



Fremantle 2030

An economic
blueprint for
Fremantle

Abridged Summary Version

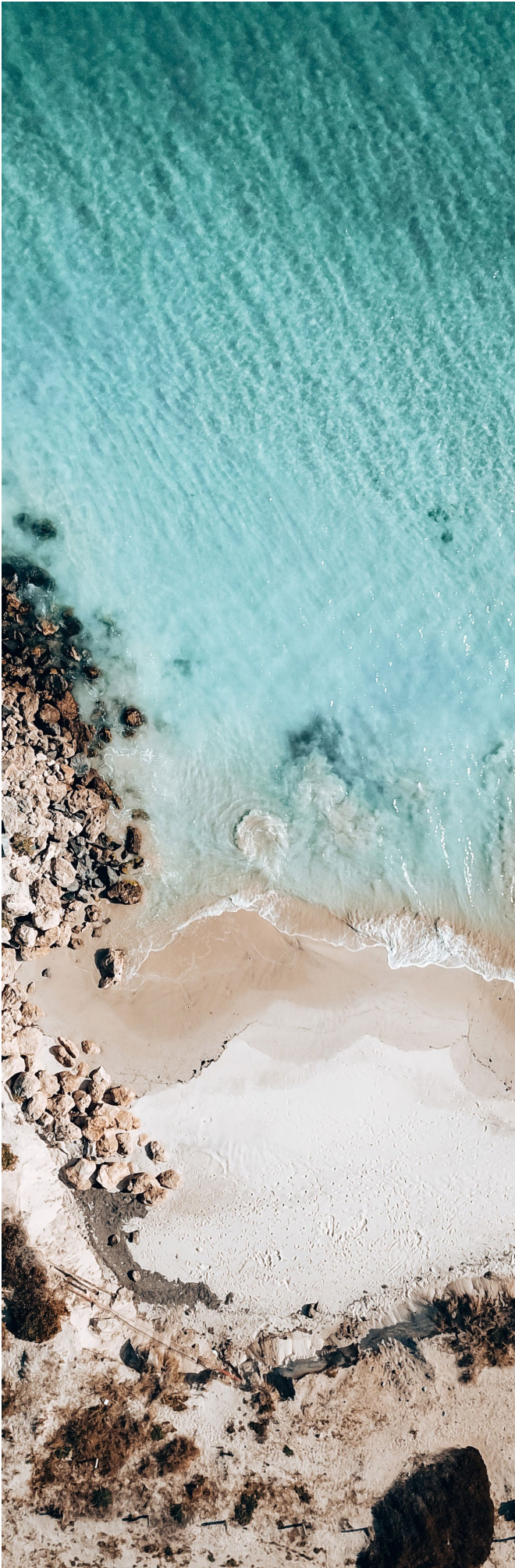
Acknowledgement

The City of Fremantle acknowledges the Whadjuk people as the Traditional Owners of the greater Fremantle/Walyalup area and we recognise that the cultural and heritage beliefs are still important today.



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Introduction

Fremantle's economy is evolving, shaped by both ongoing challenges and emerging opportunities. This Economic Development Strategy provides a clear framework for how the City of Fremantle will collaborate with local businesses, industry groups, and government partners in the next five years. The Strategy is designed to be adaptable, ensuring that Fremantle can respond to global trends, technological advancements, and the evolving needs of the community.

Fremantle has long been defined by its vibrant cultural and economic core anchored by tourism, hospitality, retail, port, and creative industries. While these remain central to its identity, this Strategy acknowledges the importance of fostering new industries and future-proofing the local economy. Emerging sectors such as the blue economy, advanced manufacturing, and knowledge industries offer new avenues for growth, innovation, and job creation.

Fremantle's competitive advantages – its rich heritage, world-class waterfront, thriving arts and innovation scene, and strong community spirit continue to attract investment and talent. By harnessing these strengths, Fremantle will become a dynamic and sustainable economic hub for its growing population.

Innovation, sustainability, and collaboration are key themes driving Fremantle's economic future. This strategy outlines a commitment to supporting business growth, attracting investment, and ensuring economic development benefits the entire community.



Executive summary

The City of Fremantle is WA's second City, contributing \$5 billion annually to Perth's economic output, and representing one of the state's strongest visitor economies.

In 2023-24, Fremantle supported 33,247 jobs and represented 2.3 per cent of Greater Perth's economic output, despite only making up 1.9 per cent of its geographical area. Local economic growth has averaged more than 1.8 per cent annually in the past five years (2019-24). Population growth has been a significant catalyst, with residents increasing by 2.7 per cent per annum in the same period, comfortably exceeding the 10-year average of 1.8 per cent and Greater Perth's 2.4 per cent. Unemployment rates remain impressively low at 4.0 per cent in 2024, well below pre-COVID levels, providing a solid foundation for local retail and hospitality operators.

Crucially, visitors account for a staggering 78.3 per cent of all local spending, underscoring the importance of tourism to Fremantle's economy.

The city's rich heritage, world-class waterfront, thriving arts scene, and strong community spirit continue to draw investment and talent. Innovation, sustainability, and collaboration are the bedrock of Fremantle's economic future.

This strategy sets out a plan to drive Fremantle's economic future, foster business growth, and address challenges.



Fremantle's economy

Fremantle's economic heart beats with a cultural pulse, historically anchored by industries such as tourism, hospitality, retail, port operations, and creative enterprises. While these remain integral to Fremantle's identity, this strategy actively welcomes new industry, including the blue economy, advanced manufacturing, and knowledge-based sectors, to future-proof its economic contribution to the State.

Fremantle's economy is undergoing a dynamic transformation, navigating both persistent challenges and burgeoning opportunities.

Fremantle generated \$5.08 billion in Gross Regional Product (GRP) and supported 33,247 jobs in 2023-24, accounting for 2.3 per cent of Greater Perth's economy. Local economic growth averaged +1.8 per cent per year (2019-24), improving from previous flat trends, though trailing the metropolitan average. Population growth has been a significant driver, with residents estimated to be living in Fremantle increasing by 2.7 per cent per year, well above the decade average (1.8 per cent p.a.).

Top value-generating sectors include Transport, Postal and Warehousing (\$840 million), Health Care and Social Assistance (\$514 million), and Public Administration (\$410 million).

Economic diversity remains high, with recent growth concentrated in health and public administration. Tourism has seen a rebound, with overnight stays rising post-COVID, highlighting Fremantle's strength as a tourism destination and supporting hospitality employment. Fremantle's economy has grown steadily, but at a slower pace than Greater Perth, as growth has been driven by lower-productivity population-serving sectors.



