preserve their assets, attract investment, meet workforce needs and have increased levels innovation.



# 5

## Economic Development Strategy

*The best way to predict the future is to create it.*

Peter Drucker - Management Consultant, Educator and Author

### 5.1 Value Proposition – People and Place

People visit and fall in love with Noosa's pristine beaches, national parks, lack of city symbols, open spaces, low scale development and the connection between the built and natural environment, UNESCO Biosphere status, the high level of services offered by local businesses and the lifestyle that these elements enable.

Noosa has over time attracted an agglomeration of skilled and talented people - entrepreneurs, remote workers, investors and a myriad of leading edge experts forging development in their field of technical expertise. COVID-19 has accelerated this. The result is a spike in inward migration from capital cities (particularly Melbourne and Sydney), to safe lifestyle orientated regional areas such as Noosa.

The combination of skilled and talented people enjoying the lifestyle afforded by our commitment for sustainability and the natural environment enables and exemplifies Noosa's key differentiator, becoming a Smart Biosphere.

In the absence of population driven economic growth and a commitment to thoughtful management of our destination for visitors, Noosa is focused on developing the means to generate increased economic activity that supports higher export of goods and services and/or the replacement of imports.

Previous Economic Development Strategies have pursued economic diversification to build a more resilient economy that looks beyond tourism and population driven economic growth. This approach continues to resonate with the community and this Strategy builds on these concepts from the previous Local Economic Plan.

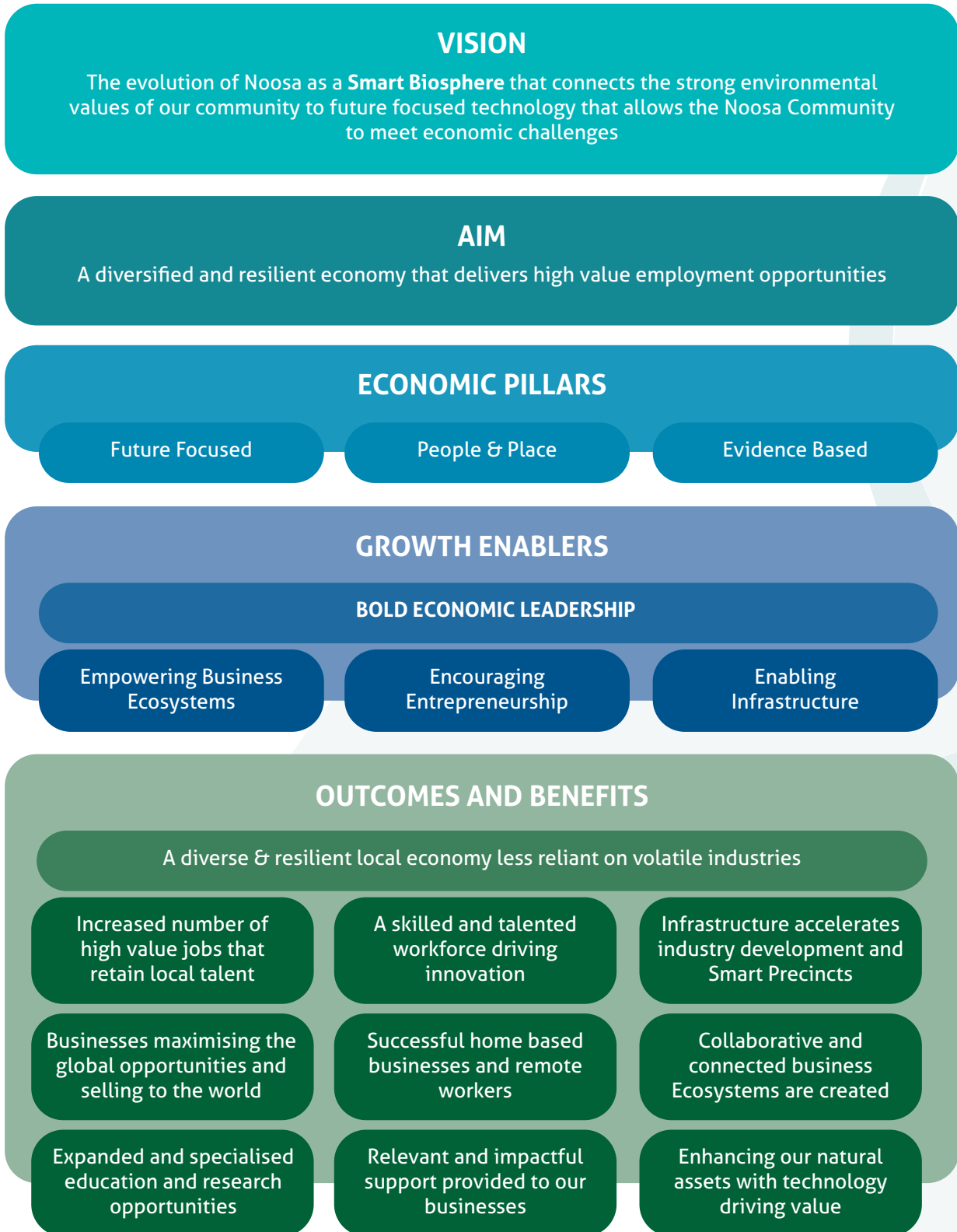
Council is committed to pursuing a robust, sustainable and resilient local economy that recognises the importance of skilled and talented people; has the necessary infrastructure to accelerate employment growth; supports the sustainability of businesses, industries and technologies; and creates a business environment that provides a range of diverse employment opportunities.

