

# 2021-2022 End of Financial Year Economic Development Report

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## Background and Strategic Summary

### Economic Development

Economic Development is one (1) of the five (5) strategic directions of the **Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 (CSP-2027)** with the objective to facilitate a growing local economy by continuing to support an attractive business climate and the goal of:

1. Facilitate market and business opportunities;
2. Develop a strong brand for Glen Innes Highlands;
3. Facilitate growth and support business development; and
4. Recognise and support the agricultural sector as the most significant local industry within the LGA.

Economic development is critical in assisting communities to develop a consistent approach and focus to leverage and achieve economic development outcomes. An **Economic Development Strategy (EDS)** also acts as strategic document for Council that aids advocacy efforts with Federal and State Government.

In addition, an EDS builds confidence for potential investors and/or businesses seeking to relocate to the region. It would also serve as a guide for the development of the next Delivery Program under the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan ensuring alignment and progress to achieve economic, community and social outcomes.

The new place based **Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy 2020-2040 and Action Plan 2020-2025 (EDS-AP)** was adopted by Council at the March 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting.

The following executive summary is taken from the EDS-AP and shares the vision, strategy, and key guiding principles:

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### VISION

"Our place grows from the people that live within it. We celebrate and honour our shared Indigenous and European history and traditions. We connect, engage, nurture and motivate each other for mutual prosperity to create a vibrant and close-knit community that welcomes new people."

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy provides a clear pathway for Council and Community foster local socio-economic prosperity and growth through the four key pillars of Partnerships, People, Place, and Prosperity. These four pillars provide a whole-of-place mechanism to deliver a place-based approach to local economic development.

### KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**DIVERSIFICATION & SPECIALISATION** - We seek to diversify our local economy by diversifying our dominant industries and supporting specialist industry growth.

**SUSTAINABILITY** - We seek to sustain our local economy for future generations to ensure their wellbeing and prosperity.

**CLIMATE PROTECTION** - Our majority believe the science of climate change and seek to ensure that our impacts are reduced, renewable energy solutions are embraced and utilised and strive to be 100% renewable.

**INNOVATION** - We seek to not only embrace innovation and leverage digital connection but to create it with no fear of failure.

**COLLABORATION** - We believe that Economic Development is everyone's responsibility and that the village can raise the best outcomes just like it can raise a child.

**LIVABILITY** - We make every decision based on the benefit to the community first, and the benefit to visitors second, because we live here.

**NURTURE** - Collectively and individually we nurture our next generation to leverage the legacy whilst evolving towards an even better future with respect of new ideas, ways and means.

**LOCAL PRIDE** - We celebrate our town, villages and hamlets with reflective appreciation of our lifestyle and healthy way of connecting through our lives.

## Destination Management

Destination management introduces a ‘holistic’ approach to the development, management, and marketing of tourist destinations.

Destination management aims to ensure that tourism adds value to the economy and social fabric of the area, is sustainable into the future, is resilient to external shocks and is responsive to changes in both the marketplace and competitive environment. It involves formulating a strong vision for the future of the destination and putting in place the framework and resources to ‘deliver’ this vision.

The new **Destination Management Plan Summary 2021-2026 (DMP)** was adopted by Council at the July 2021 Ordinary Council Meeting EDS-AP.

The following image represents the DMP’s four (4) strategic pillars, their strategic objectives, and their strategic goals.

| STRATEGIC PILLAR                                                                                                                         | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | STRATEGIC GOAL                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>1. IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE</p>                 | <p>Improve the customer experience of GIH towns and villages as both destinations and service centres to address key customer experience constraints and provide visitors more reason to stop, explore and stay and spend longer.</p>                                   | <p>Provide a customer experience that increases visitor’s length of stay and spend, encourages positive word of mouth and user generated content, and return visitation.</p>            |
|  <p>2. EVOLVE BRAND POSITIONING</p>                   | <p>Evolve the brand positioning to focus on a central contextual theme to bring together all the attributes of natural and cultural heritage.</p> <p>Continue to strengthen marketing and promotional activity based on the evolved brand positioning.</p>              | <p>Provide a focused approach to destination marketing, product, and experience development to deliver our vision and strengthen what we stand for and are known for.</p>               |
|  <p>3. DEVELOP &amp; IMPROVE EXISTING EXPERIENCES</p> | <p>Continue to develop and improve the existing experience base of GIH across attractions, activities, and events.</p> <p>Support existing natural, human, and built assets to provide improved experiences that benefit the community’s socio-economic prosperity.</p> | <p>Improve the quality and capacity of our existing attractions, activities and experiences through connection, collaboration and support of local people and businesses.</p>           |
|  <p>4. CREATE &amp; DELIVER NEW EXPERIENCES</p>       | <p>Incubate, fund, and deliver new activities, events, and attractions in context of adventure in nature, culture and history.</p> <p>Expanding adventure-based activity, experiences, and events in context of our natural &amp; built environments.</p>               | <p>Be bold, adventurous, and ambitious to create new ideas and experiences to attract domestic and international visitors based on trends, interests, and the discerning traveller.</p> |

The following summaries the key actions and initiatives delivered in FY 2021-2022 from the Economic Development team utilising the 2021/2022 Operational Budget as well as successful grant funding applications across the two key strategies – EDS-AP and DMP.

The EDS-AP will be optimised in due course to ensure that the strategy and its actions are relevant to what has been achieved to date and aligned to new and developing approaches to socio-economic development in the context of place-making and place-based economic development.

# Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy 2020-2040 and Action Plan 2020-2025

## Partnerships – Facilitate connection and collaboration

Six (6) of the seven (7) tasks have been delivered to date and the remaining in progress and/or ongoing.

