



Fremantle 2030

Economic
Development
Strategy

Part I – Situational Analysis

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The City of Fremantle's rich heritage, world-class waterfront, thriving arts and innovation scene, and strong community spirit continue to attract investment and talent.

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.



Right: Fremantle International Street Arts Festival 2025



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.



Executive Summary

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 (\$840M), Health Care and Social Assistance (\$514M), and Public Administration (\$410M).

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.



Right: Fremantle International Street Arts Festival 2025



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 production. Screen production provides quick revenue injection and long-term benefits through local employment, investment, and tourism opportunities.

Startup & 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.

Left: Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Marine Fish Hatchery

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.

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



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: Over 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.

Visitation: Over 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: Over 1.2 million people annually.

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.

Visitation: Over 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.

Visitation: Over 1.1 million people annually.

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.

Visitation: Over 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 1 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 Part II of the strategy (Strategy and Implementation).



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 city centre services and local businesses.

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



Right: Elders Woolstores Redevelopment. Photo credit: Human Urban & Spaceagency



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.

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 is being developed to 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 \$932.4M), 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.

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

Right: Fremantle Oval Precinct Redevelopment





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.

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

What it involves

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.

Why it will make a difference

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.

State and Regional Economic Context

WA Economy

Western Australia's economy remains one of the strongest in the country, underpinned by its resources sector, population growth, and resilient domestic demand.

In 2023-24, WA accounted for 17.2 per cent of the national economy, despite making up only 10.9 per cent of Australia's population. The state's Gross State Product (GSP) grew by 0.5 per cent in 2023-24, reaching its largest size on record of \$448.2 billion, highlighting its continued economic strength. In the year to January 2025, WA accounted for \$232.8 billion in goods exports, representing 45.1 per cent of the nation's total exports, reinforcing its role as Australia's economic powerhouse.

Consumer price inflation in Perth has fallen significantly over the past two years, from a high of 8.3 per cent in the December quarter 2022. Perth's annual inflation rate, as measured by year-on-year growth in the consumer price index (CPI), was 2.9 per cent in the December quarter 2024, down from 3.8 per cent in the previous quarter. However, Perth's annual CPI inflation has been above Australia's over the past three quarters.

Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of Australia recently cut interest rates to 4.1 per cent in March 2025, marking the first reduction in over four years, aimed at stimulating further economic activity.

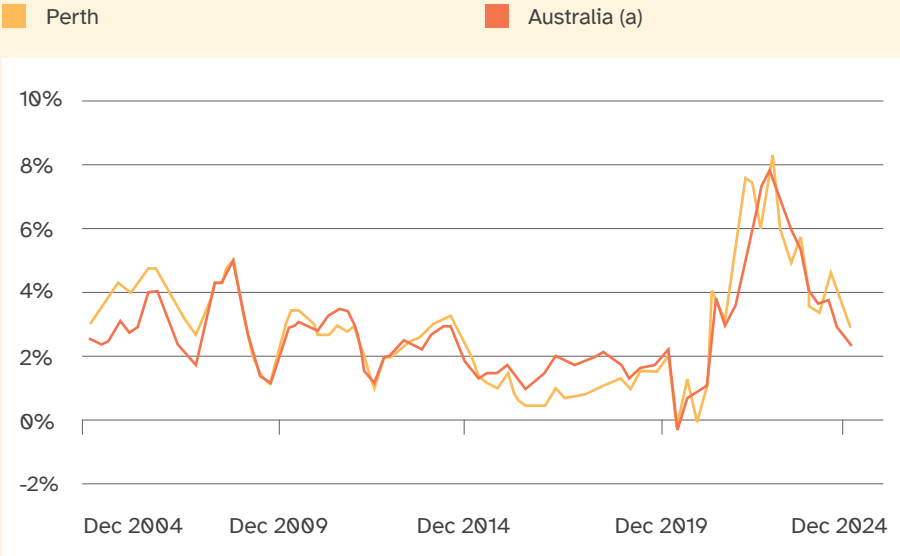
Residential construction costs rose by 3.4 per cent over the 12 months to December 2024. Since the onset of COVID-19, construction costs have cumulatively increased by 30.8 per cent.



State Economic Forecast

Despite ongoing global uncertainties, Western Australia continues to benefit from sustained demand for its mineral resources, a growing tourism sector, and a diversified economy. While economic growth is expected to moderate compared to previous years, WA remains well-positioned for long-term expansion, supported by population growth, strategic infrastructure investment, and increasing economic diversification. Gross State Product (GSP) is projected to grow modestly within the 2-3 per cent range, reflecting the state's resilience amid evolving global market conditions.

Investment in renewable energy, technology, and advanced manufacturing is set to accelerate, reinforcing WA's economic foundation and future competitiveness.



WA State Government Budget

Western Australia's GSP was less affected by the COVID 19 pandemic in 2019 20 compared to other states and territories and grew at a relatively consistent rate in the next three financial years.

Western Australia's real gross state product (GSP) rose 0.5 per cent in 2023 24, lower than the growth of Australia's real gross domestic product (GDP) of 1.4 per cent.

The WA Government Mid year Financial Projections Statement 2024 25 forecasts Western Australia's real GSP will rise 2.25 per cent in 2024 25 and 2.5 per cent in 2025 26.

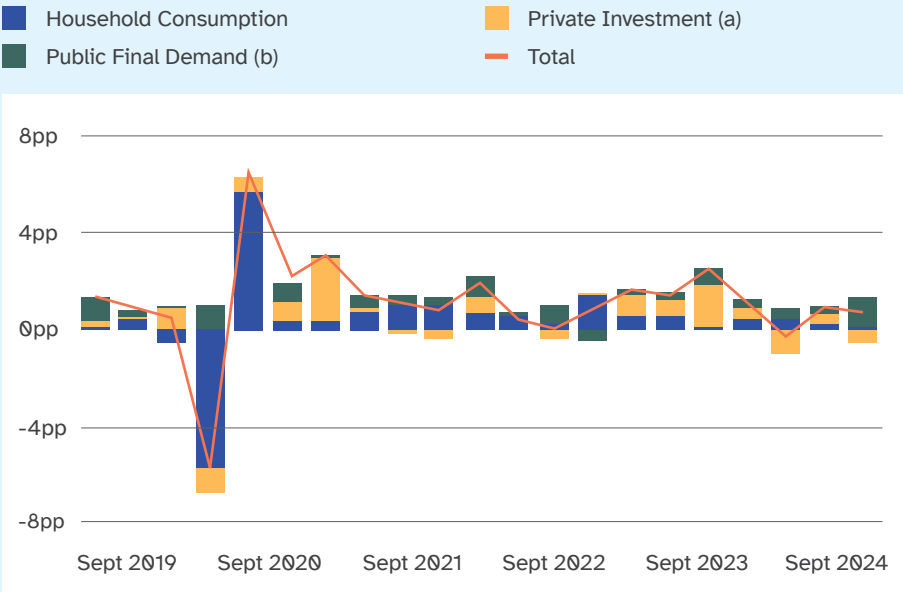


State Final Demand

Western Australia's real SFD rose 0.7 per cent in the September quarter 2024, following a 0.9 per cent rise in the June quarter 2024 and a 0.3 per cent fall in the March quarter 2024. The March quarter 2024 fall marked the first decline in SFD since the June quarter 2020 when SFD fell sharply due mainly to the restrictions imposed in the early phase of the COVID 19 pandemic.

Public final demand made the largest contribution, adding 1.2 percentage points to SFD growth in the September quarter 2024, with household consumption adding 0.1 percentage points. This was partly offset by private investment, which detracted 0.6 percentage points from SFD growth.

The WA Government Mid year Financial Projections Statement 2024–25 forecasts Western Australia's real SFD will rise 3.5 per cent in 2024–25 and 3.25 per cent in 2025–26.



CPI

Consumer price inflation in Perth has fallen significantly over the past two years, from a high of 8.3 per cent in the December quarter 2022. Perth's annual inflation rate, as measured by year on year growth in the consumer price index (CPI), was 2.9 per cent in the December quarter 2024, down from 3.8 per cent in the previous quarter.