Fremantle GRP & job growth

Fremantle economy

As of 2023/24

 GRP \$5,079m	5yr avg growth +1.8%	Greater Perth (+3.1%)
 Local jobs 33,247	5yr avg growth +2.0%	Greater Perth (+3.1%)
 Population 36,349	5yr avg growth +2.7%	Greater Perth (+2.4%)
 Unemployment 4.0%	5yr avg growth -3.4%	Greater Perth (-2.7%)
 Tourism visits 1,301,372	5yr avg growth -3.8%	Greater Perth (-0.8%)

Key industries



Blue economy: Marine-based industries contribute significantly to Fremantle's local economy, supporting approximately 2,261 jobs. The region aims to be a centre of excellence for sustainable blue economy innovation on the Indian Ocean Rim.



Green economy: Fremantle is committed to building a green economy that balances environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic prosperity.



Creative and immersive economy: This sector is a major driver of Fremantle's identity, cultural vibrancy, and economic growth, spearheading innovation in a knowledge-based economy. As of 2021, Fremantle's creative economy included an estimated 2,310 jobs and contributed \$181.8 million directly to the economy. It is the largest contributor to creative industries in the southwest metro sub-region.



Film friendly city: Fremantle maintains a strong creative milieu, attracting and retaining film activity, with more than 90 applications from 2023 – 2025 including major productions. Screen production provides quick revenue injection and long-term benefits through local employment, investment, and tourism opportunities.



Startup and innovation: Fremantle offers a prime environment for startups, with more than 70 valued at \$758 million across diverse sectors. Its strategic position as the gateway to the Western Trade Coast provides an ideal launchpad. The City is home to key organisations and resources supporting innovation, with direct access to large-scale industries.



Health and medical life sciences: The largest employment sector in Fremantle, this sector supported 6,494 local jobs in 2023–24. A cornerstone for health and medical research and education in Western Australia, Fremantle is home to some of the best health institutions in the Perth metropolitan area, including Fremantle Hospital, the Hospital Research Foundation Group and the University of Notre Dame Australia's School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

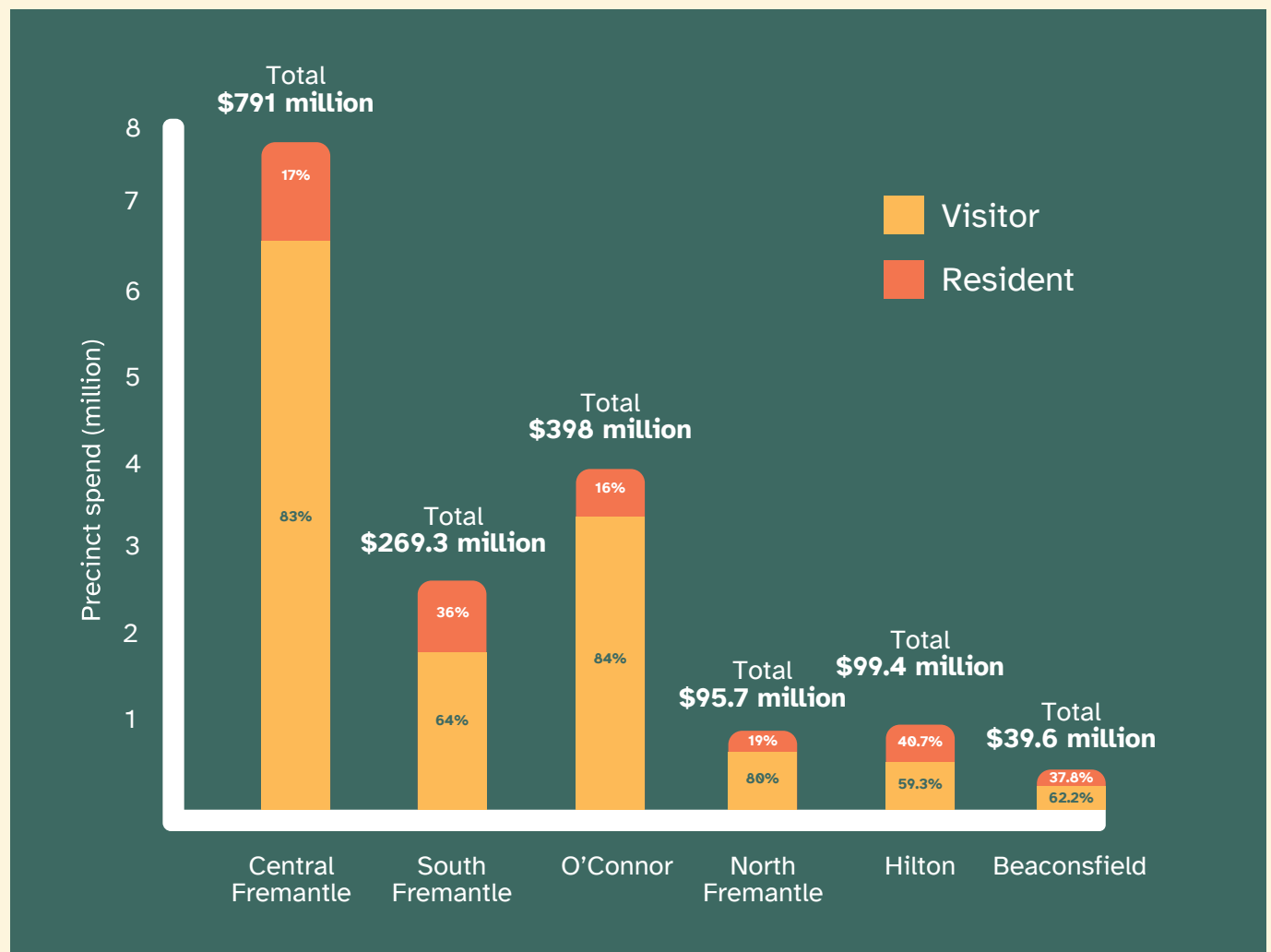


Tourism: Visitation is recovering post-COVID, though still 18 per cent down from 2019, largely due to fewer day trips and international visitors. Domestic overnight stays, however, are up 6 per cent.