### *Local Business Growth & Support*

- a. The **Highlands Business and Community Hub (HUB)** incorporating programs and initiatives to drive local socio-economic prosperity and support social enterprise has been fully funded under the **Bushfire Local Economic Development Fund (BLER)** with the fit-out in progress with an opening date of September 2022.
- b. The HUB Officer has been appointed under the title of **Community and Business Engagement Officer (CBEO)** who will provide support, connection and access through the HUB to improve leadership, growth and employment outcomes as well as reduce local economic leakage and promote local partnerships and collaborations.
- c. Delivering an ‘open for business’ approach to attracting business through effective support and guidance is iterating as the **Manager Economic Development (MED)** increases awareness of the economic development function within Council through various initiatives and communication activities.

### *Consultation, Design Thinking & Problem Solving*

- a. The **Grow Glen Innes Think Tank (GGITT)** now has 58 members (target of 20) with five (5) workshops delivered to date which will all contribute to the Liveability GGITT including:
  - i. Healthcare Workforce Attraction;
  - ii. Local Jobs and Skills Gaps;
  - iii. Disused and Underutilised Assets;
  - iv. Vision 2100; and
  - v. Community Wealth Building.

### *Master Planning and Integrated Planning*

- a. The 2100 Vision GGITT workshop summary is attached for information and will be included as an input to the Liveability GGITT to be held in August 2022. The key emerging themes include:
  - I. Pride in place: In 2100, the people of Glen Innes are proud to be custodians who plan to leave behind a positive place legacy;
  - II. Cohesive community: In 2100, community life is harmonious, cohesive and inclusive. The Glen Innes region values people, people collaborate, partners together and diversity is respected;

- III. Well-planned infrastructure: In 2100, the people of the Glen Innes region have access to a well-planned, wide range of services, activities and facilities including health services, sustainable housing and jobs, green spaces, culture and arts and transport;
  - IV. Healthy ecosystems: In 2100, the Glen Innes region has a healthy ecosystem with clean air and water. Regenerative industries and natural spaces provide fresh food and recreation opportunities; and
  - V. Peaceful character: In 2100, Glen Innes has retained its peaceful and relaxed character, complemented with a vibrant town heart.
- b. The EDS-AP was a key input when framing priorities for the **Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (CSP-2032)** and fully integrated into the **Glen Innes Severn Delivery Program 2022-2025 (DP)** and the **Glen Innes Severn Operational Plan and Budget 2022-2023 (OP-2022-2026)**.

The External Customer Survey's conducted every two (2) years shows economic development and road and infrastructure are the two (2) top areas of high importance with the historically low satisfaction in the 2016, 2018 and 2020 results.

One (1) of the four (4) key recommendations in the 2020 External Customer survey is:

*“Continue to focus on investment and economic growth within the area to maintain vitality and prosperity of the region (business/industry attraction, employment growth, keeping youth in the area and the promotion of tourism).”*

The positive results presented in this report will hopefully see a higher satisfaction rating in the next external customer survey, however, to achieve this greater support from media and communications and a continuation of continuous information sharing via all available channels informing the community and changing the perception around performance in economic development.

## People – Improve socio-economic wellbeing and prosperity

Nine (9) of the thirteen tasks have been delivered to date and the remaining in progress and/or ongoing.

### *Local Jobs Program & Workforce Attraction Strategy:*

- a. Research was commissioned and completed for local jobs and skills gaps to determine the challenges, gaps and future workforce opportunities via **Regional Australian Institute (RAI)** and the **Workforce Attraction and Retention Strategy (WA&RS)** will be another key input into the Liveability GGITT.
- b. The development of a **Local jobs Program (LJP)** is in research stage with the GGITT completed ready for the next steps to leverage the HUB and its connection with training and development to co-design the program in collaboration with schools, TAFE, industry, Federal and State plans and universities and/or university centres.

The strategic recommendations of the WA&RS to create a **Regional Learning System (RLS)** will be a focus area in the 2022-2023 financial year to deliver a collaborative approach to local education and training opportunities to mitigate future jobs and skills gaps in main areas of professional services (healthcare and education) and professional trades.

*HUB – Education & Jobs programs & Initiatives:*

- c. The HUB – Community ‘Localised’ digital platform incorporating local jobs, education & training, candidate profiles and link to the business platform has been delivered and re-launched in May 2022 to add Community and Careers in order to expand the platform to a whole-of-community tool to connect, create, innovate and grow.

The platform has been migrated away from Localised which unfortunately folded in April 2022 and will need to be rebuilt away from the satellite server to have the opportunity to further develop and potentially integrate with the HUB coworking booking plug-in Nexodus.

- d. Grant funding was delivered for the HUB training and development programs as a part of the BLER funding and additional funding applied for under the **Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program (RRNSW-CEP)**;
- e. The local mentoring program is in development by MED initially as a feature on the digital HUB and will be expanded through the LJP program; and
- f. There is no specific update provided from the former **General Manager (GM)** on the lobbying of State and Federal Governments for increased training and education courses linked to our local gaps and future needs.

*Digital Connectivity & Remote Readiness:*

- g. The IGM will continue to lobby Federal Government to address mobile blackspots in the LGA. MED advises advocating for **Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)** projects to include more benefit to local communities including funding of additional mobile towers and opportunities for consumer benefit to reduce energy household costs.
- h. MED facilitated the partnership with nbn co to apply to the **Regional Connectivity Program (RCP)** for the Deepwater Village upgrade to NBN, Council was advised 14 July 2022 that the application was unsuccessful. Council will continue to advocate for better broadband services to the LGA and leverage any new grant funding opportunities to address this community concern and inhibitor;
- i. Seeking ‘Remote Ready’ programs and initiatives to deliver through the HUB will continue from those already secured and referred to above;

## Place – Develop Local Assets and Improve Liveability

11 of the 18 tasks have been delivered to date and the remaining in progress and/or ongoing:

### *Marketing and Promotion:*

- a. The **Glen Innes Highlands (GIH)** annual marketing plan was delivered to encourage people to Visit, Live and Invest with the following results achieved in leveraging our strengths, opportunities, and assets.