However, Perth's annual CPI inflation has been above Australia's annual CPI inflation over the past three quarters. In the December quarter 2024, Australia's annual inflation rate was 2.4 per cent, down from 2.8 per cent in the previous quarter. The main reasons for lower CPI inflation nationally were large falls in electricity and automotive fuel prices and lower price rises for new dwellings.

The measure of Perth's CPI in the WA Government's State Budget excludes the electricity sub-index, to smooth the effect of successive household electricity credits. On this basis, the WA Government Mid year Financial Projections Statement 2024–25 forecasts Perth's annual average CPI will rise 3.25 per cent in 2024–25 and 2.75 per cent in 2025–26.



Household Spending

Growth in nominal household spending in Western Australia fell from mid to late 2022 as pandemic related disruptions subsided and tighter monetary policy affected consumer prices and household purchasing power. However, the growth rate in nominal household spending has stabilised over the past few months.

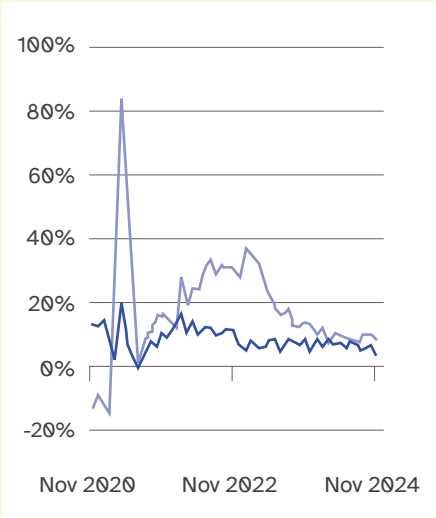
Western Australia's household spending index grew by 5.9 per cent in year on year terms in November 2024.

The household spending index can be split between goods and services; as well as discretionary (non essential) and non discretionary goods and services.

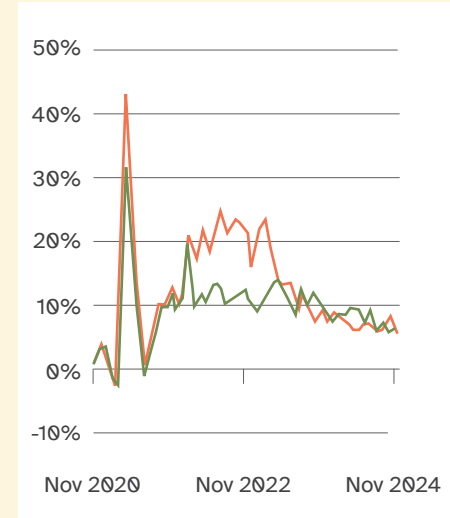
Growth in household spending has been higher on services compared to goods. The household spending index for services grew by 7.6 per cent in year on year terms in November 2024, while the index for goods grew 3.0 per cent.

The household spending index for discretionary goods and services grew by 5.4 per cent in year on year terms in November 2024, while the index for non discretionary goods and services grew by 5.8 per cent.

■ Goods
■ Services



■ Discretionary
■ Non-discretionary



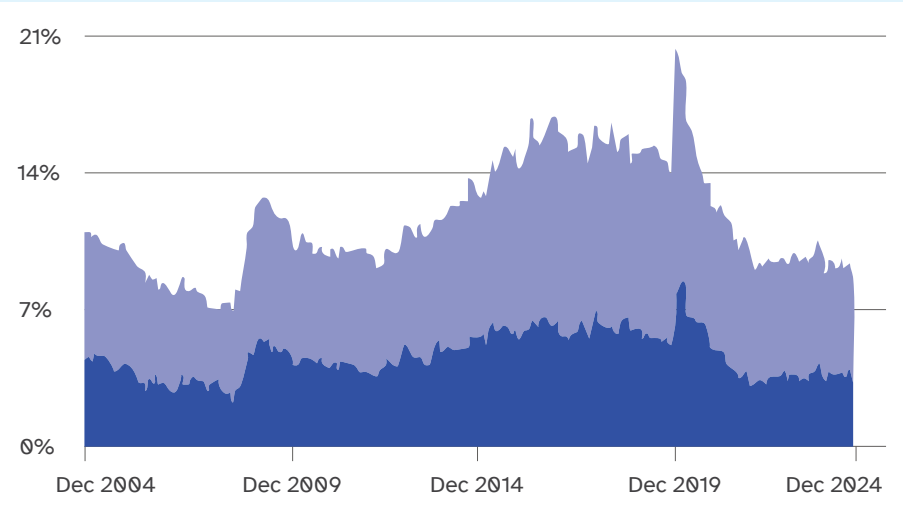
Labour Market

Western Australia underutilisation rate, which is the sum of the unemployment and underemployment rates, was unchanged at 8.8 per cent in December 2024.

The unemployment and underemployment rates for Western Australia in December 2024 were both unchanged from the previous month:

- The unemployment rate was 3.3 per cent in December 2024, the same as November 2024.
- The underemployment rate was 5.5 per cent in December 2024, the same as November 2024.
- Western Australia's record low underutilisation rate was 6.9 per cent in October 2008, when the unemployment rate was 2.3 per cent and the underemployment rate was 4.6 per cent.
- Western Australia's record high underutilisation rate was 20.2 per cent in April 2020 during the initial stages of the COVID 19 pandemic, when the unemployment rate was 6.1 per cent and the underemployment rate was 14.1 per cent.

■ Unemployment rate (a)
■ Underemployment rate (b)



Population

Western Australia's population has been growing at a high rate, relative to both the past fifteen years and to the national rate. Western Australia's estimated resident population was 2.97 million in the June quarter 2024, 2.8 per cent higher than the June quarter 2023. Australia's estimated resident population was 27.2 million in the June quarter 2024, 2.1 per cent higher than the June quarter 2023. Western Australia accounted for 10.9 per cent of Australia's population in the June quarter 2024.

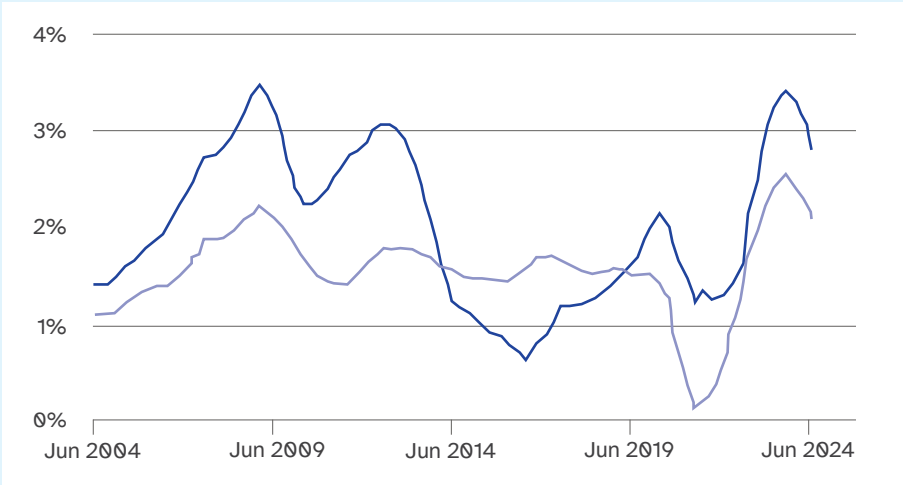
In the year to the June quarter 2024, Western Australia's population grew by 81,397, with the increase comprising:

- Net overseas migration of 58,082 (13.0 per cent of the Australian total)
- Natural increase of 13,573 (12.8 per cent of the Australian total)
- Net interstate migration of 9,742.

The WA Government Mid year Financial Projections Statement 2024 25 forecasts Western Australia's population will grow by 1.9 per cent in 2024–25 and 1.8 per cent in 2025–26.