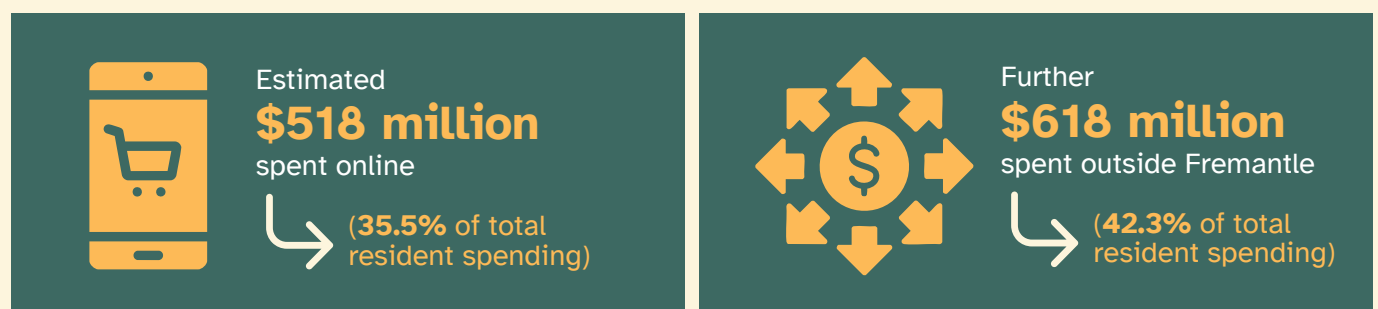


Fremantle's economic heartbeat across key precincts

Precinct specific spend



Resident spending habits

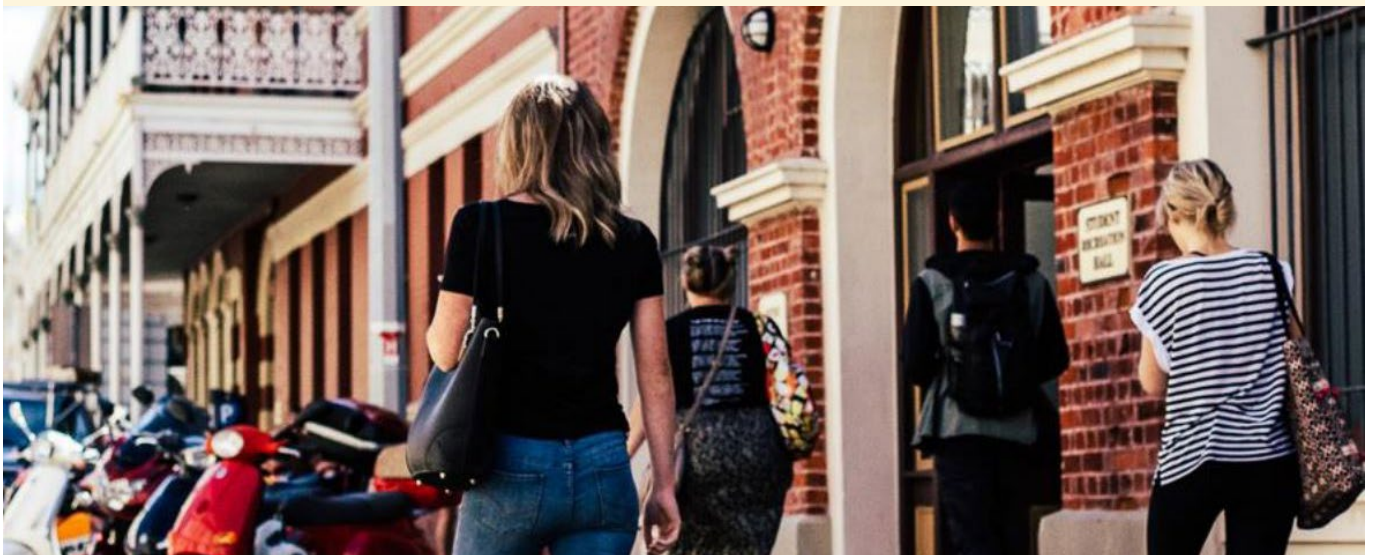
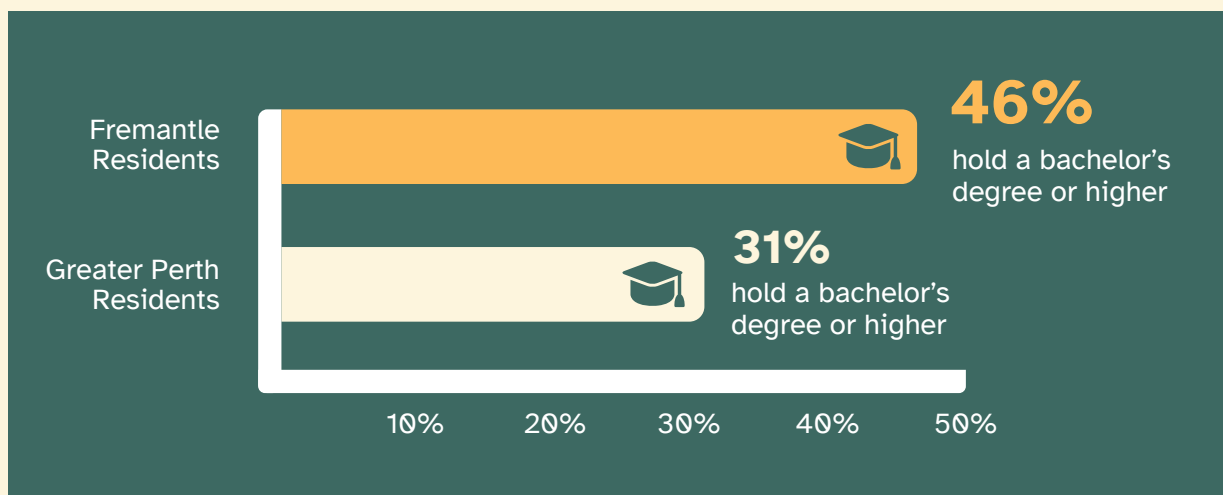


Fremantle's highly skilled workforce

Fremantle has a highly qualified population, with 46 per cent holding a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 31 per cent in Greater Perth. Resident income levels are higher than the local average, with 57 per cent earning more than \$65,000 compared to 48 per cent of local workers. However, occupation and qualification mismatches persist, with deficits in health and science professions and surpluses in hospitality and retail jobs.

In 2024, there were 13,076 more jobs than employed residents, indicating the region generates more jobs than its resident workforce and attracts workers from other regions. Only 4 per cent of new WA Department of Communities workers lived in Fremantle in 2021. This highlights Fremantle's role as a regional employment centre with 22,466 people commuting in for work, while 11,514 residents travel outside the area for employment.