**Our new economic vision seeks to transition to “a Smart Biosphere”.**



## 5.2 Economic Development Framework

Driven by a clear goal to continue to diversify and strengthen our local economy, our vision to transition to a Smart Biosphere is underpinned by what we describe as ‘Pillars’ and ‘Growth Enablers’. The diagram below outlines Noosa’s Economic Development Framework, the elements of which are explained in more detail through this document





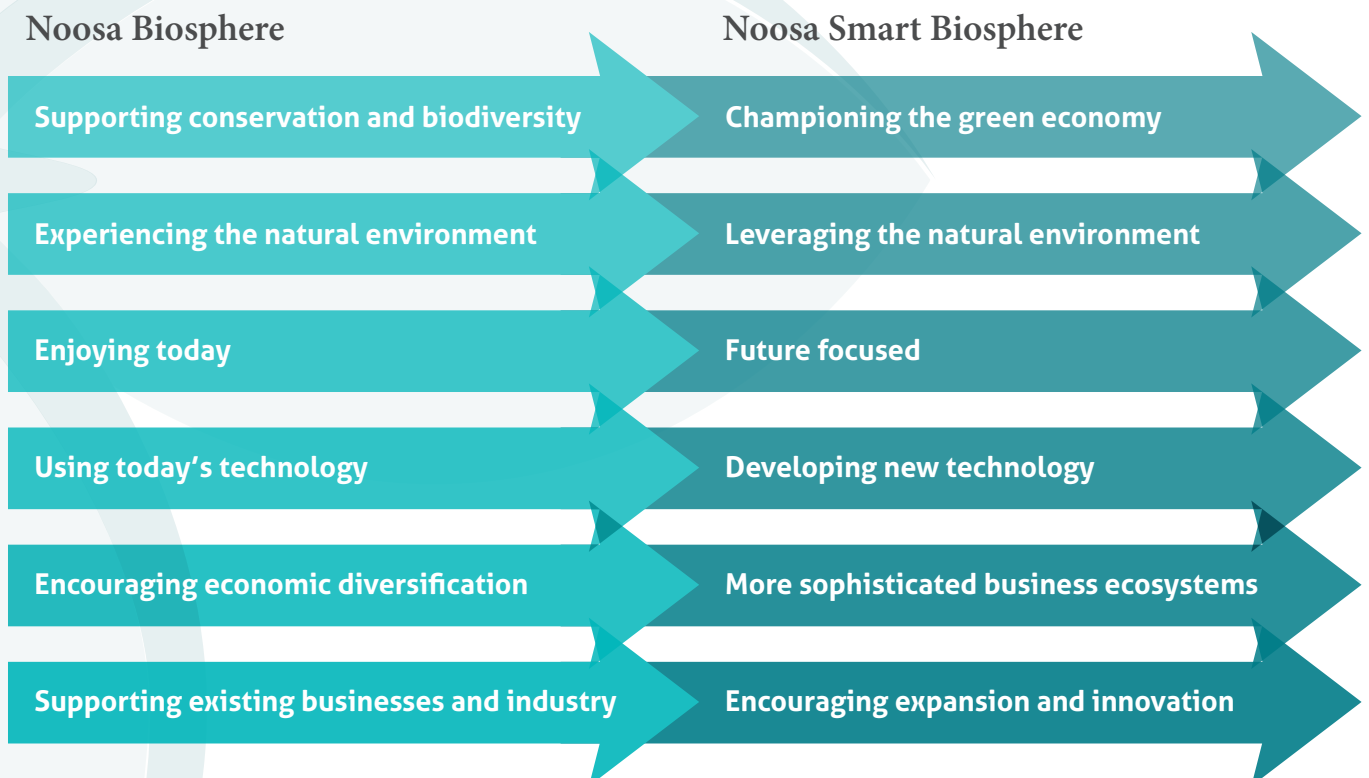
## 5.3 What is a Smart Biosphere?

A Smart Biosphere connects the strong environmental societal values of our community to future focused, technology and data driven actions to find creative and resourceful solutions to economic and environmental challenges.

There are numerous elements of a Smart Biosphere:



The transition to a **Smart Biosphere** is the next step in the evolution of economic development in Noosa. The transition can be imagined and described as:



## 5.4 Economic Pillars

Our aspiration to build on our environmental successes will be guided by three economic pillars or filters. All our activities, interventions, and decisions must be; future focused; people and place centric; and evidence based. This approach is outlined below:



### FUTURE FOCUSED

Look through a future focused lens

Acknowledge macro trends, drivers of change, our competitive advantage and capability to address these.