■ Western Australia
■ Australia

Estimated resident population (change)

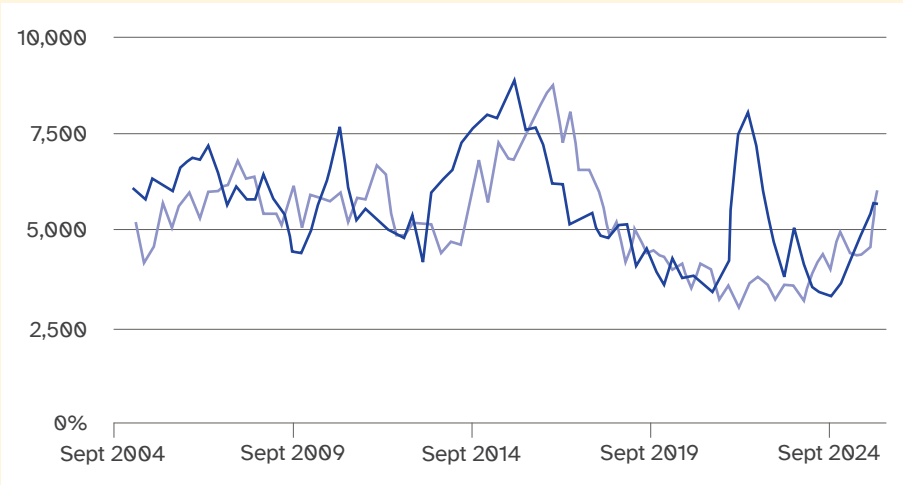


Housing

The number of dwellings completed usually tracks the number of dwellings approved with a lag as approved dwellings are built. However, the large increase in dwelling approvals in mid 2020 was not followed by a corresponding increase in dwellings completed.

- Stimulus measures introduced by the Australian and Western Australian Government in mid 2020 contributed to the number of dwelling units approved increasing rapidly from mid 2020, reaching 7,918 units in the March quarter 2021.
- Over the same period, the number of dwelling units completed plateaued, resulting in many approved dwelling units yet to be completed.
- Higher costs and longer timeframes for housing construction contributed to a slowdown in dwelling approvals, although the number of approvals has picked up over the past year. There was also a large increase in the number of dwellings completed in the September quarter 2024.
- The number of dwelling units approved in Western Australia was 5,604 in the September quarter 2024, 61.5 per cent higher than the September quarter 2023.
- The number of dwelling units completed in Western Australia was 5,924 in the September quarter 2024, 20.3 per cent higher than the September quarter 2023.

■ Approved
■ Completed



Perth Southwest Metropolitan Region

The Perth Southwest Metropolitan Region Incorporates the Local Government Areas of the City of Fremantle, City of Cockburn, City of Melville, City of Kwinana, City of Rockingham and City of East Fremantle. The data presented to follow is collated and provided by the Perth Southwest Metropolitan Alliance.

Economic Strength and Employment

- Gross Regional Product (GRP): \$44.721 billion, indicating a strong regional economy.
- Jobs in the Region: 185,261, showing a robust labour market.
- Unemployment Rate: 3.8 per cent (as of June 2024), which is relatively low and suggests a stable job market.

Demographics and Housing

- Population: 485,012, highlighting a sizeable regional community.
- Median age: 38, reflecting a mature but active workforce.
- Total houses: 182,774, indicating a strong housing market to support the population.
- Median income: \$1,889 per week, suggesting a healthy earning capacity for residents. The combination of high employment, strong income levels, and low unemployment suggests an economically thriving and growing region.



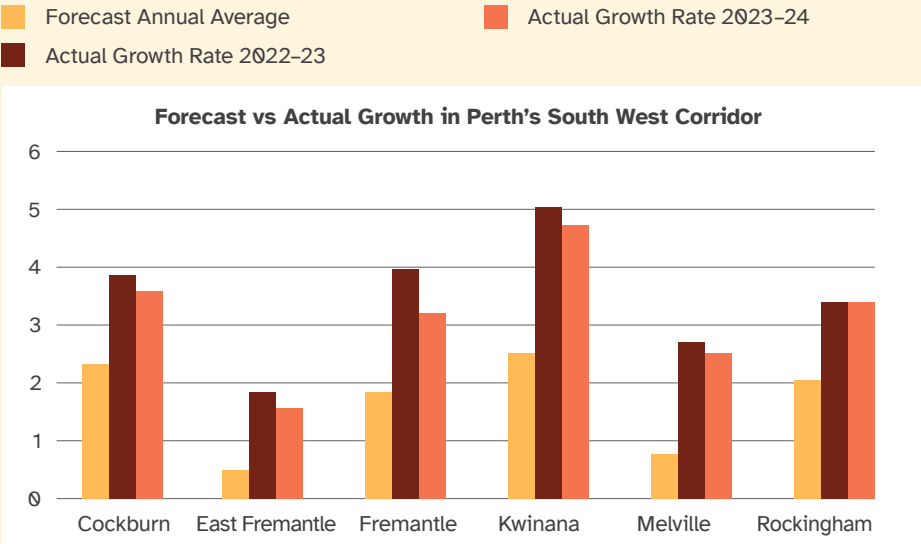
Source: PSWMA Current Regional Stats 2024

Opportunities and Considerations

- A diverse mix of urban and industrial landscapes supports a variety of industries.
- Infrastructure, innovation, and sustainability efforts will be key to sustaining growth.
- Potential for further economic development and investment, given the stability of employment and income levels.

Future Growth

- New ABS data reveals that actual population growth in the Perth Southwest region has significantly outpaced WA State Government forecasts. This trend extends beyond outer growth suburbs, impacting affluent and well-established communities as well.
- Key drivers of this surge include stronger-than-anticipated employment growth and major new projects in the region—such as AUKUS, Westport, Murdoch health infrastructure, the Future of Fremantle, and substantial private sector investments in the Western Trade Coast.



Section Sources: PSWMA current regional stats 2024; Perth Southwest Metropolitan Alliance

Local Economic Context

The insights to follow relate to a period from 2018–19 to 2023–24 and assess recent economic performance, growth drivers, competitive advantages and barriers to growth.

Economic Performance and Structure

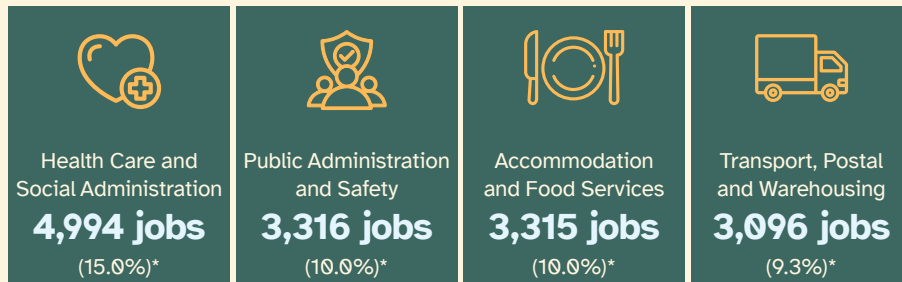
- Fremantle generated \$5.08 billion in GRP and supported 33,247 jobs in 2023–24, accounting for 2.3 per cent of Greater Perth's economy.
- Local economic growth averaged + 1.8 per cent per year (2019–24), trailing the metro average but improving from previous flat trends.
- A big driver of economic growth has been population. Residents estimated to be living in Fremantle increased by 2.7 per cent per year over this period, well above the decade average (1.8 per cent p.a.).
- Top value-generating sectors: Transport, Postal and Warehousing (\$840M), Health Care and Social Assistance (\$514M), and Public Administration (\$410M).
- Fremantle's economic diversity remains high, though recent growth has concentrated in health and public administration.
- Tourism rebound: Overnight stays are 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 the growth was driven by lower-productivity population-serving sectors.