Fremantle's educated workforce: Higher qualifications than greater Perth



Business and investment: a growing pipeline

GST-registered businesses in Fremantle grew by 11 per cent from 2020 to 2024, led by sole traders and small firms in Professional Services, Real Estate, and Health. A consistent pipeline of building approvals, primarily in population-servicing areas, alongside public sector investment in the new Fremantle Police Complex and

Victoria Quay, continues to support the construction industry. In 2024, Fremantle had 13,076 more jobs than employed residents, indicating its role as a regional employment centre that attracts workers from beyond its borders.



From 2020 to 2024, GST-registered businesses grew by 11%

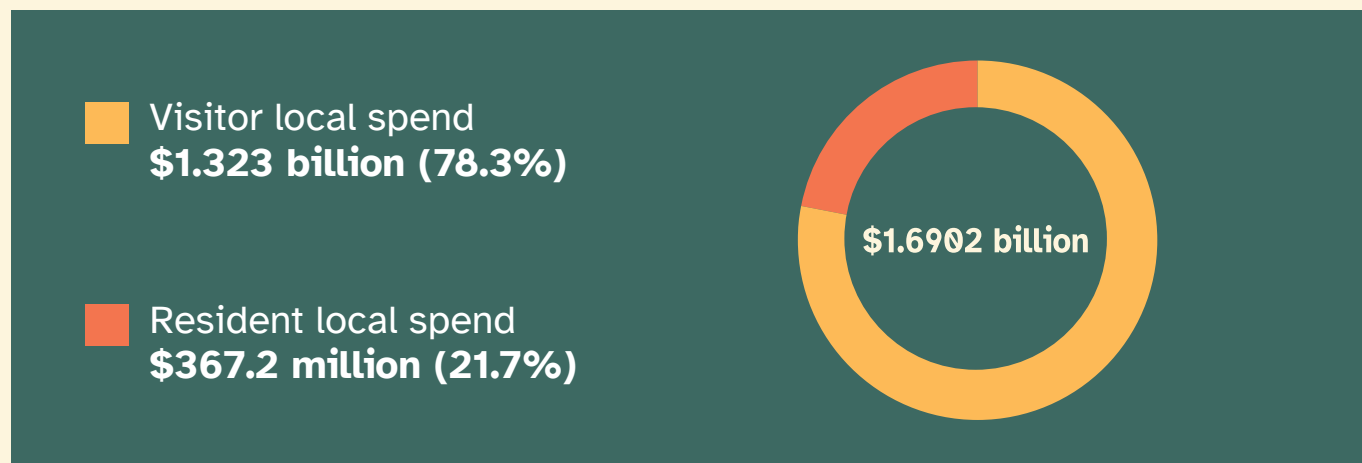


in 2024, Fremantle had
13,076 more jobs
than employed residents



Who spends in Fremantle?

Visitor vs. resident contributions



Major economic precincts

Fremantle's economy is shaped by its unique role as a major visitor destination. Across the City's eight precincts, spending is overwhelmingly driven by non-residents, with visitor expenditure accounting for \$1.31 billion – more than 78 per cent of total expenditure.

Central Fremantle: The primary economic driver, representing \$791.3 million (46.8 per cent of total spend). It is the primary employment hub (48 per cent of local jobs) with concentrations in health care and social assistance, public administration, and accommodation and food services. Visitation exceeds 1.8 million people annually. Top spend categories: Specialised and Luxury Goods and Dining and Entertainment.

O'Connor: Accounts for 17 per cent of total local jobs, with a strong industrial profile in manufacturing, retail trade, and construction. Visited by more than 1.2 million people annually. Top spend categories: Bulky Goods and Specialised and Luxury Goods.

North Fremantle: The inner harbour supported approximately 9 per cent of total local jobs in 2021, concentrated in transport. Visitation exceeds 1.2 million people annually, with dining/entertainment and transport as top spending categories. Top spend categories: Dining and Entertainment and Transport.

South Fremantle: Accounting for 8 per cent of total local jobs, with a diverse mix across hospitality, education, health, manufacturing, transport, and professional services. Visited by more than 857,000 people annually. Top spend categories: Grocery Stores and Supermarkets and Dining and Entertainment.

Hilton: Accounts for 5.4 per cent of total local jobs, centred around education, training, health care and social assistance. Visited by more than 1.1 million people annually, with grocery stores and supermarkets as the highest expenditure. Top spend categories: Grocery Stores and Supermarkets.

Beaconsfield: Accounts for 2.7 per cent of total local jobs, mainly in Education and Training and Health Care and Social Assistance. Visited by more than 947,000 people annually. Top spend categories: Grocery Stores and Supermarkets, Professional Services, and Transport.

Strategic opportunity statements

Fremantle is entering a pivotal phase of economic renewal. With major public investments underway, a growing base of knowledge workers and entrepreneurs, and the potential relocation of port operations, the City has a unique opportunity to shape a more vibrant, diverse and future-focused economy. The strategic opportunity statements to follow are grounded in existing strengths – heritage, lifestyle appeal and innovative local talent – and present clear pathways to support inclusive growth, job creation and long-term resilience.

The analysis of information presented in Part I (Situational Analysis) of this strategy has identified five key strategic opportunities:

1. Fremantle as a future-proofed city
2. Fremantle as leading the industries of tomorrow
3. Fremantle unlocking transformational renewal
4. Fremantle's soul powering its economy
5. Fremantle building a future-fit, resilient economy

While these ambitions are aspirational and presented separately, they are deeply interconnected. For instance, Fremantle's strong appeal as a visitor destination, rooted in its unique heritage and cultural vibrancy, directly supports local businesses and stimulates broader economic activity, influencing investment and trade. The role the City can play in contributing towards the realisation of some or all of these opportunities is articulated in the strategy section of this document.



Opportunity 1

Future-proofed City

What it involves

Fremantle is poised to become a vibrant, mixed-use centre, ensuring consistent activity across daytime, evening and weekend economy. Recently approved inner Fremantle developments and the City Plan's focus on increased residential density present a significant opportunity to boost the local economy. Public sector investments, such as the new Police Complex and the expansion of Fremantle Hospital, enhance the feasibility of commercial developments by signalling precinct stability and long-term support. These projects provide predictable daytime foot traffic from public sector workers, which benefits local service providers and reduces risk for private commercial leases, encouraging further private sector investment. Key redevelopments, such as the Woolstores Shopping Centre, which opened in March 2025, and the proposed Elders Wool Stores Redevelopment, will further contribute to this increased density and activity. This includes growing City centre residency to increase City centre density, extend trading hours and foster the growth of City centre services and local businesses.

Fremantle is poised to become a vibrant, mixed-use centre, ensuring consistent activity across daytime, evening and weekend economy.

Why it will make a difference

A City alive with energy attracts people – residents, workers, and visitors – fuelling economic growth and reinforcing Fremantle's position as a dynamic urban centre.