Communication with GIH databases and social media audiences (visitors, community, and local business) continued monthly via our email campaigns, articles on the GIH website news page and organic social media posts. Table 1.1 – Email campaign activity shows the number of newsletters delivered over the year.

| <b>Newsletter Content</b>                               | <b>Audience<br/>(as at 30 June 2022)</b> | <b>Number of email<br/>campaigns<br/>delivered</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Newsletter                 | 1,384 recipients                         | 9                                                  |
| Tourism and Events Industry News                        | 185 recipients                           | 11                                                 |
| Grants and Funding Opportunities – Business & Community | 1,180 recipients                         | 5                                                  |
| Local Economic Development News                         | 1,174 recipients                         | 2                                                  |
| General news                                            | Targeted to specific recipient groups    | 12                                                 |

*Table 1.1 – Email campaign activity*

Social media activity shows the statistics from the delivery of our organic social media content strategy over the year. As of 30 June 2022, GIH had a combined following of 8,947, growth of 14% from the previous period.

Total post engagement decreased by 10% and reach increased by 9% compared to the previous period.

Given the decrease in total number of posts, the stable results support the content strategy is resonating with the audience. The overall 30% increase in combined page reach further supports the positive impact of the marketing activity. Please refer to Table 1.2 below.

| Social Media                   | Followers<br>(as at 30 June 2022) | Total Page Reach*    | Total Posts    | Total Post Reach*  | Total Post Engagement |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Glen Innes Highlands Facebook  | 7,873<br>(17% ↑)                  | 1,478,082<br>(40% ↑) | 206<br>(36% ↓) | 356,630<br>(11% ↑) | 26,191<br>(12% ↓)     |
| Glen Innes Highlands Instagram | 1,074<br>(21% ↑)                  | 23,606<br>(76% ↓)    | 59<br>(16% ↓)  | 25,042<br>(8% ↓)   | 2,495<br>(9% ↑)       |
| TOTAL                          | 8,947<br>(14% ↑)                  | 1,501,688<br>(30% ↑) | 265<br>(34% ↓) | 381,672<br>(9% ↑)  | 28,686<br>(10% ↓)     |

Table 1.2 – Social Media activity - \*Post reach equals the number of people who saw a specific post in their news feed. Post reach equals the number of people who saw any of a page’s post content during the given period of time.

Paid digital and social media advertising campaigns were executed across display, google search and Facebook, television advertising, and print advertisements across a range of publications, to reach multiple target audience demographics and geographics. Marketing activity across all owned and paid channels was reviewed monthly to optimise results.

Increased website traffic for the period compared with the previous two (2) periods (FY 2019/2020 and FY 2020-2021) highlights the positive impact of the marketing activity on increasing brand awareness as referred to in the below Chart 1.1.

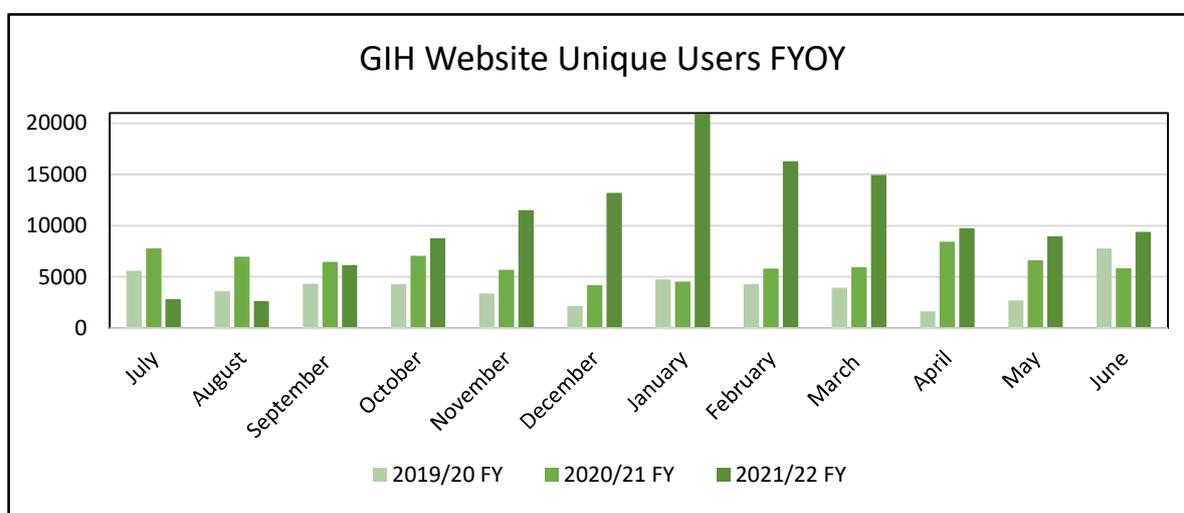


Chart 1.1 - GIH website unique users Financial Year on Year (FYOY)

GIH website unique users **Financial Year on Year (FYOY)**. The spike in traffic from September correlates with the re-launch of the GIH visit and live digital campaigns in September 2021, followed by the launch the invest campaign in October 2021. Additional traffic from November 2021 to March 2022 correlates with GIH participation in the regional brands marketing activities.

The development of the new GIH Visitor Guide Magazine progressed but production was delayed with completion expected in September 2022. A total of 17 stories have been developed for the guide by local travel writer Amanda Woods.

In addition, content was developed to promote GIH cycle tourism including a page on the GIH website, imagery and three (3) gravel grinding videos shown below:



Images 3-5 – Gravel Grinding Youtube videos

- b. Formalise the **New England High Country (NEHC)** brand and group to deliver marketing and promotions at a regional level has been postponed.
- c. Facilitate place-making media coverage has been achieved through campaign activity and the **Media Office (MO)** local media coverage.
- d. Building pride, advocacy and positivity within our local community through a collaborative marketing ecosystem driven by one purpose has commenced and continues to be optimised.

The collaborative partnership being developed between Council and the new Glen Innes Business Chamber via HUB will propel this task in the coming year.

- e. Deliver NEHC programs and campaigns in conjunction with the NEHC Group continues to bring increased awareness and consideration of our region with the following activity delivered:

2021/2022 FY marketing activity promoting the regional destination brand included paid digital and social, product development and print advertising. Refer Images 6 – NEHC Youtube videos below.