Continue focus on projects that deliver high economic value & low environmental impact.

Focus on export and global opportunities



### PEOPLE AND PLACE

Celebrate and build the capacity of our human capital – our people

Leverage the appeal of Noosa as a destination of choice to live, work, play and connect.

Focus on connecting people through our business ecosystems

Create “Places” where entrepreneurship is celebrated

Consider and understand the impact of Strategies, actions, policies and interventions on our environment and local community



### EVIDENCE BASED

Decisions are backed by data driven evidence

Strategies, actions, policies and interventions are driven by a deep understanding of the challenge being addressed and/or opportunity being pursued

## 5.5 Economic Growth Enablers

Traditional Economic Development Strategies outline a Sector based approach to delivering economic growth and specific industry development. This strategy takes a different approach. The focus is on economic growth enablers and the philosophy that bold leadership, strong business ecosystems, investment in enabling infrastructure and a culture of entrepreneurship are the very foundation of a strong, healthy, sustainable and resilient local economy.

**BOLD  
LEADERSHIP**



**ENCOURAGE  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



**EMPOWERING  
ECOSYSTEMS**



**ENABLING  
INFRASTRUCTURE**



## 5.6 Economic Growth Enablers (Detailed)

### 5.6.1 Bold Leadership - Economic Development

Leadership has a big impact on the ability of a community to achieve the desired standard of living for its residents, and the experience of visitors. Noosa has benefited from strong leadership and community advocacy. It will be important to look for opportunities that lead to improvements in the performance of the local economy in line with community aspirations.

This Economic Development Strategy places an emphasis on leadership to drive and facilitate initiatives that add value to the local economy by:

- Developing integrated goals and cross sector strategies
- Building partnerships across public and private sectors and local government boundaries
- Taking a coordinated approach that avoids duplication of effort or zero sum competition
- Understanding our assets, strengths and opportunities
- Understanding and aligning with demand side needs of employers and local businesses
- Articulating and upholding Noosa's distinctive offering
- Creating new investment tools/instruments that optimise public investment and leverage private investment

#### **BOLD LEADERSHIP – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**STRATEGY:** *Demonstrate bold leadership in economic development to drive a continued focus on the future that positively impacts on the local economy.*

##### **PRIORITY ACTIONS**

- I** Establish a recognised business identity and messaging that aligns with and complements Noosa's respected brand and the aspiration to be a Smart Biosphere.
- II** Identify advocacy opportunities in line with the Economic Development Strategy outcomes.
- III** Develop a Connectivity Plan that aims to deliver better access, connections and digital infrastructure to the region to increase productivity, diversify industries, and access to global markets.
- IV** Lead the establishment of a destination management plan, working with the community to determine the most appropriate model to preserve the local lifestyle, natural environment and also enhance the local and visitor experience.
- V** Continue to collaborate and ensure integration on key Council policies and initiatives that impact the economy – Housing Choice (particularly as it relates to worker accommodation), Planning Scheme amendments, employment land, Climate Change Adaptation, Transport, and Cultural/Creative Industries Strategy etc.
- VI** Continue to develop and refine engagement opportunities with industry such as the Business Round Table, Ecosystems Groups and business leaders.
- VII** Continue to support the development of strong and collaborative industry representative organisations through engagement and support programs.
- VIII** Continue to grow the reach, influence, community benefit and economic impact of the Peregrine Digital Hub.

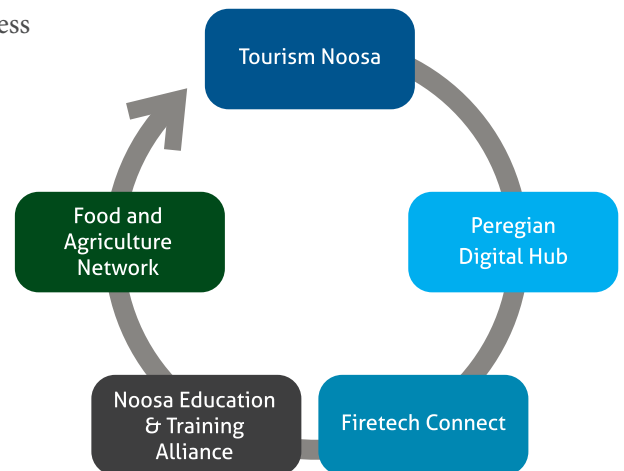


## 5.6.2 Empowering Business Ecosystems

A key aim of this Economic Development Strategy is to build a more diversified local economy – one that offers more high value employment opportunities to address some of the challenges noted previously. Key to this is developing a business environment that is supported and connected. Business ecosystems are a concentration of related businesses who gravitate together because of a shared need and as a result, greater revenue comes into a local area with skilled workers coming together to drive expertise and an innovative culture. They are a recognised building block for economic development that enable existing and new business entrants to connect to their cohort and supply chain, seeding diversification, and enabling a force multiplier effect (one to many).