Realising this opportunity will mean:

- A bigger resident base within walking distance will provide consistent customers for hospitality, retail and service businesses
- Increased population, therefore supporting extending trading hours - strengthening the weekday, evening and weekend economy
- More professionals living locally will drive demand for essential services such as gyms, medical clinics, childcare and dry cleaning
- Job creation and community growth
- Reduction of economic vulnerability from reliance on visitor spend
- Greater confidence for investors that will ensure Fremantle is not just a weekend destination but a thriving City centre every day of the week



Opportunity 2

Leading the industries of tomorrow

What it involves

Fremantle is uniquely positioned to become a base for knowledge industries, attracting remote workers, startups and purpose-led businesses. Fremantle's resident population has a higher proportion of degree-educated individuals compared to Greater Perth. The growing acceptance of remote work presents an opportunity to attract office-based professionals to relocate to the region, including suburbs outside the City centre. Supporting this trend through investment in co-working spaces can meet latent demand, foster flexible work environments and stimulate economic activity in both the City centre and surrounding suburbs, benefiting local businesses across the wider area.

With continued growth in both SMEs and Business Services (+511 and +245 new businesses from 2019-2024), Fremantle is well-positioned to attract more professional workers who want to live in a connected, lifestyle-rich area and work remotely or in co-working hubs. The Propel Fremantle program has successfully supported 18 startups across the 2023/24 and 2024/25 funding rounds, helping to accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship in the region.

Fremantle is well-positioned to attract more professional workers who want to live in a connected, lifestyle-rich area and work remotely or in co-working hubs.

Why it will make a difference

A City that attracts and retains the brightest minds and fosters entrepreneurial spirit will be more dynamic, innovative and globally competitive.

Realising this opportunity will mean:

- Growing this sector will diversify Fremantle's economy
- It will attract investment into the local economy
- Providing diverse, modern, high-amenity office spaces will enable these entrepreneurial residents to grow their businesses locally, reducing the need to relocate outside the area and strengthening the local economy
- It will foster flexible work environments and stimulate economic activity in the City centre and surrounding suburbs
- It will help to fill a gap in local commercial space offerings



Opportunity 3

Unlocking transformational renewal

What it involves

Transformational investment across key precincts – from the inner Harbour to O'Connor and Fremantle Oval – presents a rare opportunity to reshape the City's economic landscape. Coordinated planning and placemaking can unlock these areas for housing, jobs, innovation and culture. The relocation of port operations creates a generational opportunity to revitalise the inner harbour, enabling the development of new housing, employment precincts and a vibrant waterfront destination.

The Fremantle City Plan will act as a spatial vision for Fremantle's City centre to guide its growth over the next 20 years. This plan aims to increase residential population within the City centre to foster vibrancy, coordinate major projects and enhance infrastructure to attract investment. Projects like the Fremantle Oval Precinct Redevelopment, the Woolstores Developments (with a total value yet to be completed of \$932.4 million), and the Future of Fremantle Place and Economic Vision are central to this precinct-based renewal. O'Connor also presents an opportunity to evolve this light industrial precinct into a more diverse and productive employment area.

This plan aims to increase residential population within the City centre to foster vibrancy, coordinate major projects and enhance infrastructure to attract investment.

Why it will make a difference

Strategic precinct renewal will drive significant economic growth and redefine Fremantle's identity, positioning it as a future-ready City.

Realising this opportunity will mean:

- This transformation will elevate Fremantle's global appeal
- It will deliver flow-on benefits to suburbs beyond the City centre through improved connectivity, increased visitation and broader economic activation
- The Future of Fremantle Place and Economic Vision aims to support up to 20,000 new homes and enable 45,000 jobs, contributing \$13.6 billion per year to WA's gross state product
- A transition in O'Connor will boost local job creation, attract investment and support Fremantle's broader economic resilience
- These precincts will help shift Fremantle's identity from a heritage port to a diverse, future-ready City
- It will attract long-term private investment



Opportunity 4

Soul powers the economy

What it involves

Fremantle's unique identity, shaped by its rich Aboriginal heritage, distinctive coastal character and vibrant creative community, is a powerful asset for economic growth. There is an opportunity to better connect this identity to the visitor economy, local enterprise and city experiences. Revitalising heritage assets, enhancing cultural storytelling and strengthening connections to the waterfront, including a renewed vision for the Manjaree area as a place of deep cultural recognition, welcome and gathering, can elevate Walyalup as a world-class destination. Fremantle has long been a hub for artists, musicians, filmmakers, designers and other creative professionals, with a strong reputation as a centre for innovation and cultural production. As of 2021, Fremantle's creative economy included an estimated 2,310 jobs and contributed \$181.8 million directly to the economy. The City has the longest-running street arts festival in Australia, and the Fremantle Arts Centre turned 50 in 2023.

Revitalising heritage assets, enhancing cultural storytelling and strengthening connections to the waterfront, including a renewed vision for the Manjaree area as a place of deep cultural recognition, welcome and gathering, can elevate Walyalup as a world-class destination.



Why it will make a difference

A strong place identity strengthens community pride, attracts aligned investment and builds a distinctive offer that visitors, residents and businesses can connect with.

Realising this opportunity will mean:

- This identity-led approach fosters community connection
- It supports social wellbeing
- It attracts talent, tourism and investment to power a resilient and equitable local economy
- It will elevate Walyalup as a world-class destination
- It sustains Fremantle's leadership in culture, arts, music and social innovation, with its creative economy being the biggest contributor to creative industries in the Southwest Metropolitan sub-region
- It provides a unique foundation for inclusive economic growth



Opportunity 5

Building a future-fit, resilient economy

What it involves

To build a more inclusive and robust economy, Fremantle can support better access, mobility and affordability while embracing future-focused industries. This involves advocating for affordable housing and key worker accommodation, as new infill developments in the City will allow an influx of new residents that can support local retail and household service expenditure. The Heart of Beaconsfield is a long-term urban renewal initiative led by the City of Fremantle in collaboration with the Department of Communities and other stakeholders, with a desire for development to comprise more than 700 new dwellings.

Fremantle's economy, with its big health and social services sector (the employment sector supporting 6,494 local jobs in 2023-24) and transport and logistics, is well positioned to benefit from AI adoption.

A 'green/circular economy' and 'blue economy' have been identified as major commercial opportunities, and Fremantle is well-positioned to contribute to this transition with a chance to incorporate green economy business development, research and training and sustainable urban design in the re-envisioned future of Fremantle Harbour. Fremantle is also well-positioned to lead in marine technology, aquaculture and ocean-based sustainability.