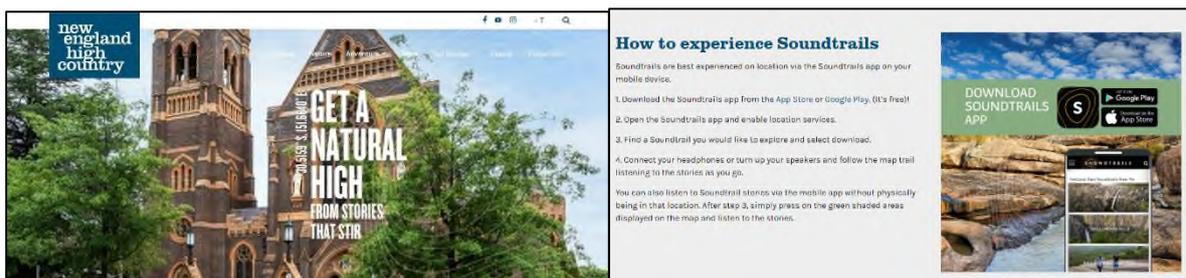
Images 6 – NEHC Youtube videos

Activities included the Classic Car print and digital campaign with Just Cars and Practical Motoring from July 2021 to October 2021, Caravanning and Recreational Vehicle Campaign from September 2021 to October 2021 and the launch of the NEHC Brand and Soundtrails digital marketing campaign from July 2021 to March 2022.

NEHC partnered with Australian Traveller in the Australia Now (issue 92) and 100 Amazing Road Trips (issue 94) campaigns. Refer Annexure 2 for the final Australia Now campaign report.

NEHC Tourism Group contracted a social media contributor from November 2021 to deliver the brands social media content and engagement strategy. As of 30 June 2022, NEHC had a combined following of 18,379, growth of 8.4% from the previous period. Nature and adventure content resonate the most with the brands audience. See Annexure 3 – NEHC Social Media Outcomes for the full results.

Major product development included the development of four Soundtrail experiences in Washpool **National Park (NP)**, Baldrock NP and Oxley Wild Rivers NP. Refer Images 7-8 – NEHC Website and Soundtrails experiences below.



Images 7-8 – NEHC Website and Soundtrails experiences

- f. Marketing material has been disseminated through networks such as **Regional Development Australian Northern Inland (RDANI)** and Regional NSW directly and to industry bodies and businesses through online channels via LinkedIn and the HUB digital platform.
- g. We have continued to leverage **Accredited Visitor Information Centre's (AVIC's), Destination NSW (DNSW) & Destination Country and Outback (DNCO)** to promote Glen Innes Highlands, its events and activities to attract people to visit and utilise the networks for information we can leverage in our programs and activities going forward.

**Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre (VIC)** - The total number of visitors to the for FY 2021/2022 was 10,791, a 24% decrease from the previous period due to border closures, lockdowns, and extreme weather events.

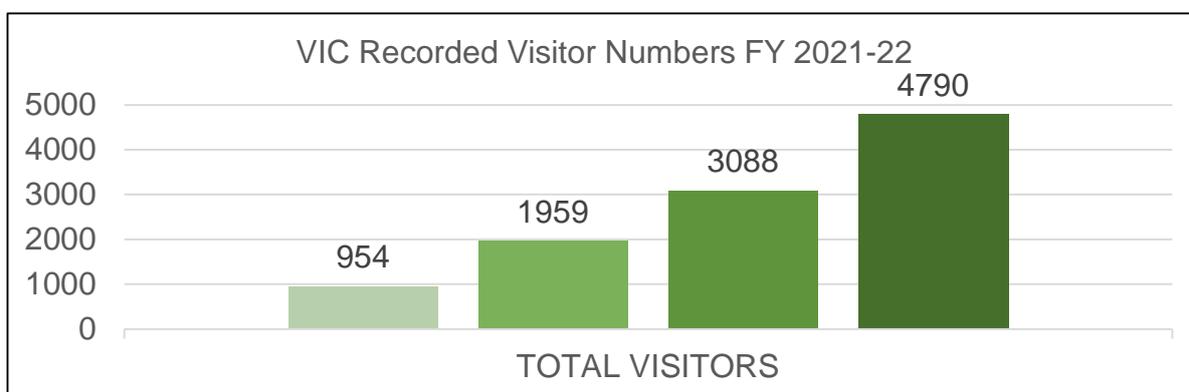


Chart 1.1 – Recorded Visitor Numbers at the Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre FY 2021-2022

Though COVID-19 Public Health Orders were eased in NSW in January 2022, other states including Queensland were still restricted under State Government legislation. Once restrictions became more aligned Nationally visitor numbers slowly increased.

There was however still hesitation for visitors to make plans due to a resurgence of outbreaks, this was challenging for visitors and businesses.

The VIC playing an integral role for travellers regarding latest road closures due to flooding, landslides and those looking for accommodation. Glen Innes continued to be a convenient stop-over for those travelling west especially visitors avoiding the coast and affected towns from 21 February to 11 March 2022.

Glen Innes continued to see visitors from South-West Queensland but also more travellers from Victoria and South Australia, in numbers we had not seen since the beginning of the Pandemic, reaching a new peak during Easter School Holidays and high visitor numbers including international visitors in May due to the Australian Celtic Festival.

The **Glen Innes Highlands Shop (GIH Shop)** sales reached 91% of the yearly target with quarter four (4) being the highest quarter in sales. Sales were down which was expected due to the 24% decrease in visitor numbers.

However, this result is much better than anticipated considering this. Refer Chart 1.2 for a comparison of quarterly sales.

The GIH Shop continued to support and highlight local produce, local artisans and GIH branded merchandise. Fossicking gem wash and local honey were our highest selling products.