The benefits - access to specialised information through personal relationships, joint marketing, innovation through shared information on new markets and technological advances, they provide strength in numbers, encourage healthy competition, accelerate networking, and increase productivity.

Finally, they draw talent and a pooled market for specialised workers.

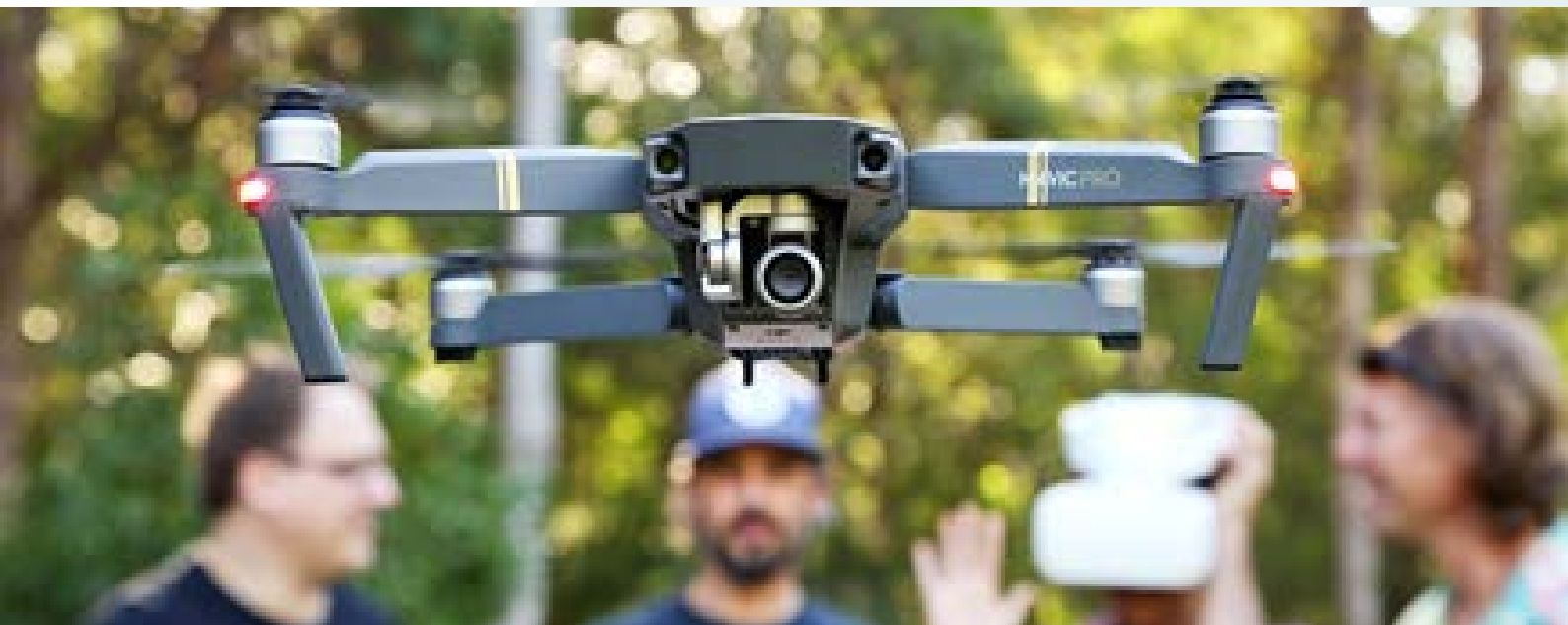


## EMPOWERING BUSINESS ECOSYSTEMS

**STRATEGY:** *Strengthen and deepen existing and emerging business ecosystems in technology and future focused sectors, where a specialisation and competitive advantage exists to drive sector and business development that delivers employment opportunities.*

### PRIORITY ACTIONS

- I Support the development of future focused business ecosystem through ecosystem organisation programs that provide a package of support which reflects the needs of the individual sector, builds industry capability and skills, provides assistance to sectors leaders, grows specialisations and drives industry development.
- II In collaboration with stakeholders, establish a Green Economy Industry Development Plan that supports ecosystem development, explores areas of competitive advantage and sector trends, and identifies regional expertise and opportunities for industry growth.
- III Link this Green Economy Development Plan the delivery of other work across Council and with industry and community groups to support the delivery of outcomes attached to the Climate Change Adaptation Plan, emissions' reduction targets, Cities Power Partnership Mayors' Economic Recovery Statement, and the aspiration to become a Smart Biosphere.
- IV Continue to develop the FireTech Connect and Living Lab programs to drive talent attraction, research and industry collaboration.
- VI Continue to facilitate the growth and reach of the Noosa Education & Training Alliance Inc. (education & training ecosystem), to develop education to industry programs, skill and career development opportunities, increased access to learning opportunities and the promotion of the industry and Noosa as a broad education destination.
- VII Continue to work with industry and stakeholder groups in the food and agribusinesses sector to strengthen the ecosystem to connect and collectively solve shared challenges and realise opportunities to unlock industry growth, particularly in areas of competitive advantage that align with Smart Biosphere i.e. regenerative and sustainable agriculture, growing local food networks, strengthening supply chains, circular economy initiatives.
- VIII Support the development of the Food & Agribusiness Networks dedicated FAN Noosa arm.