Targeted infrastructure and policy support can foster the growth of its blue economy cluster and strengthen Fremantle's international innovation profile. This opportunity also includes leveraging AI in healthcare, with emerging technologies well-placed to address healthcare workforce shortages and improve service delivery. Fremantle can also ensure greater economic stability by supply chain rebalancing, advocating for infrastructure improvements, fostering industry collaboration and supporting access to innovation networks.

Why it will make a difference

Inclusion and future-proofing build resilience, socially and economically, making Fremantle a fairer, more adaptable and prosperous city.

Realising this opportunity will mean:

- It will support local retail and household service expenditure
- AI has the potential to alleviate healthcare workforce shortages and improve service delivery
- Fremantle can play an enabling role in the shift toward more resilient and locally anchored supply chains
- There is significant potential in most LGAs for reuse of plastics, organic waste, e-waste and lithium battery recycling
- These industries are likely to draw both government and private investment while helping to diversify the local economy and create sustainable jobs
- It will contribute to a more connected and prosperous region



Opportunity 6

Ensuring Fremantle's enduring appeal

Fremantle's unique character and appeal are built on strong foundations. A clean, safe and vibrant City is a backdrop for economic growth as well as being essential to attracting residents, workers and visitors. To stay competitive, Fremantle must offer an exceptional urban experience, with lively streetscapes, accessible amenities and a dynamic cultural scene that excites and inspires.

What it involves

Maintaining a clean, welcoming City is central to the City of Fremantle's role. World-class events and activations will bring energy to the streets, while investment in public spaces and infrastructure will ensure Fremantle remains beautiful, functional and accessible.

Workers should have opportunities close to home, and key workers should be able to live near their jobs. Small businesses will continue to be supported as critical parts of the City's appeal. Whether for business, study or leisure, Fremantle will remain a destination of choice. This includes ensuring public realm improvements, advocating for affordable housing and key worker accommodation, and promoting sustainable transport.

World-class events and activations will bring energy to the streets, while investment in public spaces and infrastructure will ensure Fremantle remains beautiful, functional and accessible.



Vision for Fremantle's economy

The City of Fremantle's Community Strategic Plan 2024-2034 sets out a vision for the community, with a prosperous and innovative economy being a key aspiration within the plan. The plan aspires to an economy that:

1. Attracts and retains a diversity of investment and talent
2. Supports a resilient 7-day economy
3. Provides a thriving and supportive ecosystem for start-ups and small businesses
4. Provides clear pathways for learning and education
5. Creates a vibrant and active City Centre

Fremantle's vision for the future centres around a thriving economy that benefits everyone. This plan focuses on creating an environment that attracts investment, supports local businesses, and provides opportunities for residents and workers.

Key outcomes and measures of success:

Local opportunities: Residents can find work and study opportunities locally, while workers can live and study within the community.

Attractive urban realm: Improved urban spaces and amenities encourage investment, development, and tourism.

Regional influence: The local economy extends beyond Fremantle's boundaries, connecting with other industry and employment hubs.

Creative sector growth: Targeted growth in creative industries.

Economic resilience: Industry growth and diversification create jobs, contribute to the state economy, and attract larger employers.

State land development: Positive contributions from the development of state-owned land.

Private investment: Increased private sector investment



Strategy

The City of Fremantle will seek to achieve the key outcomes associated with this strategy through the delivery of a series of strategic program areas and associated actions. There will be three primary approaches to implementing the actions identified to follow:

Deliver: Direct delivery of initiatives by the City of Fremantle

Partner: Collaborative delivery with external stakeholders

Advocate: Representing Fremantle's interest to influence policy and investment decisions

While the City of Fremantle has the tools and resources to drive progress, success will also depend on strong partnerships with other levels of government, key policy stakeholders and the businesses, institutions and communities that power the City's economy.

Monitoring and Reporting

Progress will be monitored through:

- Annual implementation plans with specific targets
- Regular reporting to council and the community
- Key performance indicators aligned with strategic outcomes

Strategic program areas

The strategy provides a clear roadmap for supporting the growth of Fremantle's economy through targeted initiatives across four strategic program areas. The program areas and associated actions have been developed based on the key challenges, opportunities and economic data presented in Part I (Situational Analysis) of the strategy, as well as in response to key engagement data collected via the business community.

- Investment and Growth
- Activation and Programming
- Jobs, Skills and Innovation
- Economic Precinct Planning and development



1.0 Investment and growth

Fremantle has seen significant revitalisation, but challenging market conditions and limited investor engagement have slowed the City's full potential.

By leveraging distinct industry clusters including the blue, green, creative, cultural, and visitor economies, our aim is to drive further revitalisation by promoting targeted investment in these areas, fostering employment, innovation, and resilience.

Goal

Grow our City centre residential population, and attract the diverse investment required to build a resilient economy.

Priority objectives

- Incentivise investment
- Target and grow priority sectors
- Support and engage businesses

Key actions

1.1 Incentivise investment

- 1.1.1 Deliver:** Develop a policy or similar mechanism that allows for a portion of rates generated by significant residential developments in the City Centre to be allocated towards the improvement of the public realm directly adjacent to or surrounding those respective developments as they near completion.
- 1.1.2 Deliver:** Identify and make recommendations on areas of the Town Planning Scheme where council can apply discretion that may incentivise development of vacant or underutilised land in the City Centre.
- 1.1.3 Deliver:** Deliver an ongoing program of engagement with the investment and development community that educates them on the opportunities associated with the new City Plan and other opportunities within the LGA.
- 1.1.4 Deliver:** Formalise an approach to an investor/developer concierge service that supports and streamlines investor and developer engagement with internal City processes such as planning, building compliance, health, engineering and rates.

1.2 Target priority sectors

- 1.2.1 Partner:** Prioritise activities and initiatives that will support the growth of jobs, businesses and or investment into the following Fremantle based industry clusters:
- Blue Economy
 - Green Economy
 - Creative Economy
 - Cultural Economy
 - Visitor economy
- 1.2.2 Deliver:** Carry out an audit of each of the above-mentioned sectors to determine existing capability and local content, as well as future growth opportunities within each that align with State level priorities of economic development.
- 1.2.3 Deliver:** Profile Fremantle's activities within each of these sectors and promote via investment marketing, engagement with export markets via Trades offices, advocacy activities, and through stakeholder relationships with government and industry bodies.



1.2.4 Deliver: Leverage the This is Fremantle brand, investment website and prospectus to deliver a program of marketing and communications that raises Fremantle's profile as a suitable place to invest.