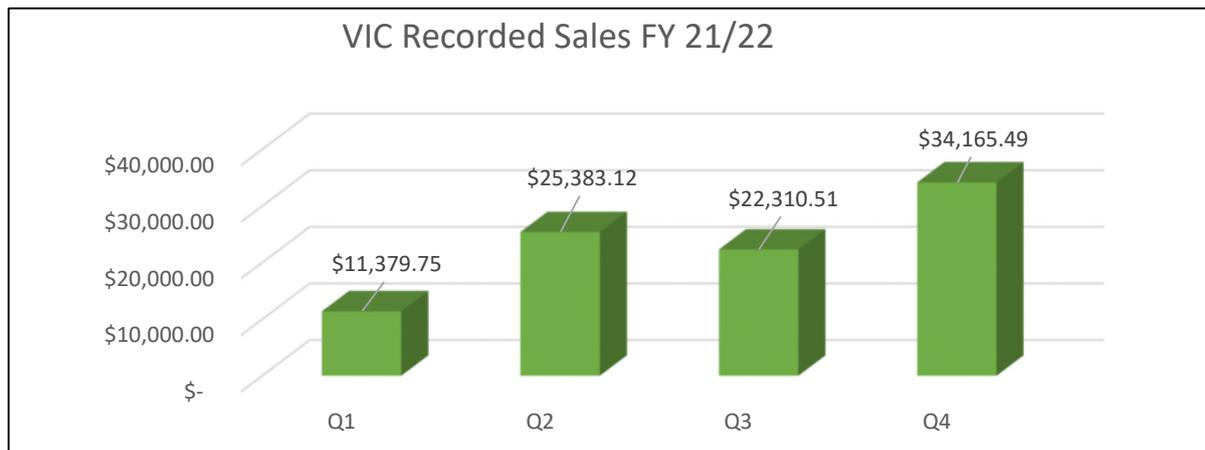


Chart 1.2 – VIC Shop Sales FY 2021/2022.

### Healthcare & Social Assistance Services

- h. Advocating to attract aged care facilities and services to accommodate our future aging population is the responsibility of the **Director Development, Planning and Regulatory Services (DDPRS)**.
- i. Leveraging the 'Health outcomes and access to health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales inquiry to formulate a plan to improve local health services is the responsibility of the **Director Corporate and Community Services (DCCS)** however the MED initiated the **Attract, Connect, Stay - Glen Innes (ACS-GI)** pilot program which is now handed over to the community-based committee headed by Sheryn Nourse, Chairperson.
- j. Lobbying of the State Government for the upgrade to the Glen Innes Hospital has produced an increased \$50Million budget inclusive of a new ambulance station at the existing hospital site.
- k. Lobbying of the State Government and partnering with the NSW Rural Doctors Network to provide incentive packages to attract additional healthcare professionals to the LGA/Regions has been replaced by the ACS-GI and the collaboration with **Primary Hunter Health (PHN)** to run another pilot program in Glen Innes named **Better Health for the Bush (BHFB)**.
- l. Lobbying the Australian Department of Social Services to add Glen Innes to the Stronger Places, Stronger People program to interrupt the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage has not yet commenced and is the responsibility of the **General Manager (GM)**.

### *Attracting & Retaining Population*

- m. Creating a 'Movers Attraction Policy' to address population mobility and to increase internal migration from and to key areas leveraging our strengths and opportunities across all relevant strategies and channels is in development as part of the Liveability GGITT.
- n. We have continually sought grant funding and investment to improve 'things to do' to improve liveability and attract more families including the following:
  - i. The Skywalk Geotourism Experience
  - ii. The New England Rail Trail
  - iii. The HUB
  - iv. The Powerhouse Museum concept
  - v. Gravel-Grinding
  - vi. Bouldering
- o. Facilitating a university-led detailed study into the outflow of people moving to the area in order to create incentives to stem the outflow and retain families, investigating the link between occupation types leaving and industry services local demand will be delivered by 2023.
- p. Providing a start-up incubator via the HUB to provide a pathway for high-school and university leavers to consider remaining in the LGA, starting a business, and contributing to local economic prosperity was initially a partnership with BREED, unfortunately the federal fund stream was removed. MED will continue to seek funding and partnerships to deliver this task into the future.
- q. Partnering with local real estates to include GIH marketing in their marketing channels; collect migration data; promote affordability and deliver a new 'Welcome to Glen Innes Pack' has been partially initiated through direct emails and newsletters on how to leverage the GIH and NEHC brands. This will continue and the new visitor guide distributed to real estates to utilise as a tool directly with their client bases.

### **Prosperity – Improve Local Resilience and Facilitate Opportunities for Growth**

Twelve (12) of the twenty-two tasks have been delivered to date and the remaining in progress and/or ongoing.

### *Diversification of Agriculture*

- a. The Agri-innovation business development program to leverage agriculture for tourism and business-related opportunities to expand the Agri-economy through value-adding and value chain development was delivered by Regionality with twelve participants and funded by DRFA.
- b. Reviewing the Agri-Innovation Action Plan and prioritising actions for the next 4-year Delivery Program is on hold until a GGITT can be facilitated to consult with the community.

- c. Building reputation as a high-quality food and fibre production region through local and regional branding and alignment with the new brand for Regional Australia task will be reviewed for relevance post point b. above being delivered, however this is organically being delivered by industry and local agricultural businesses.
- d. Continually seek funding and provide support to the local Agricultural Industry and its Associations to support on-farm diversification is ongoing with the **Building Better Regions Round Five (BBRF5)** - Creating Capability & Confidence for Community Champions grant awarded for GLENRAC and letters of support provided by Council in GLENRAC applications for funding.
- e. Investigate the potential of the circular economy to provide low-skilled jobs and a sustainable 'green' future economy with a recommended action plan to Council and Community was delivered in the Waste Management Strategy.

### *Leveraging Growth Opportunities*

- f. TOURISM: Delivering the priorities of the **Destination Management Plan (DMP)** continues to be delivered with the highlights being:

- i. **Goodness Gravel Grind** event was held 9 April and 10 April 2022. Council assisted with infrastructure and publicity. The event organisers were happy with the number of attendees even though adverse weather conditions and flooding that occurred in the week leading and during the weekend had disrupted the event. Next year the event organisers Goodness Gravel have informed Council that they will be holding the event in Glen Innes again in April 2023.