 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%)

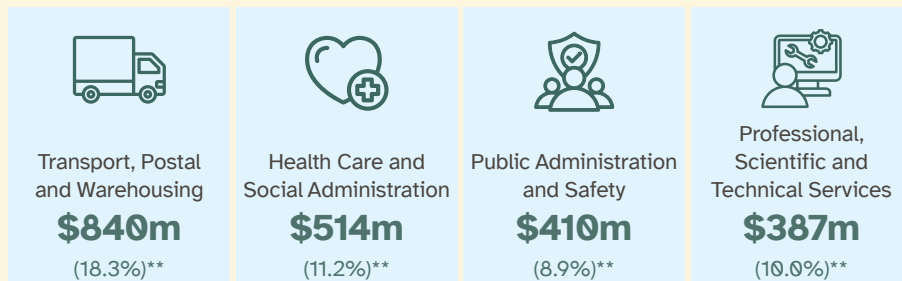
Employment Trends

- Local jobs increased by + 2.0 per cent annually over five years, marginally slower than the Greater Perth average.
- Public Administration and Safety (+ 1,273) accounted for the majority of jobs growth in Fremantle between 2019 and 2024, adding well over 1,000 jobs. This was largely down to the relocation of the head office of the WA Department of Communities. Other drivers were Health Care (+593), Construction (+484), and Professional Services I+ 462).
- Job losses occurred in Transport (-385) and Wholesale Trade (-209), affected by automation and early Westport impacts.
- Tight labour market conditions significantly reduced unemployment from 2021 onwards with the unemployment rate falling below 4 per cent towards the end of 2023. However, by 2024 the rate began rising again, though still below historical levels.
- Fremantle has a surplus of jobs, particularly in sectors like retail, hospitality, and government, but struggles with employment sufficiency, as many workers commute in. Only 4 per cent of the new WA Department of Communities workers lived in Fremantle in 2021.

Jobs

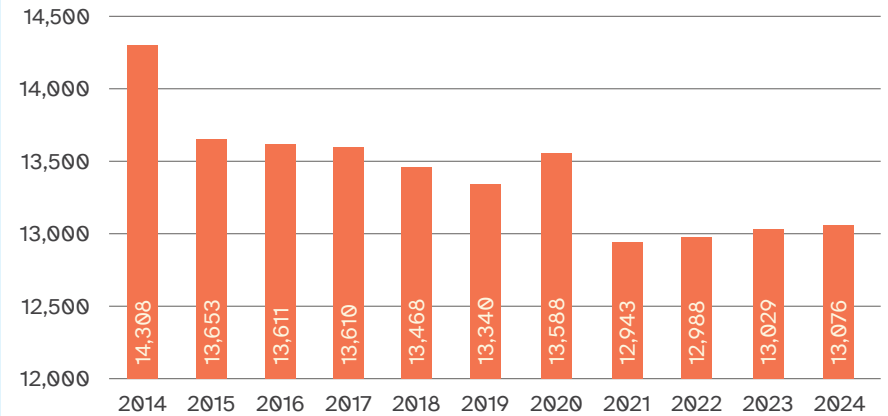


Value Added



Source: NIEIR, 2025 | * % of local jobs in Fremantle. ** % of value added in Fremantle.

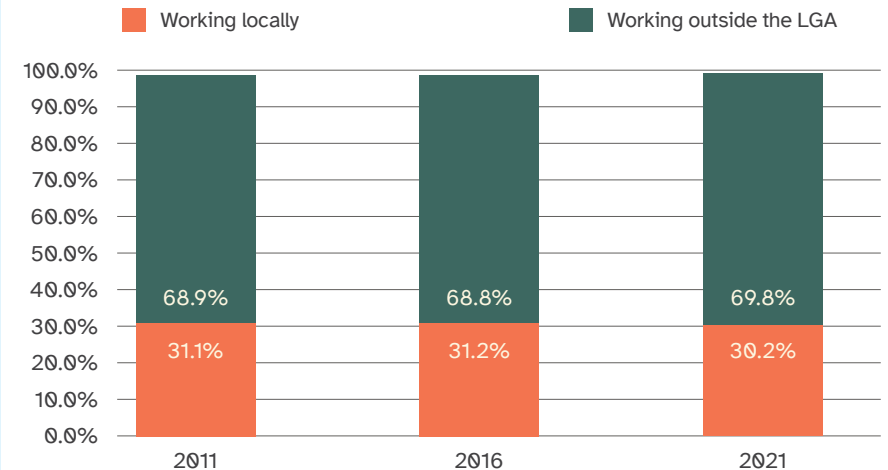
Employment Capacity – Fremantle
More local jobs than employed residents



Source: NIEIR, 2025.

In 2024, there were 13,076 more jobs than employed residents. This suggests the region generates more jobs than its resident workforce base and attracts workers from other regions.

Employment Self Containment – Fremantle
Share of residents working locally



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2011, 2016 and 2021



Business and Investment Landscape

- GST-registered businesses grew 11 per cent from 2020 to 2024, slower than the Greater Perth average of 16 per cent. New businesses were led by growth in sole traders and small firms in Professional Services, Real Estate, and Health.
- There has been a constant pipeline of building approvals across mainly population servicing areas (health, education, retail, accommodation)

Public sector investment into the new Fremantle Police Complex and Victoria Quay will also support the construction industry.

Tourism

- COVID had a strong impact in Fremantle with the loss of employment in hospitality in 2021. Visitation has gradually recovered but by 2024 visitation was still estimated to be down 18 per cent from 2019.
- Most of the fall has been in day trips and international visitors, domestic overnight stays were up +6 per cent.

Socio-economic factors

- Fremantle boasts a highly qualified population, with 46 per cent holding a bachelor's degree or higher (vs 31 per cent in Greater Perth)
- Resident income levels are higher than the local average, with 57 per cent earning over \$65k compared to 48 per cent of local workers.
- Occupation and qualification mismatches remain, with deficits in health and science professions and surpluses in hospitality and retail jobs

Section Sources: City of Fremantle Check and Forecasts Custom Report – Economy ID

Economic Health Check – Fremantle

Positive Indicators

Economic Conditions

Steady recent growth supported by strong population growth:

Economic (1.8 per cent), Jobs (2.0 per cent) and population growth (2.7 per cent) has been stronger in the last five years than earlier in the decade. Population growth exceeded the Greater Perth average of 2.4 per cent.

Low unemployment:

The unemployment rate fell to 4.0 per cent in 2024, below pre-COVID levels, supporting local retail and hospitality businesses

Industry

Major uplift in public administration:

The opening of the relocated head office of the WA Department of Communities accounted for the majority of jobs growth in Fremantle between 2019 and 2024, adding well over 1,000 jobs.

Knowledge economy areas driving business growth:

Professional Services, Real Estate, Finance and Info Media all saw strong business numbers growth between 2020-2024.

Diversified specialisations:

Fremantle's economic specialisations cover both blue- and white-collar areas which makes it quite distinctive within the Greater Perth economy. The city has a major comparative advantage in Transport, Postal and Warehousing as well as Accommodation and Food Services, Public Administration and Safety, Tourism, and Arts and Recreation Services.

Construction uplift:

New residential developments, some infrastructure projects such as Swan River Crossing have contributed to construction activity. Recent building approvals are very high.

Precincts

Employment concentration:

Central Fremantle is the primary employment hub in the LGA, accounting for almost half (48 per cent) of total local jobs in 2021. Investment is supporting jobs uplift.

Strategic job centres:

O'Connor Industrial Precinct accounted for 17 per cent of jobs in 2021 and has a strong manufacturing base, accounting for 25 per cent of its local jobs.

Port economy:

Fremantle Port only supported approx. 9 per cent of jobs in 2021 but generated substantial economic output. Transport and logistics represent 18 per cent of Fremantle's total industry value added.

Demography

Highly qualified:

Fremantle's key working age residents (15 to 69 yrs) are well educated (46 per cent with degrees) compared to the Perth average (31 per cent). This can support growth in knowledge-based services.

In-migration trends:

Fremantle is attracting a diverse mix of new residents including younger workers, families, retirees, and skilled migrants. Recent population growth is shaped by international arrivals (included returning residents who left during COVID), but ageing in place is also contributing to changing demographic demands.

Emerging Challenges

Economic Conditions

Below-average economic growth:

Fremantle's economic and jobs growth while stronger in recent years still lagged behind Greater Perth.

Population-driven growth:

Growth was driven by low value population service sectors, such as health, retail and hospitality.