1.2.5 Deliver: Develop a suite of content that establishes the This is Fremantle investment website as a central repository for economic data, promotional information, strategies, plans and advocacy material – providing a one stop shop for any information investors and developers require to make informed investment decisions relating to Fremantle.

1.3 Support and engage businesses

1.3.1 Deliver: Deliver activities and initiatives that assist in building and maintaining direct lines of communication with Fremantle's business community, so that the City is accessible and responsive to feedback and communication from businesses.

1.3.2 Deliver: Establish a business toolkit that can be provided to new and existing businesses and provides information on how to engage with the City, opportunities that exist for businesses and key projects the City is embarking on.

1.3.3 Deliver: Implement methods of communication that are consistent, diverse and better align with the needs of all small businesses including but not limited to face to face communication, events, digital communications and larger event-based forums.

1.3.4 Deliver: Formalise an approach to delivering a small business concierge service that supports and streamlines small business engagement with internal City processes such as planning, building compliance, health, engineering and rates.

2.0 Activation and programming

Fremantle's City centre, despite its rich heritage and culture, faces challenges in maintaining vibrant public spaces that consistently drive economic activity, particularly mid-week.

Issues like vacant properties, street cleanliness, and underutilised public spaces can detract from the visitor experience and dampen our economic vibrancy.

A coordinated approach to marketing, programming, and street-level interventions is vital to boost activity and support local businesses.

Goal

Create vibrant, engaging public spaces that drive consistent economic activity, improve visitor experience, and mitigate impact of commercial vacancy.

Priority objectives

- Activate public spaces
- Enhance safety and amenity
- Boost marketing and promotion



Key actions

2.1 Activated and engaging public spaces

2.1.1 Deliver: Continue to deliver on major event, business event, activation and programming objectives outlined in the City of Fremantle Destination Development Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027.

2.1.2 Partner: Support the delivery of programs that temporarily activate clusters of vacant retail and hospitality premises in collaboration with suitable partners.

2.1.3 Deliver: Develop a register of City Centre vacancy that seeks to collect and track data relating to length of vacancy, type of ownership and barriers to occupation.

2.1.4 Advocate: Work with WALGA and an appropriate independent advisory to investigate and advocate for a workable approach to managing long term commercial vacancy in City Centre and High Streets via differential rating, or other suitable mechanism.

2.1.5 Deliver: Develop and deliver a program of street level interventions and activities that maintain a focus on driving mid-week activation in areas that rely on footfall driven economic activity.

2.1.6 Deliver: Review the current calendar of City owned events/programming and determine the phasing required to drive activation across periods of lower activity (low and shoulder seasons).

2.1.7 Deliver: Establish a staged program of activations that recognises and celebrates the progression of the Fremantle Dockers through milestones within the AFL and AFLW finals series and grand final, as well as the achievement of other nationally or internationally significant sporting events that have a connection to or resonate with the Fremantle community.

2.2 Safety and amenity

2.2.1 Deliver: Review City centre street cleaning schedules and work to align with key visitation periods to ensure streetscapes are clean and presentable during periods of higher visitation and foot traffic.

2.2.3 Deliver: Deliver a program of education and engagement for businesses that provides guidance and advice on how best to leverage the City's community safety program as well as approaches to engaging police in managing anti-social behaviour.

2.2.4 Partner: Collaborate with key agencies such as WA Police, Department of Communities and St. Patricks to deliver a cross-agency approach to support at risk and vulnerable street present members of the community.

2.2.5 Deliver: Undertake an audit of City centre streets and identify opportunities to de-clutter ageing and superfluous infrastructure in order to improve walkability and amenity.

2.2.6 Deliver: Assess City centre foot traffic data in order to guide and prioritise key projects within the City's footpath renewal program in line with volume of usage and impact on walkability.

2.3 Marketing and promotion

2.3.1 Deliver: Continue to deliver on marketing, activation and programming related objectives outlined in the City of Fremantle Destination Development Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027.



3.0 Jobs, skills and innovation

As the global economy evolves and technology disrupts traditional work, the jobs and skills needed for a sustainable local economy are changing dramatically.

Fremantle's existing start-up and innovation ecosystem has the potential to drive the creation and growth of these future jobs. This requires ongoing support for the ecosystem and the provision of necessary education and training outcomes to develop the required skills, knowledge, and talent.

Goal

Create an ecosystem that generates future jobs, develops essential skills, and fosters innovation in an evolving global economy.

Priority objectives

- Grow and strengthen the start-up and innovation ecosystem
- Promote and connect key research and education pathways with industry



Key actions

3.1 Start up and innovation ecosystem

- 3.1.1 Deliver:** Continue to deliver and grow the City's ecosystem support program (Propel Fremantle) and ensure it is accessible and relevant to the needs of the local start-up and innovation ecosystem, as well as expanding focus beyond start-ups to incorporate growth and support opportunities for established small and medium size enterprises.
- 3.1.2 Partner:** Support local ecosystem related events through cash and in-kind sponsorships.
- 3.1.3 Advocate:** Identify and secure relevant state and federal funding to support the City's ecosystem support program and assist other local programs in securing further state funding.
- 3.1.4 Partner:** Strengthen relationships within key supporting agencies (State Government, Mesh Points etc.) to position Fremantle as a key hub in the WA innovation ecosystem.
- 3.1.5 Deliver:** Invest in and support relevant economic/industry studies and data to further define the Fremantle start-up and innovation ecosystem and identify opportunities for growth.
- 3.1.6 Advocate:** Support blue economy stakeholders in developing and advocating for a shared marine testing, research and production facility that will allow colocation and collaboration across the blue economy supply chain within Fremantle.

3.2 Research and education

- 3.2.1 Partner:** Continue to work closely with Notre Dame University Australia to deliver mutually beneficial projects and initiatives that support and grow the Fremantle economy.
- 3.2.2 Partner:** Establish and grow relationships with neighbouring universities to identify opportunities that aid in advancing the growth of priority sectors within Fremantle as well as the potential to deliver mutually beneficial projects and student housing outcomes.
- 3.2.3 Partner:** Engage with Southwest Metropolitan Tafe and other Registered Training Organisations to identify and grow vocational training opportunities arising from Fremantle's priority sectors and economic activity occurring in the broader region.
- 3.2.4 Partner:** Collaborate with relevant non-academic research bodies (i.e. Curtin Economics, Spinnaker Foundation, WA Marine Science Institute etc.) to encourage the delivery of research activity that supports the growth of Fremantle innovation ecosystem and priority sectors.
- 3.2.5 Advocate:** Continue to engage with and raise the profile of alternative education pathway providers for school age students seeking to pursue further academic or entrepreneurial pathways.