- ii. Council supported other **Community Groups** throughout the year by assisting with COVID 19 support and infrastructure, publicising their events through Council social media channels, placing information in the **Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)**.

The placing of posters in VIC window and gondolas and speaking directly to visitors and locals from Visitor Information Centre staff as well as assistance with Covid 19 plans and infrastructure if requested. There was an increase in local business events including specialist workshops due to the easing of COVID-19 and border restrictions in March 2022

- iii. Council-run events included **Christmas in the Highlands (CIH)** which supported the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Red Cross Christmas Tree Display at the Town Hall. This and Christmas in the Highlands event was moved from its scheduled date to second Thursday in December due to Council elections in November.

The markets and entertainment for the event brought many community groups together including Life Choices, 2CBD, Glen Innes High School, Lions Club, Glen Innes Pottery Club, Shimmy in the Glen, Spend in Glen, Lioness-Lioness and Leos as well as local artisans and entertainers. Many businesses leveraged the event by extending their trading hours which gave attendees more options to explore.

Feedback from the stallholders was overall positive but due to some extreme weather conditions the event ended earlier than anticipated. The main Christmas Tree on the roundabout encountered some delays due to power issues and these were rectified the following week.

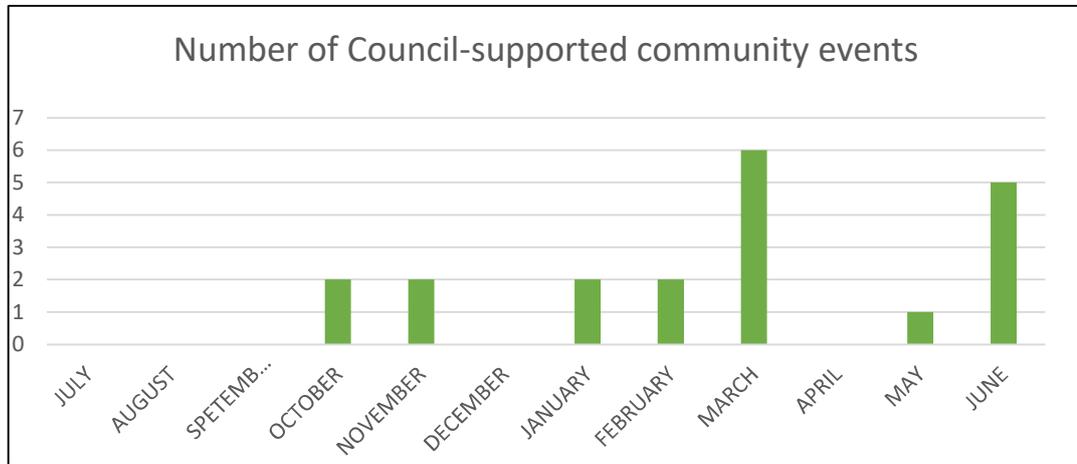


Chart 1.3 – Number of Council-supported local events 2020/2021

- iv. **Minerama Fossicking, Gem and Jewellery Show (Minerama)** was held from 11 until 13 March 2022 at the Glen Innes Showgrounds.

Council provided a preliminary debrief to the outgoing Minerama Committee on 11 April 2022. A full debrief and consultation with the new Minerama Committee is scheduled for Monday 27 July 2022.

Table 1.1 shows an overall percentage increase of 5.5% in attendance to the event since 2021. The decrease in attendance on the Friday is due to the cancellation of school field trips.

| Day of Minerama Show | Attendees 2021 | Attendees 2022 | Percentage Change |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Friday               | 658            | 483            | 26.6% ↓           |
| Saturday             | 1367           | 1655           | 21.0% ↑           |
| Sunday               | 470            | 497            | 5.7% ↑            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>2496</b>    | <b>2635</b>    | <b>5.5% ↑</b>     |

Table 1.3 – Minerama Total Attendance FYOY

- v. **The Australian Celtic Festival (ACF)** was held Thursday, 28 April until Sunday 1 May 2022. Due to the easing of NSW Public Health Order restrictions, this was the first ACF held with a full schedule of events since 2019.

Over 4592 tickets were sold across four (4) official ACF events totalling \$131,902.55 in ticket sales. Total number of attendees including performers, traders, Clans & Societies and children was 6104.

Feedback is being compiled from Key Stakeholders and a full debrief finalised and prepared to enable continual improvement and propose solutions to the major issues affecting the event including volunteers and accommodation shortages. The 2023 ACF Operational Plan for the Year of Scotland has commenced.

The event received grant funding from the NSW Government Regional Event Acceleration Fund which assisted in infrastructure, buses from Inverell and Armidale, a headline act and sporting identity and additional amenities.

- g. TOURISM: A comprehensive audit of all disused or underutilised assets to link assets to ideas and opportunities was delivered via a GGITT and the outcomes utilised in prioritising projects with the most community support.
- h. TOURISM: Securing funding to build and deliver the pilot '**Tourism Itinerary & Packages Platform**' (TIPP) has proved challenging. The TIPP was unsuccessful under the **Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF)**.
- i. TOURISM: Licensing the 'Tourism Itinerary & Packages Platform' to other Councils to generate additional revenue for Council is in progress following an initial presentation to **General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC)**.
- j. ASSET-BASED PLACE-MAKING: Constructing the New England Rail Trail – Glen Innes to Ben Lomond continues to progress in collaboration with **Armidale Regional Council (ARC)** and **New England Rail Trail Inc (NERT-I)**. The legislation change went to Parliament in June 2022.
- k. ASSET-BASED PLACE-MAKING: Seek funding to deliver projects to a shovel-ready status as identified in the 'Disused Asset Audit' and ongoing interactions with the Grow Glen Innes Think Tank continues to progress as opportunities for funding arise.
- l. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – The first annual report on local economic leakage is attached as **Annexure D** – this will be leveraged to attract additional professionals to link demand with supply as well as in the Liveability GGITT.
- m. RENEWABLE ENERGY - Leveraging the **Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)** status to unlock renewable energy and storage projects and industry is dependant on State Government continuing with the EOI processes. Council are looking at ways that the REZ can be leveraged indirectly with projects like the Glen Innes Powerhouse Museum.
- n. RENEWABLE ENERGY - Support and help incubate local business in the research and trials of renewable energy solutions that benefit our community will be a future focus by MED.
- o. PUBLIC SERVICES & ADMINISTRATION - Lobbying State and Federal Government to decentralise services to the regions and relocate a large public administration facility to Glen Innes is the responsibility of the GM.
- p. The design and deliver an 'Investment Attraction Policy' to encourage industry across sectors identified as growth opportunities will be delivered in the next financial year to enable the incorporation of Community Wealth Building and