### 5.6.3 Enabling Infrastructure

Industrial and commercial land supply is a key enabler of economic growth. In the SEQ Regional Plan 2017 and the Noosa Plan 2020, land zoned for business and industry is limited to within the urban boundary of the Noosa Shire, and therefore a finite resource. In this constrained environment it is important to use our existing land resources efficiently, sustainably and future proof development to be adaptive and allow for new technologies.

With Accommodation and Food Services, Construction, and Retail as established mature key industry sectors within the local economy, the opportunity exists to pursue future focused industry development and expand opportunities for higher skilled employment in the Shire through niche projects.

To support increased diversification of the local economy, opportunities exist to explore demand driven development in employment zones including

the remaining stages of the Noosa Business Centre, particularly the innovation zone; the former Bowls Club site in Noosa Junction, and Council and State Government owned land and facilities. This will support the continued development and maturity of business ecosystems, where specialisations emerge, and the acceleration of technology based industry 4.0 and associated skill development, capacity building and research occurs.

Business hubs play a key role in enabling businesses within the ecosystem to take advantage of specialisations and accelerate development. Hubs provide an anchor from which businesses collaborate, build capacity and scale. The Peregian Digital Hub is an example of this, and in just three short years and despite the impacts of Covid-19, 40 new FTE roles have been created in member companies and 10 new part time jobs enabled. Three new businesses were created at the hub and two businesses accelerated out of the hub.

## ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

**STRATEGY:** *Develop initiatives and opportunities for collaboration with the aim of influencing the development and redevelopment of key business and industry sites across the shire to deliver high value employment opportunities in future focused industries, and attract investment and talent.*

### PRIORITY ACTIONS

- I Progress the establishment of the Future Skills Learning Hub concept to determine feasibility, potential funding and operational models.
- II Progress the second stage of development of the Peregian Digital Hub – construction and operation.
- III Actively collaborate with industry, developers, and state and federal government agencies to actively influence outcomes from the development of the Innovation Zone at the Noosa Business Centre.
- IV Working with stakeholders, facilitate a process to explore funding mechanisms, models and partnership opportunities to fund the development of economic infrastructure.
- V Undertake a commercial and industrial land demand review to inform discussion on future employment land availability and Councils response to the South East Queensland Regional Plan review.
- VI Undertake a review of Council and State owned land zoned for industry and commercial development to determine how these assets are best used for community benefit.
- VII Engage with business, the development industry and relevant stakeholders to actively influence development of remaining employment land stocks.
- VIII Explore the Community Wealth Building models to activate community economic development opportunities.
- IX Continue to support the Food & Agribusiness Network in their bid to create an industry 4.0 smart manufacturing and food and beverage hub on the Sunshine Coast.

## 5.6.4 Encouraging Entrepreneurship and Innovation

The Noosa economy is dominated by small business. One of the aims of this strategy is to provide support to those looking to establish, trade successfully or grow, through connections to business ecosystems, business hub support programs and Council and government assistance services.

The Queensland “Big Plans for Small Business” Strategy 2021 -2023 reported that small businesses are confused by the multiple government websites and communications channels and find it difficult to locate and understand what assistance is available. To assist in this Council is developing the business pages of our web site to be a one stop shop for information on the economy, information on state and federal government assistance programs (including grants), capacity and skill development opportunities and connections to local business associations and sector groups.

The level of assistance provided to small business by all levels of government has never been greater. Therefore Noosa Council is investing in the development of communication tools such as newsletters, social media channels and dedicated business alerts to assist business to be more informed and to build awareness of these programs. Additionally, Council is building a bank of local business case studies to showcase the truly

incredible businesses located in our region. Council is also revisiting promotional material with the intention of creating a suite of communication pieces in targeted sectors and sub-sectors, to profile and promote Noosa as a business location of choice.

Business associations such as CCIQ Noosa and precinct representative groups, Business Mentors Noosa, Zero Emissions Noosa and Sunshine Coast Angels continue to be an integral link between Council and the businesses community. Council will continue to support and work closely with these and other key representative groups.

Council will continue to provide business support through initiatives such as the Professional Service Providers Panel established to provide access to free advice to Noosa businesses to assist them to overcome challenges, grow, adapt and thrive. Assistance is provided across a number of important topics from digital transformation, human resources, ecommerce and innovation to communications, marketing, accounting and business planning and strategy.

Council is working with the Queensland Small Business Commissioner’s office to explore the opportunities and benefits of adopting the Queensland Small Business Friendly Charter.

### ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

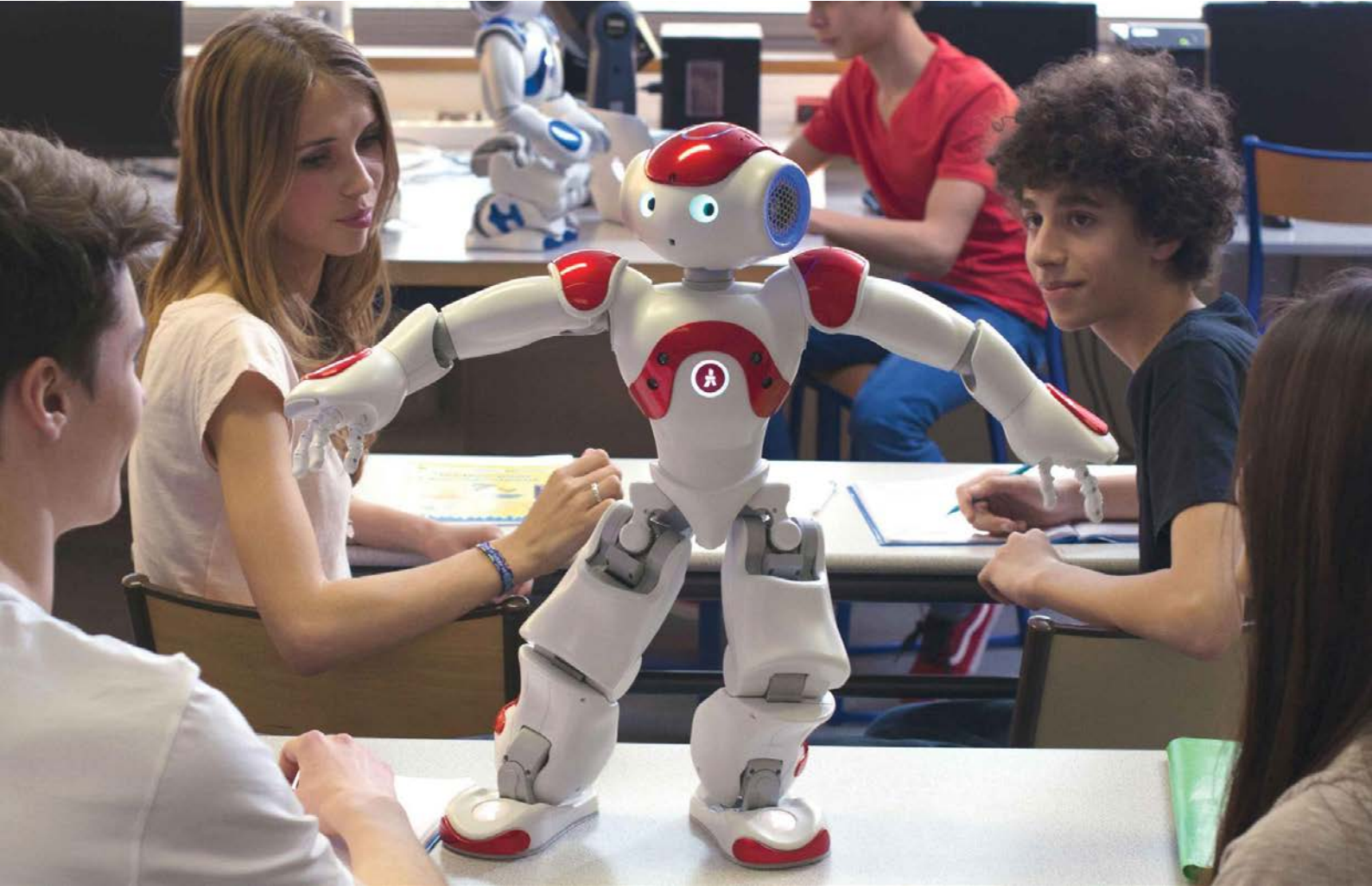
**STRATEGY:** *Support entrepreneurs on their business development journey through targeted programs that connect SME’s to support and services, provide easy access to business information, Council and other government services, and connections to business ecosystems.*

#### PRIORITY ACTIONS

- I Explore the opportunities and benefits of adopting the Queensland Small Business Friendly Councils Charter to guide quality engagement between Council and the business community.
- II Continue to invest in the development of dedicated business communications tools to ensure local businesses are well informed and have access to available resources.
- III Undertake an annual review of the support services provided to the business community such as the Professional Service Providers Panel and Business Concierge Service to ensure they are relevant and meeting the needs of business.
- IV Work with state government agencies and associated organisations to ensure skill development and knowledge building events are accessible to Noosa Businesses.







## 5.7 Outcomes & Benefits

This strategy has a clear set of ‘end in mind’ outcomes that will drive the actions and implementation of this strategy towards the pursuit of our Vision and goals.