Slowing GRP growth:

GRP growth slowed in 2023–24 after the post-COVID boost

Industry

Business services gap:

Employment in Professional and Technical Services is under-represented compared to Greater Perth and jobs growth was also slower than the metro average. This contrasts with strong business growth which suggests Fremantle is attracting more sole traders or small enterprises rather than larger businesses (possible due to lack of supply of suitable commercial office space).

Decline in logistics and wholesale trade jobs:

Significant job losses occurred in Road and Water Transport sectors (385 jobs total), potentially due to automation and freight network shifts. Several wholesale businesses relocated to lower-cost areas outside Fremantle, contributing to a loss of 209 jobs.

Precincts

Agglomeration challenges:

Limited large-scale commercial office space and competition from inner Perth can hinder attraction of larger knowledge economy businesses. New commercial development is likely competing with higher yields from residential developments.

Competition for main industrial precinct:

A number of other precincts in Perth's Southwest including Jandakot and Canning Vale are seeing an expansion of demand due to perceived better logistical advantages. The eventual move of container trade to Kwinana will also likely reduce the attractiveness of Fremantle's precincts to transport companies.

Demography

Mismatch in local jobs and resident's needs:

Fremantle's workforce varies considerably from the industry of employment of local residents. Many professionals are commuting into the CBD and elsewhere and key industries such as Public Administration and Transport bring in workers from outside Fremantle. Only 4 per cent of the new Department of Communities workers were estimated to live locally in 2021.

In 2021, around 22,466 people commuted to Fremantle for work, while 11,514 residents travelled outside the area for employment. Only 5,007 residents both lived and worked in Fremantle. This gap highlights the city's role as a regional employment centre. The top destinations for Fremantle residents working outside the area were Perth City, along with neighbouring LGAs of Melville and Cockburn.

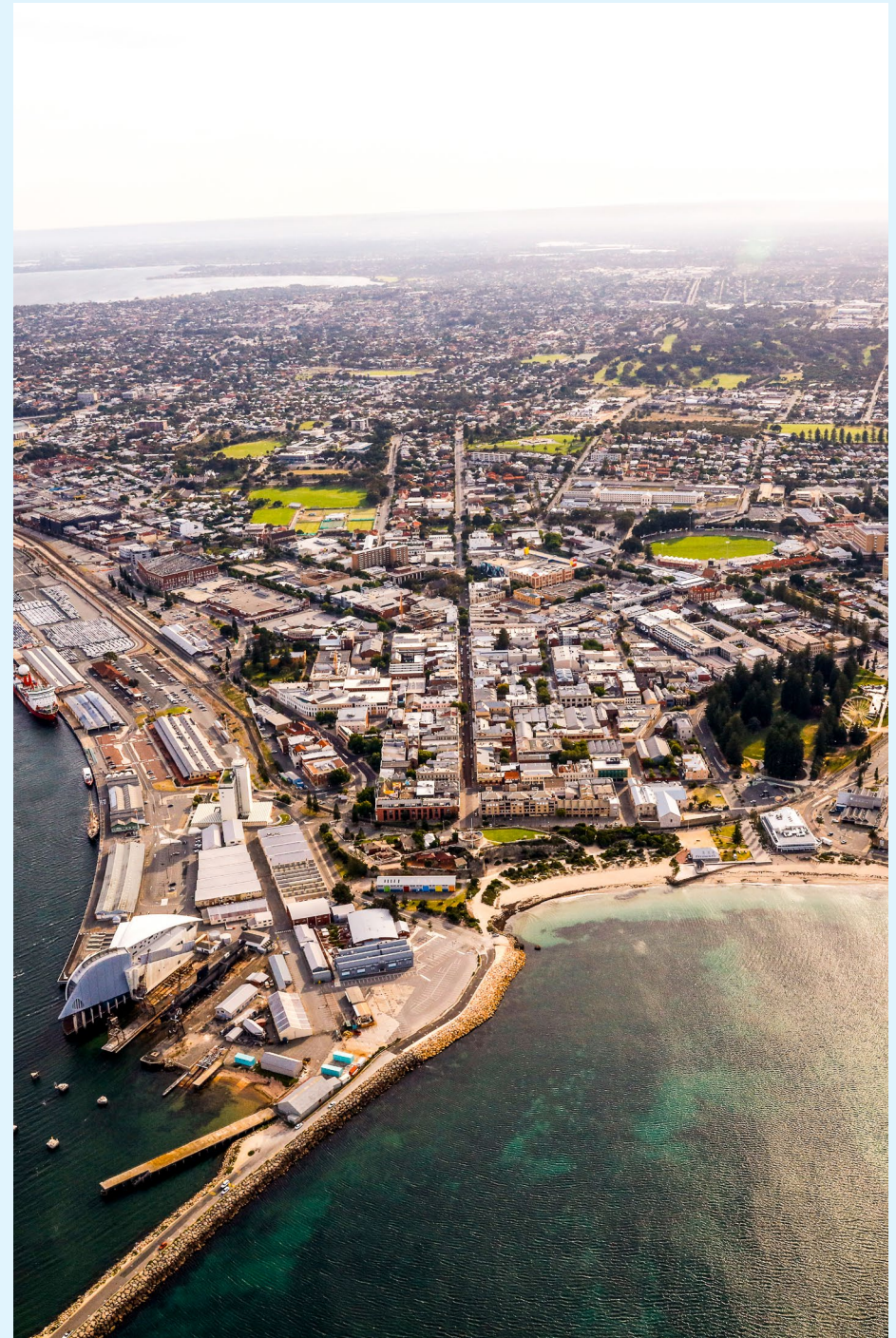
More than 19 per cent of Fremantle's local workers lived in Cockburn, while approximately 18 per cent lived within Fremantle itself. Other key residential locations included Melville, Rockingham, and Stirling.

Future Economic Outlook

Fremantle's economy is beginning a long-term transitional growth phase, with strong population gains and sector specific momentum in government, health, and professional services likely to compensate for employment losses in more industrial sectors (transport, manufacturing) going forward.

Key focus areas will need to be:

- How to manage the Inner Harbour redevelopment brought about by the potential relocation of port operations so diversity in industry activity remains and residential demands for land don't make employment growth opportunities (e.g. in green economy, niche advance manufacturing industries) unviable.
- How to ensure new residential developments don't undermine diversity and workforce availability for lower paid industries such as healthcare, retail and hospitality.
- How to utilise Public Sector Investment as an economic catalyst for private investment.
- How to tap into Fremantle's educated and entrepreneurial population to fuel faster growth in knowledge-based businesses.



Opportunities

Inner Harbour redevelopment:

The potential relocation of port operations unlocks major renewal potential, with plans for new homes, jobs, and a vibrant waterfront precinct supporting Fremantle's transformation into a globally significant coastal city.

Increasing city centre residence base:

Recently approved new inner-city developments and a focus on increased density in the Fremantle City Plan can help boost the economy via:

- **More customers for local hospitality and retail businesses:** With more people living within walking distance, local shops, cafes, restaurants, and service providers benefit from a larger, consistent customer base.
- **Extended Trading Hours:** High-density residential areas tend to support evening and weekend economies, since residents are around beyond typical business hours.
- **Higher Demand for Services:** Professionals living in the centre drive demand for services like dry cleaning, gyms, medical clinics, and childcare, which in turn supports job creation.

Public investments improving feasibility of commercial developments:

Major investments by the State Government in the new Department of Communities office and even the under construction new Police Complex can support future private investment due to:

- Acting as a confidence signal to the private sector that the precinct is stable, supported, and worthy of long-term investment.
- Public sector workers bring predictable daytime footfall supporting local service providers and de-risking commercial leases.

Supporting business growth of highly qualified and entrepreneurial residence base:

Fremantle's residents are much more likely to be degree educated than the Greater Perth average and recent years has seen a substantial increase in business registrations in knowledge economy areas. A solid supply of diverse modern high amenity office space is required to allow these business owners to potentially expand without the need to leave the LGA.

Work-from-home shift:

An increase in acceptance of working from home may support increased internal migration to the region by office-based professionals and support local businesses. Investment and/or support for co-working facilities could meet latent demand.