in conjunction with consultation with Invest NSW and the community via the Liveability GGITT.

- q. Lobbying the State Government Planning Department to provide more transparency and collaboration in state-managed investment opportunities to better benefit the local community is the responsibility of the GM.
- r. Lobbying the State Government to share the burden of asset depreciation costs to enable more infrastructure projects is the responsibility of the GM.
- s. Connecting local businesses to Business NSW and State & Federal initiatives, support, funding and incentives is ongoing through the Economic Development newsletters, socials and HUB digital platform.
- t. The MED and **Tourism and Events Officer (TEO)** attended the LGA Destination and Visitor Economy Conference in Orange.
- u. Meeting with partners (i.e. developers, industry groups, specialty consultants, etc.) in identified growth sectors to discuss opportunities is ongoing with RDANI, Regional NSW, Austrade, Business NSW and industry specialists.
- v. MED engaged, supported and collaborated with regional leaders through the Northern Inland Regional Developers (NIRDS) forum building relationships with regional counterparts.

*Other projects delivered by MED include:*

1. Housing Assessment and Future Strategy;
2. Airport Master Plan RFQ;
3. Service NSW Partnership Agreement;
4. Glen Innes Powerhouse Museum Project;
5. Local Economic Development Support Fund; and
6. HUB Lease Agreement.

### **EOFY Progress Report – Grants and Funding**

Overall, across all Council departments the 2021/2022 Financial Year has been a busy and successful period for grants and funding activity.

Twenty-one (21) grant applications that were submitted by Council were approved for a total of \$14,181,465 Ex GST.

Council is currently awaiting decision on a further two (2) applications to the value of \$3,285,298 Ex GST.

Council was unsuccessful with three (3) grant applications for a total of \$1,011,369 Ex GST potential funding.

### Grant Applications – Financial Year Summary

Table 1.4– Financial Summary provides a summary of grant information for the past four (4) years:

| Description                   | 2021/2022           | 2020/2021           | 2019/2020          | 2018/2019           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Number of Grants Approved     | 21                  | 20                  | 11                 | 29                  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$14,181,465</b> | <b>\$25,240,785</b> | <b>\$4,504,252</b> | <b>\$11,005,216</b> |
| Number of Unsuccessful Grants | 3                   | 10                  | 4                  | 6                   |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$1,011,369</b>  | <b>\$8,389,359</b>  | <b>\$1,880,691</b> | <b>\$1,837,753</b>  |

Table 1.4 – Financial Summary

### 2021/2022 Grant Applications – Unsuccessful

Table 1.5 – 2021-2022 Grant Applications – Unsuccessful provides a summary of the unsuccessful grant applications and the value of the grant, for the 2021/2022 financial year:

| Grant Description                                                                                         | Value of Grant     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) - Tourism Packages & Itinerary Planner                      | \$901,369          |
| Destination NSW - Glen Innes Global Greening Irish National Day                                           | \$20,000           |
| 2022 Graffiti Management Grant - Trailer mounted pressure cleaner, public graffiti wall, public art mural | \$90,000           |
| <b>Total value of grants unsuccessful</b>                                                                 | <b>\$1,011,369</b> |

Table 1.5 – 2021-2022 Grant Applications – Unsuccessful

## 2021-22 Grant Applications – Approved

Table 1.6 – 2021-2022 Grant Applications – Approved provides a summary of the grant applications approved, and the value of the grant, for the 2021/2022 year:

| Grant Description                                                                                                        | Value of Grant      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Stronger Country Communities Fund Round Four (SCCF4) - Emmaville War Memorial Hall Upgrades                              | \$131,658           |
| Regional NSW Events Acceleration Fund (REAF) – 2022 Australian Celtic Festival                                           | \$140,000           |
| Building Better Regions Round Five (BBRF5) - Creating Capability & Confidence for Community Champions                    | \$154,710           |
| Greater Cities and Regional Sport Facilities Fund (RSFF) Round Two (2) - Warwick Twigg Indoor Sports Stadium Stage Two   | \$734,763           |
| Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant Program (BSBR)<br>- Rural Address Signage and Asset Register                        | \$592,376           |
| Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant Program (BSBR)<br>- Youth and Sport Precinct Upgrades and Connectivity              | \$738,523           |
| Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant Program (BSBR)<br>- Warwick Twigg Indoor Sports Stadium                             | \$413,926           |
| Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant Program (BSBR)<br>- Centennial Parklands Amenities and Outdoor Event Area           | \$1,341,616         |
| Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant Program (BSBR)<br>- Pinkett Resilience                                              | \$72,691            |
| NSW Environmental Protection Agency - Council Landfill Program Phase Two                                                 | \$50,000            |
| Fixing Local Roads (3) – Upgrade to Gulf Road, Emmaville                                                                 | \$1,380,000         |
| Mosman Council Community Grant - GISC Library & Learning Centre Aboriginal Community Project                             | \$5,000             |
| Transport for NSW - Bald Nob Road Upgrade                                                                                | \$4,480,000         |
| Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Phase Three (3) – Council Allocation                                            | \$1,744,858         |
| Regional Youth Summer Break Holidays – Life Choices                                                                      | \$7,700             |
| Youth Week 2022 Local Government Grant – Life Choices Co-Funding                                                         | \$3,644             |
| Destination NSW Regional Event Fund- Flagship Event - Minerama Fossicking, Gem and Jewellery Show                        | \$20,000            |
| NSW Partnerships Local Council Funding – Stage Two (2) - Council allocation for community resilience project             | \$90,000            |
| Disaster Recovery Arrangements Category B (DRFA Cat B) - Council allocation for flood repairs on various roads           | \$1,000,000         |
| Disaster Recovery Arrangements Category D (DRFA Cat D) - Council allocation for Glen Innes Airport Runway Rehabilitation | \$1,000,000         |
| NSW Planning Portal API Grant Program - Open Office installation for e-planning                                          | \$80,000            |
| <b>Total value of grants approved</b>                                                                                    | <b>\$14,181,465</b> |