Council and communities success as we move forward will be assessed against the following desirable outcomes:

**A sustainable, diverse & resilient local economy less reliant on volatile industries**

Increased number of high value jobs that retain local talent

A skilled and talented workforce driving innovation

Infrastructure accelerates industry development and Smart Precincts

Businesses maximising the global opportunities and selling to the world

Successful home based businesses and remote workers

Collaborative and connected business Ecosystems are created

Expanded and specialised education and research opportunities

Relevant and impactful support provided to our businesses

Returns from our natural assets with technology driving value

## 5.8 Engagement & Stakeholders

Council engages with the business community on a number of levels from food licencing, development applications and building and plumbing applications through to economic development programs.

Engagement occurs through a variety of mechanisms as listed below, and will continue to evolve to progress this strategy:

- The Business Round Table (BRT). The BRT has continued to evolve and is now a key business engagement mechanism. The BRT brings together business representative groups, the Mayor, State Government representatives, Council staff and a number of observers to exchange information and identify and collaborate on challenges and opportunities to positively impact the local business environment.
- Key sector business groups such as NETA and FAN, and operators and stakeholders through dedicated sector development programs.
- Ecosystems leads and members anchored to the Peregian Digital Hub.
- State & Federal Government agencies through working groups and program engagement opportunities.

The table right lists a number of our major stakeholders:

<b>LOCAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Round Table (BRT)</li> <li>Tourism Noosa</li> <li>Noosa Education &amp; Training Alliance (NETA)</li> <li>Peregian Digital Hub</li> <li>FireTech Connect</li> <li>Zero Emissions Noosa</li> <li>Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation</li> <li>Business Mentors Noosa</li> <li>Local Industry Connectors</li> </ul>
<b>REGIONAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University of the Sunshine Coast</li> <li>Ed Sunshine Coast</li> <li>Sunshine Coast Business Council</li> <li>Suncoast Angels</li> <li>Food &amp; Agribusiness Network (FAN)</li> <li>Sunshine Coast Council Economic Development Team</li> <li>RoboCoast</li> </ul>
<b>STATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Employment, Small Business &amp; Training</li> <li>Queensland Small Business Commissioner</li> <li>Queensland Chief Entrepreneurs Office</li> <li>Arts Queensland</li> <li>Local Government Association Queensland</li> <li>Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning</li> <li>Sunshine Coast Trade &amp; Investment Group</li> <li>Queensland Reconstruction Authority</li> <li>Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport</li> </ul>
<b>FEDERAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Development Australia (RDA)</li> <li>AusIndustry</li> <li>Austrade</li> <li>Department of Energy, Science &amp; Resources</li> <li>National Careers Institute</li> <li>Australian Bureau of Statistics</li> <li>Australian Tax Office</li> <li>Bushfire &amp; Natural Hazards CRC</li> </ul>



## 5.9 Implementation, Monitoring & Reporting

### ANNUAL REPORTING

#### Economic Profile

State of the Economy

#### Strategy Measures

Monitoring Progress

#### Program Activity

Economic Development Initiatives

A three tiered approach to monitoring and reporting will be adopted to track the health of the local economy, progress towards strategic outcomes and the impact of economic development programs and initiatives.

1. An annual **Economic Profile** for the Noosa Shire will be developed to communicate the state of the economy. The Profile will talk to key economic indicators including gross regional product, industry value added, work force data, business counts and income levels. It should be noted that there are a number of macroeconomic factors that will influence the local economy and will be reflected in these indicators that are beyond the influence of Council, stakeholders and the local community.
2. Targeted measures have been identified to track the progress and effectiveness of the economic development strategy.