Challenges

Below-average economic growth:

The potential relocation of the port activities may generate some medium to long term challenges in addition to substantial direct job losses:

- Businesses dependent on port activity (e.g. freight operators, marine suppliers) may relocate or downsize if not integrated into the post-port economy.
- The transition period before the port precinct is fully redeveloped may see reduced economic activity, affecting local employment and investment confidence.
- Due to demand for residential developments, protecting marine, heritage and industrial space in the Inner Harbour that could be adaptively reused for new industries may be difficult.
- Soil contamination and environmental remediation in the area could considerably delay redevelopment or make some projects not financially feasible.

Housing affordability and displacement:

Rising property values tied to increased amenity in the city, new up-market projects, and even higher cost-sustainable Beaconsfield developments could displace lower-income residents, undermining diversity and workforce availability (especially for low-income health, retail and hospitality industries).

Climate Challenges:

Fremantle is a low-lying coastal city, and is exposed to sea level rise, storm surges, and flooding, which could damage infrastructure, deter investment and raise insurance costs.



Economic Forecasts

Fremantle's economy is forecast to reach \$5.8 billion in 2028–29. The average annual change over the five years to 2028–29 is forecast to be 2.8 per cent p.a. well above the five-year period to 2023–24 (1.8 per cent p.a.) and above the forecast state average (2.2 per cent p.a.).

Fremantle's local workforce is forecast to reach 37,036 in 2028–29 and employed residents 22,156. This equates to a job surplus of 14,880. The average annual change over the five years to 2028–29 is forecast to be 2.2 per cent p.a. above the five-year period to 2023–24 (2.0 per cent) and above the forecast for employed residents (1.9 per cent p.a.). It is also forecast to be higher than the state average (1.6 per cent p.a.).

Local jobs growth is forecast to be elevated in 2024–25 as some major projects come on board. Other projects in subsequent years will lead to jobs growth but be dampened by weaker employment growth in other industries. Employed resident growth is forecast to be weaker in the next few years as labour market conditions weaken before rising in 2029 as a range of residential developments are completed, and new residents move in.

It is important to note that Fremantle and Australia more broadly have experienced a substantial change to labour force outcomes in recent years due to the effects of COVID and related Government post-COVID stimulus.

In June 2024, the 12-month average participation rate was estimated at 68 per cent for the Fremantle LGA. This was well above the 66 per cent estimated in June 2019. In addition, the 12-month average unemployment rate for Fremantle in June 2024 was estimated at 4.0 per cent, a multi-decade low. In June 2019, it was 7.4 per cent. The five-year average before 2019 was 7.2 per cent.

Participation rates are likely to remain elevated due to cost-of-living pressures forcing more people to seek employment and continued demand in key sectors that employ females (e.g. health). Nationally female participation rates have increased by 4 percentage points over the decade; male participation rates have fallen by 0.5 percentage points.

Regarding unemployment levels, it is unlikely that we continue to see such low rates over the next few years. The State and Federal budget have both factored in increases to unemployment and data has shown a gradual uptick in rates. Several factors are causing this but mostly it is related to a return of high migration rates which has increased the supply of labour, as well as reduced demand in some labour-intensive sectors.

Section Sources: City of Fremantle Check and Forecasts Custom Report – Economy ID

Key Economic Precincts

Fremantle's economy is shaped by its unique role as both a local hub for business and 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 (78.1 per cent of total spend), highlighting the city's strong dependence on its appeal to residents of other surrounding LGA's - with visitation primarily coming from the Perth Metropolitan area as well as regional, interstate and international.

In contrast, residents contribute 21.9 per cent of total spending. The outlying precinct in this context is South Fremantle which total spend is made up of 36 per cent residents and 64 per cent visitors.

Central Fremantle is the primary economic driver representing \$791.3 million (46.8 per cent of total spend).

Fremantle residents are active consumers just not always within their own city. Local residents spend an estimated \$518 million online, representing 35.5 per cent of their total spending, and a further \$618 million (42.3 per cent) is spent outside of Fremantle altogether. This signals a significant leakage of potential economic activity that could otherwise support local businesses.

Precinct Spending Profile 23-24*	Central Fremantle	South Fremantle	O'Connor	North Fremantle	Beaconsfield	Hilton	FREMANTLE **
Spend	\$79.31m	\$269.33m	\$398.58m	\$95.72m	\$39.65m	\$87.05m	\$1689.72m
Spend (% total of Fremantle)	46.8	15.9	23.6	5.7	2.3	5.2	
External Visitor Spend in Precinct	\$657.52m	\$172.34m	\$334.64m	\$76.84m	\$24.65m	\$52.02m	\$1319.82m
External Visitor Spend (%)	83.09	63.99	83.96	80.28	62.18	59.76	78.11
Fremantle Resident Precinct Spend	\$133.79m	\$96.99m	\$63.94m	\$18.88m	\$14.99m	\$35.03m	\$369.90m
Fremantle Resident Precinct Spend (%)	16.91	36.01	16.04	19.72	37.82	40.24	21.89
Precinct Resident Spend in Precinct	\$60.70m	\$29.71m	\$1.97m	\$11.32m	\$6.26m	\$11.88m	\$121.88m
Fremantle Resident Spend in Precinct	\$72.56m	\$67.09m	\$61.66m	\$7.03m	\$8.67m	\$23.13m	\$240.35m

Resident Spending Profile 23-24*	Central Fremantle	South Fremantle	O'Connor	North Fremantle	Beaconsfield	Hilton	FREMANTLE **
Total Spend (Fremantle, external & online)	\$497.84m	\$193.51m	\$30.92m	\$258.12m	\$244.08m	\$156.22m	\$1459.79m
Online Spend	\$180.78m	\$67.94m	\$14.56m	\$93.38m	\$88.14m	\$49.78m	\$518.19m
Online Spend (as a % of total resident spend)	36.3	35.1	47.1	36.2	36.1	31.9	35.5
Escape Spend (outside LGA)	\$202.59m	\$67.89m	\$11.97m	\$131.94m	\$91.63m	\$67.07m	\$617.57m
Escape Spend outside LGA (as a % of total resident spend)	40.7	35.1	38.7	51.1	37.5	42.9	42.3
Resident Local Spend (within precinct)	\$60.70m	\$29.71m	\$1.97m	\$11.32m	\$6.26m	\$11.88m	\$121.88m
Resident Internal Escape Spend (within LGA)	\$53.76m	\$27.97m	\$2.42m	\$21.47m	\$58.05m	\$27.49m	\$202.16m
Precinct Resident Spend in Fremantle (local & other precincts)	\$114.47m	\$57.68m	\$4.39m	\$32.80m	\$64.31m	\$39.37m	\$324.04m
Precinct Resident Spend in Fremantle (as a % of total spend)	22.99	29.81	14.21	12.71	26.35	25.20	22.20