Table 1.6 – 2021-2022 Grant Applications – Approved

*2021/2022 Grant Applications Lodged and Pending Decision*

Table 1.7 – 2021-2022 Grant Applications – Lodged and Pending Decision provides a summary of the grant applications and the value of the grant, currently lodged and pending a decision by the relevant grant funding body:

| <b>Grant Description</b>                                                                                                                | <b>Value of Grant</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) Round 6 - Highlands Business and Community Hub electrical upgrade and air conditioning installation | \$505,340             |
| Regional Connectivity Program Round Two (2) - Deepwater Fibre to Premises upgrade. Joint application with NBN Co.                       | \$2,779,958           |
| <b>Total value of grant applications lodged and pending decision</b>                                                                    | <b>\$3,285,298</b>    |

*Table 1.7– 2021-2022 Grant Applications – Lodged and Pending Decision*

## Key Economic Development Summary Results against Metrics

### Partnerships

#### *Facilitate Connection and Collaboration*

| KEY METRIC                                              | 2016 BASELINE                                                                                   | FY 2021-2022 RESULTS                                                                        | % INCREASE/ DECREASE                                                          | 2041 TARGET VIA CENSUS                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>REMPAN Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas</b>          | 915 (2016)                                                                                      | Data not available                                                                          |                                                                               | 1000 (Australian Average)                                                   |
| <b>Average Household Income</b>                         | \$841 (43% lower than the State Average) (2016)                                                 | \$934                                                                                       | <b>11% INCREASE</b>                                                           | Equal to the State Average                                                  |
| <b>NEIGHBOURLYTICS Social Prosperity Standard (SPS)</b> | March 2020<br>Economic: LOW – 0.73 SPS<br>Physical: LOW – 0.84 SPS<br>Community: LOW – 0.75 SPS | Jan 2021<br>Economic: LOW – 0.77 SPS<br>Physical: LOW – 0.91 PS<br>Community: LOW -0.79 SPS | <b>5.4% INCREASE</b><br><br><b>8.3% INCREASE</b><br><br><b>5.43% INCREASE</b> | Continue to show a % increase in SPS scores across the three (3) dimensions |

### People

#### *Improve Socio-Economic Wellbeing and Prosperity*

| KEY METRIC                                                | 2016 BASELINE                                       | FY 2021-2022 RESULTS                               | % INCREASE/ DECREASE                              | 2041 TARGET VIA CENSUS                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Estimated Resident Population</b>                      | DPI Projection 2041: ~6,600<br>Actual: 8,871 (2019) | DPI Projection 2041: 8,963<br>Actual: 8,880 (2021) | <b>35.8% INCREASE</b><br><br><b>0.1% INCREASE</b> | Population growth in line with State Average            |
| <b>Residential and non-residential building approvals</b> | \$9.6 million                                       | \$10.1 million                                     | <b>5.2% INCREASE</b>                              | Growth in building approvals in line with State Average |

## Place

### Improve Socio-Economic Wellbeing and Prosperity

| KEY METRIC                      | 2016 BASELINE                                | FY 2021-2022 RESULTS                                  | % INCREASE/ DECREASE  | 2041 TARGET VIA CENSUS                        |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Visitors and Expenditure</b> | 150,000 visitors<br><br>\$38m in expenditure | 153,000 visitors (TRA 2019)<br><br>Data not available | <b>2% INCREASE</b>    | Sustained growth of visitors and expenditure  |
| <b>Unemployment rate</b>        | 9.6% (March 2019)<br><br>NSW 4.6%            | 7.9% (March 2022)<br><br>NSW 3.5%                     | <b>17.7% DECREASE</b> | Un-employment rate in line with State Average |
| <b>Local Jobs</b>               | 3,060 jobs (REMPAN 2016)                     | 3,060 jobs (REMPAN 2021)                              | <b>STABLE</b>         | Employment growth in line with State Average  |

## Prosperity

### Improve Resilience and Facilitate Growth

| KEY METRIC                          | 2016 BASELINE                                                                                                     | FY 2021-2022 RESULTS                                                                                             | % INCREASE/ DECREASE                                                       | 2041 TARGET VIA CENSUS                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Industry Sector Output</b>       | Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing - 22.7%<br><br>Total Industry Output – \$806.682 million                          | Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing - 24.0%<br><br>Total Industry Output - \$915,931 million                         | <b>5.7 % INCREASE</b><br><br><b>10.5% INCREASE</b>                         | Reduction in % showing improved industry diversification |
| <b>Business Counts per industry</b> | Identified growth industry 2019 baseline                                                                          | No change in ABR business counts                                                                                 | <b>STABLE</b>                                                              | Increased % on identified growth industries              |
| <b>Visitor Profile</b>              | Avg Domestic Stay – 2 nights<br><br>Avg Visitor Spend - \$206 per trip<br><br>Avg Visitor Spend - \$109 per night | Avg Domestic Stay – 3 nights<br><br>Avg Visitor Spend - \$299 per trip<br><br>Avg Visitor Spend - \$118per night | <b>50% INCREASE</b><br><br><b>45% INCREASE</b><br><br><b>8.3% INCREASE</b> | Growth in measures                                       |

End of report