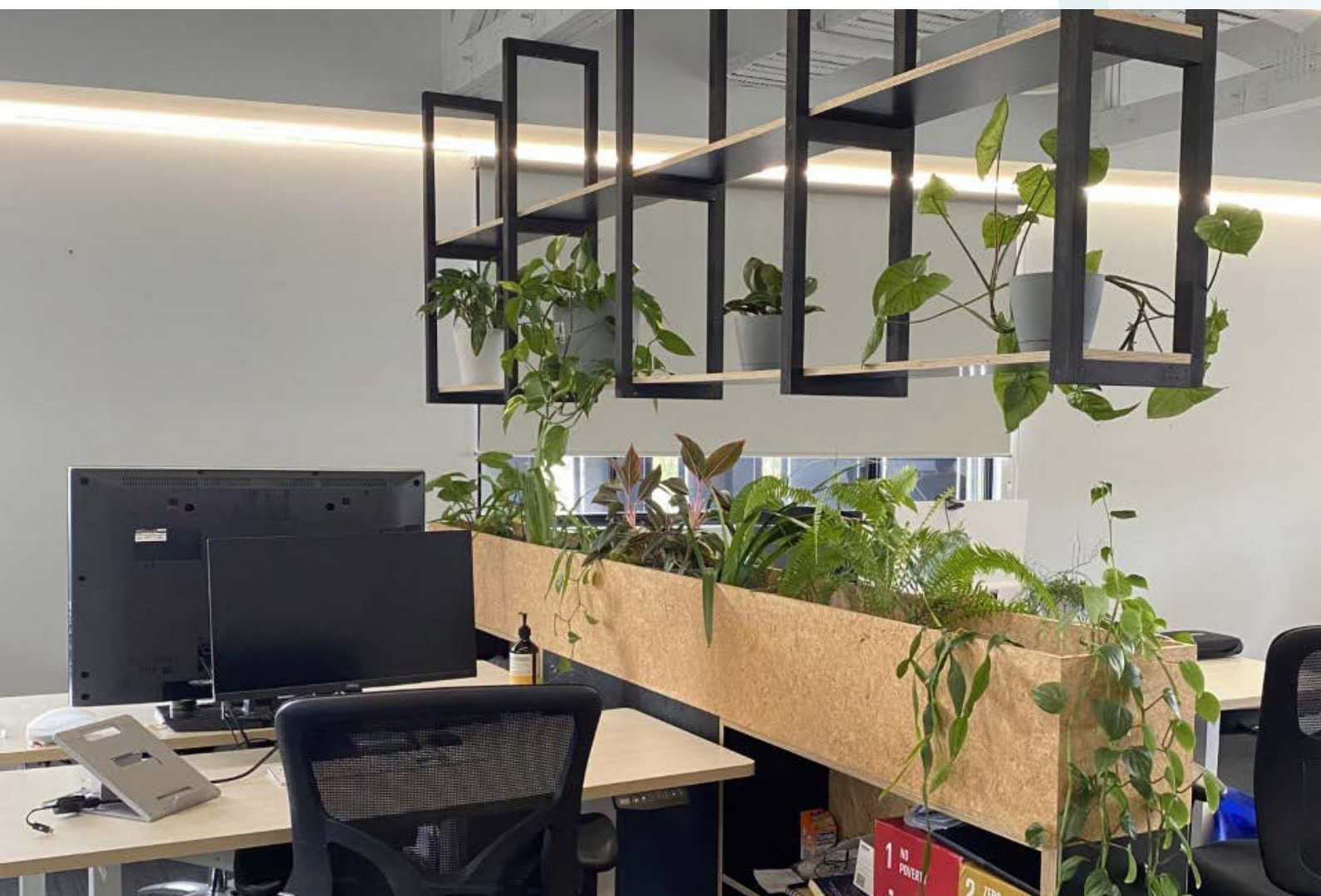
INDICATOR	SOURCE	TARGET
Growth in Gross Regional Product (GRP) compared to population growth	Economy.id measured annually 30 June	GRP exceeds population growth
Average Median household income level compared state average	Census data measured 5 yearly Census cycle	Above Queensland
Businesses Counts by turnover	QGSO Queensland Regional Profiles measured annually 30 June	Growth in the number of businesses with a turnover above \$100k
Business Counts by turnover	QGSO Queensland Regional Profiles measured annually 30 June	Growth in the number of employing business
Unemployment rate	Economy.id measured annually 30 June	Below the state average
Education, skills & training qualifications	Census data measured 5 yearly Census cycle	Above Queensland Levels
Investment in infrastructure	Noosa Council data	Year on year increase
Industry mix by industry value added	Economy.id measured annually 30 June	Year on year increase - % Growth of future focused industries.
Total employment by industry mix in Noosa Shire	Economy.id measured annually 30 June	% increase in future focused industries.

3. The Economic Development Strategy 2021-2030 (the Strategy), will be supported by an annual program of work which is developed in line with Council's planning and budget process. The work plans will include action plans and focused key performance indicators and measures to monitor individual program development and outcomes. Measures will have an increased focus on capturing the socio economic benefits.

An annual **Activity Update** will be created to communicate the progress of initiatives facilitated and delivered by the Economic Development team, and will include measures and KPI's. In this way we will report on outcomes that Council can directly influence.

To increase focus and continue the conversation, an annual Economic Summit will be held to activate dialogue and discussion on the state of the economy, stakeholder projects, progress of the Economic Development Strategy and the transition to a **"Smart Biosphere"**. This summit will focus on the challenges we can tackle and explore and develop the bold opportunities that will drive change and have impact.

This Economic Development Strategy will be reviewed and potentially refreshed every 3-5 years to ensure flexibility, relevance and alignment with Council policies.





## Image credits

Page 8 - Tourism and Events Queensland

Page 13 - Tourism and Events Queensland

Page 21 - Noosa (Peregian) Digital Hub

Page 23 - David Gleeson

Page 29 - Tourism and Events Queensland

Page 34 - Provectus Algae

Page 36 - Tourism and Events Queensland

Page 37 - Provectus Algae



[www.noosa.qld.gov.au](http://www.noosa.qld.gov.au)

General Enquiries: 8.30 am - 5.00 pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

By telephone: (07) 5329 6500 (including after-hours emergencies)

By email: [mail@noosa.qld.gov.au](mailto:mail@noosa.qld.gov.au) Fax: (07) 5329 6501

Street Address: 9 Pelican Street, TEWANTIN

Postal address: PO Box 141, TEWANTIN QLD 4565