4.0 Economic precinct planning and development

Fremantle's diverse economic precincts are subject to shifting industry trends and evolving land use demands.

A set of cohesive plans that align future land use, economic priorities, and collaborative advocacy efforts will enable the City to leverage major government and private sector projects, attract new investment, and ensure Fremantle's primary economic precincts remain vibrant, resilient, and adaptive.

Goal

Draw investment and sustain cultural vibrancy through cohesive planning, land-use alignment and economic prioritisation.

Priority objectives

- Build a plan for our economic precincts
- Advocate for the delivery of transformative projects and partnerships

Key actions

4.1 Economic precinct planning

4.1.1 Deliver: Collate and promote agreed future land use, economic priorities and character (as per the Local Planning Strategy) for key economic precincts including but not limited to:

- City Centre
- O'Connor
- North & South Fremantle
- Knutsford
- Victoria Quay
- East End
- Fishing Boat Harbour

4.1.2 Advocate: Review, determine and promote preferred land use, economic development and planning outcomes for North Quay as part of continuing engagement via the Future Fremantle planning process.

4.1.3 Advocate: Engage with relevant state government agencies and businesses to propose alternative locations for businesses that may need to relocate as a result of ongoing naval and defence investment occurring in Henderson and surrounds.

4.1.4 Advocate: Leverage opportunities associated with investment occurring across the southwest metropolitan corridor to attract investment and businesses into relevant economic precincts within Fremantle.

4.1.5 Advocate: Review and identify opportunities that may exist within masterplans and development plans associated with key stakeholders such as the Fremantle Hospital, Notre Dame University, Department of Transport and Fremantle Port Authority in order to ensure consistent and cohesive economic thinking across the City Centre.

4.2 Transformative projects and partnerships

4.2.1 Advocate: Develop an advocacy strategy and annual communications plan that provides direction on advancing the City's key advocacy priorities, particularly those that will drive significant economic outcomes for Fremantle and surrounds including but not limited to:

- Improved transport connections via the southwest corridor
- Redevelopment of Victoria Quay and relocation of RORO operations
- Delivery of residential developments planned on State Government land
- The redevelopment of the Fremantle Oval precinct.



4.2.2 Advocate: Develop and maintain productive relationships with key relevant State and Federal Agencies including but not limited to:

- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport
- Department of Energy and Economic Diversification
- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
- Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Trade Commission Offices in relevant international markets
- Defence West
- Tourism Australia and Tourism Western Australia
- Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure
- Fremantle Port Authority

4.2.3 Advocate: Develop and maintain productive relationships with key industry bodies and agencies including but not limited to:

- Destination Perth
- Business Events Perth
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA
- Committee for Perth
- Tourism Council WA
- Property Council WA
- Fremantle Chamber of Commerce
- WA Local Government Association
- Perth Southwest Metropolitan Alliance
- Kwinana Industries Council
- Australian Cruise Association

4.2.4 Advocate: Work with key stakeholders and or industries bodies who have influence over or can play a role in contributing to the economic growth of Fremantle and establish an agreed cross-organisational vision that will guide future economic development related activities or decisions at the local and sub-regional level.

Measuring success

Success will be measured against the following high-level outcomes:

1. Increased private sector investment in the CBD
2. Growth in inner City residential population
3. Improved urban realm and amenity
4. Growth in creative industry sectors
5. Increased economic activity beyond LGA boundaries
6. Development of State Government landholdings
7. Increased local employment and educational opportunities

The following will be measured and reported on (as updated Census/ABS data becomes available) in relation to individual program areas:

Investment and growth

- Total local spend in the City of Fremantle increases
- GST-registered businesses in Fremantle grow
- The number of jobs in professional services, real estate, finance and info media increases
- The total value of developments categorised as 'construction completed', 'under construction', 'approved' and 'plans submitted' increases
- Inner City residential population increases
- Fremantle's Gross Regional Product (GRP) grows, reflecting increased economic activity from renewal projects
- Local jobs growth is elevated as major projects come on board
- Visitor expenditure accounts for a significant portion of total spend, indicating strong appeal
- The number of filming permit applications received increases
- The number of visitors to Central Fremantle increases annually
- The tourism industry contribution to Fremantle's economy grows
- The number of new infill developments in the City increases

Activation and programming

- The City Centre experiences an increase in weekday visitation and expenditure
- The number of visitors to Central Fremantle increases annually
- School holiday activations visitation and economic value grows
- Perceptions of safety and cleanliness in public areas improve
- The number of City-led and supported event attendees increases

Jobs, skills and innovation

- The number of startups supported by the Propel Fremantle program increases
- Fremantle's share of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher remains strong compared to Greater Perth
- The number of people commuting to Fremantle for work increases, indicating a strong regional employment centre
- The unemployment rate falls below 4 per cent and remains low
- The City attracts a diverse mix of new residents, including younger workers and skilled migrants

Economic precinct planning and development

- O'Connor and other key economic precincts experience growth in jobs, expenditure and diversity of land use.
- Genuine demand starts to emerge for the Future Fremantle inner harbour redevelopment, due to housing supply and demand in Central Fremantle and surrounds projecting saturation into the future.
- Federal and State Funding is secured for major projects that form part of the City's key advocacy priorities.

Annual implementation and review process

An Implementation Plan will be developed and reviewed annually to assess progress against KPIs, adjust priorities based on changing economic conditions, identify new opportunities and challenges, and ensure alignment with the Community Strategic Plan.

The Implementation Plan should be viewed as a living document that will evolve as economic conditions change, and new opportunities emerge. While this plan establishes clear priorities and actions, the City of Fremantle will maintain flexibility to respond to market shifts, policy changes and community needs. Regular stakeholder engagement will be essential to ensure the plan remains relevant and effective throughout its implementation.





Related plans

This Economic Development Strategy is one of several plans that will guide the City of Fremantle. In addition to the broader relationship with these key strategic outputs, other City of Fremantle strategic and operational frameworks also complement and align with this strategy.

These include but may not be limited to:

- City of Fremantle Economic Development Strategy: Part I - Situational Analysis
- City of Fremantle Economic Development Strategy: Part II - Strategy and Implementation
- City of Fremantle Strategic Community Plan 2024-2034
- Fremantle City Plan
- City of Fremantle Arts, Culture and Creative Strategy 2024 - 2034
- Fremantle Bike Plan
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- City's Urban Forest Plan
- Tree retention policy
- Destination Development Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027
- Annual Budget process
- Long Term Financial Plan



Contact

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