* All spend data is provided by Spendmapp Geografia

** Samson & White Gum Valley precincts included in total but not displayed in table

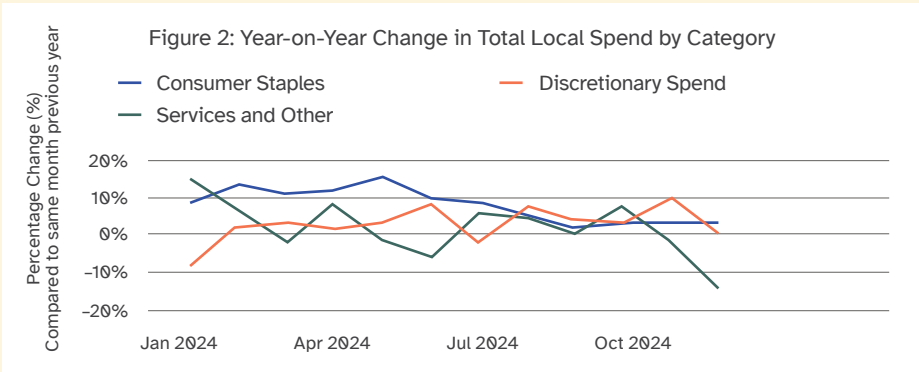
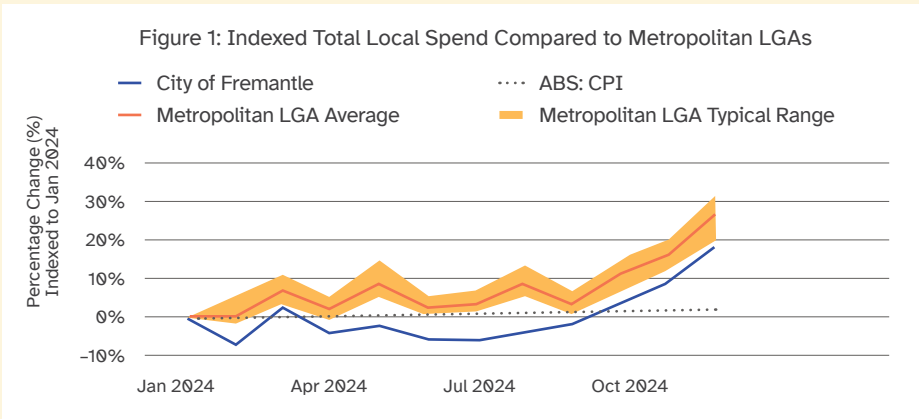
Perth Metropolitan Comparisons

Spending

From January 2024 to December 2024, Total Local Spend in the City of Fremantle increased by 18.7 per cent. This is below the metropolitan LGA average change of 27.2 per cent, and below the typical range of 20.2 per cent to 32.0 per cent. During the same period, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by 2.8 per cent.

In the last six months, the change in Total Local Spend in the City of Fremantle has been below the change in metropolitan LGAs (Figure 1).

Breaking Total Local Spend down, in December 2024, year-on-year percentage change for Consumer Staples increased by 4.2 per cent; Discretionary Spend increased by 1.2 per cent; and spending in Services and Other decreased by 13.8 per cent (Figure 2).



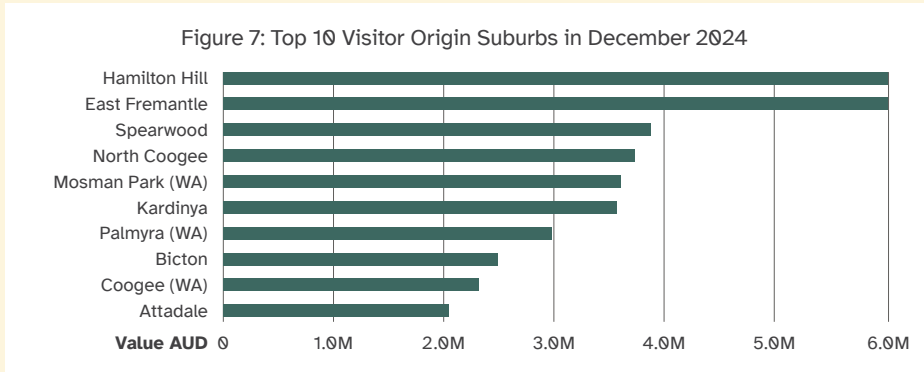
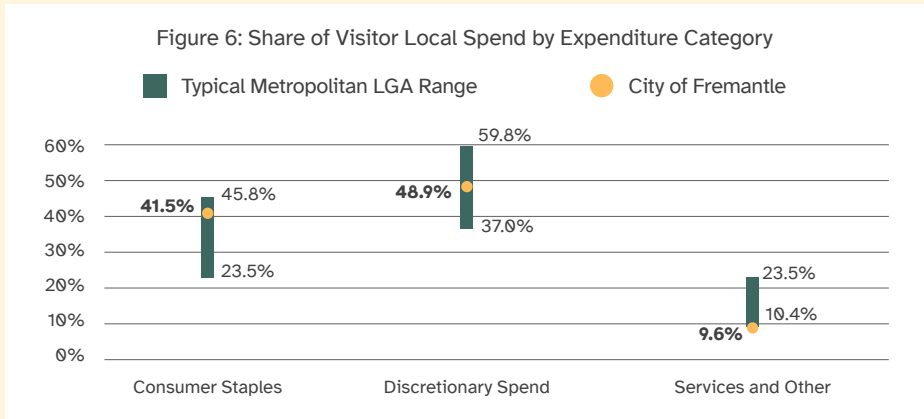
Source: Spendmapp by Geografia (2024)

Visitor Economy

At 79.9 per cent of the local economy, Visitor Local Spend in December 2024 was higher than the average share for metropolitan LGAs (59.9 per cent).

Visitor spending is important for almost all LGAs, but it comes with risks. For example, economic resilience relies on some stability and diversity and visitor spending can be both volatile and concentrated in just one or two Expenditure Categories. Initiatives should focus on smoothing out the volatility and broadening the range of goods and services purchased.

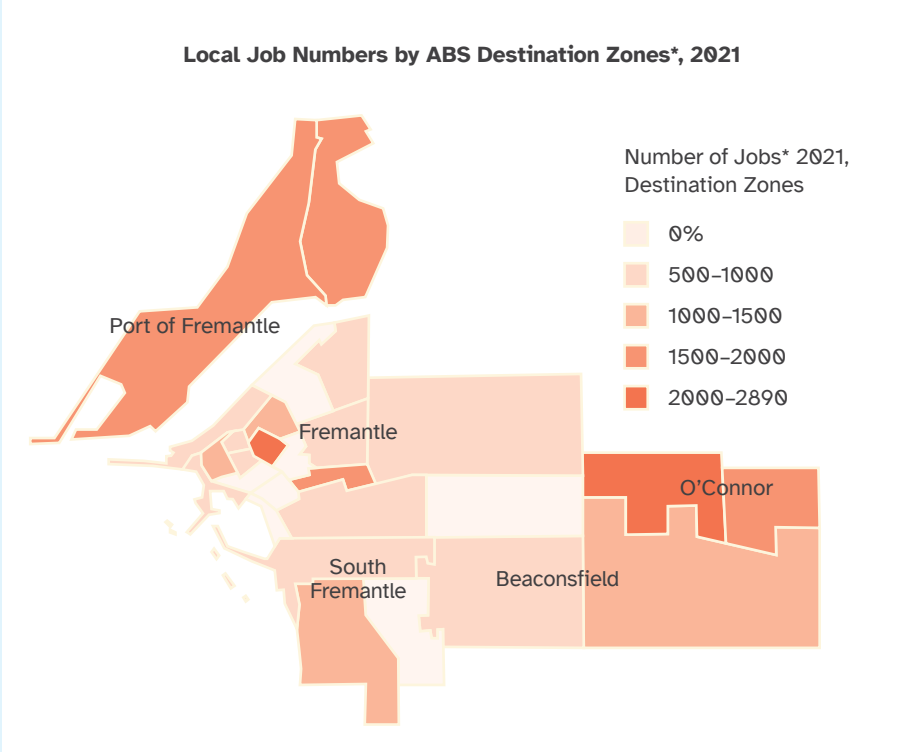
Visitors spent \$60.3 million on Consumer Staples in the City of Fremantle. This was 41.5 per cent of all visitor spending in December 2024. \$70.9 million (48.9 per cent) was in Discretionary and \$13.9 million (9.6 per cent) in Services and Other (Figure 6). By spend, Hamilton Hill was the largest source of visitor spending, counting for 6.6 per cent of total Visitor Local Spend (Figure 7).



Fremantle City Centre

Central Fremantle is the primary employment hub in the LGA, accounting for 48 per cent of total local jobs (approximately 13,189 jobs).

The area has a strong concentration of jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance, Public Administration, and Accommodation and Food Services. The high number of health, education, and government roles reflects Fremantle’s role as a major civic, health, and service centre, while hospitality and tourism also play a significant role in the local economy. In 2021, around 2 in 3 jobs in the City of Fremantle were in the Fremantle SA2 (18,797 jobs). Fremantle - South SA2 supported 4,597 jobs and O’Connor (WA) supported 4,571 jobs in the same year. The largest specific job nodes were Fremantle central area where approx. 13,000 people stated they worked in the 2021 Census (including 2,722 workers in the Walyalup Koort central zone and 1,814 at Fremantle’s health precinct; O’Connor Industrial Precinct with approx. 4,589 workers; and the Inner Harbour with approx. 2,377 workers).



Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2021

Walyalup Koort central zone clearly had the largest growth in employment between 2016 and 2021 largely due to the opening of the relocated Department of Communities head office. However, there was also growth in professional services and hospitality. The second largest employment growth was at Fremantle’s health precinct and third largest in the area adjacent to the health precinct. Some locations saw worker declines but may have been impacted by COVID policies still in effect in 2021.

SA2	Destination Zone	Local Jobs - 2021
O'Connor (WA)	511671184	2,879
Fremantle	511651181	2,722
Fremantle	511651188	1,814
O'Connor (WA)	511671189	1,710
Fremantle	511650001	1,615
Fremantle	511651169	1,557
Fremantle - South	511661193	1,495
Fremantle	511651183	1,261
Fremantle	511651178	1,205
Fremantle - South	51661198	1,123

Industries such as Professional Scientific and Technical Services, Financial Services and, in the base of Fremantle SA2, Information Media experienced strong business growth across the LGA. Business growth was particularly strong in the Fremantle - South SA2 where numbers grew 19 per cent between 2019 and 2024, compared to 10 per cent for Fremantle SA2 and O’Connor SA2. There was strong growth in non-residential building approvals in Fremantle SA2, driven by major retail, education, health and accommodation investments.

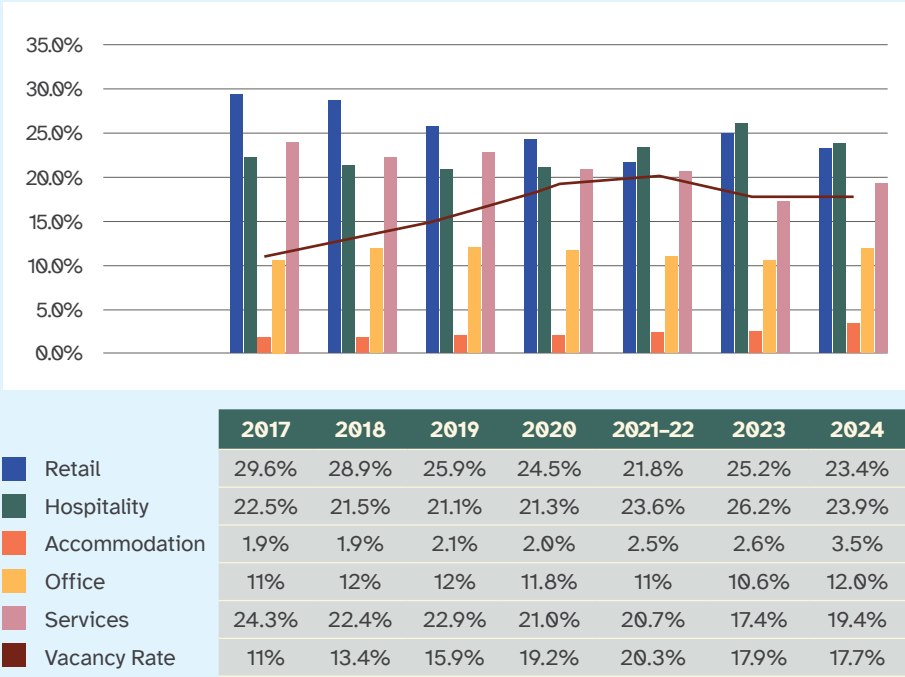
City Centre Vacancy

High Street has the highest concentration of vacancies, accounting for 18 per cent of the total, with 30.9 per cent of upper-floor vacancies also located here.

William Street, particularly the Fremantle Malls complex, represents 12.3 per cent of vacancies. Adelaide Street follows closely with 10.7 per cent, with the old Woolworths site being a significant vacant space. Collie Street shows 9 per cent vacancy, with 11 of its 20 tenancies currently unoccupied.

In terms of upper-floor spaces, many are small office suites under 30sqm, commonly found in older buildings along High and Market Streets. Market Street alone accounts for 27.3 per cent of upper-floor vacancies.

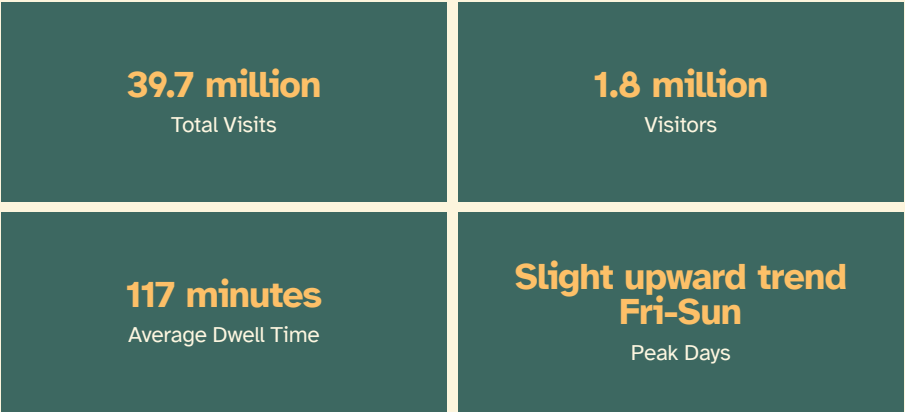
These patterns suggest challenges in attracting tenants to smaller office spaces and older properties, alongside opportunities for revitalisation and adaptive reuse to meet changing business and community needs.



Source: City of Fremantle Business and Vacancy Audit 2024

Visitation

Central Fremantle is visited by more than 1.8 million people annually including residents, workers and tourists and equates to a total number of 39.7 million visits. The City Centre experiences a small increase in visitation on weekends.



Source: Pathzz 23-24 data

Spending

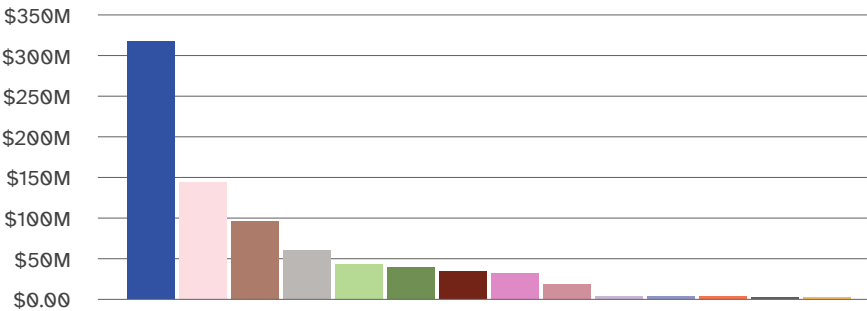
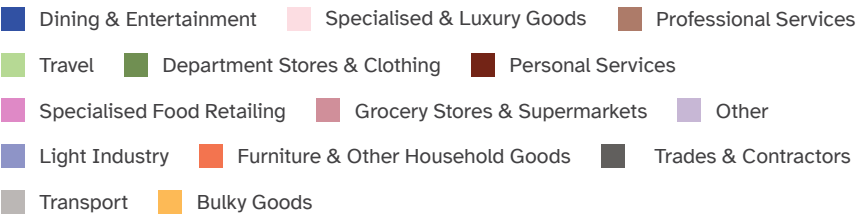
During 2023–24, central Fremantle recorded a total local spend of \$791 million (47 per cent of Fremantle). Of this, 17 per cent was attributed to local residents, while 83 per cent came from visitors. This strong economic activity reflects the pivotal role central Fremantle plays with both weekday and weekend trade and the precincts role as a destination beyond the LGA boundary.

Top visitor spending suburbs include those in close proximity (East Fremantle, Hamilton Hill and Mosman Park). The highest expenditure was Dining and Entertainment (39 per cent or \$315 million), followed by Specialised and Luxury Goods (18.1 per cent or \$144 million), indicating strong demand for independent retail, hospitality and experiential offerings.

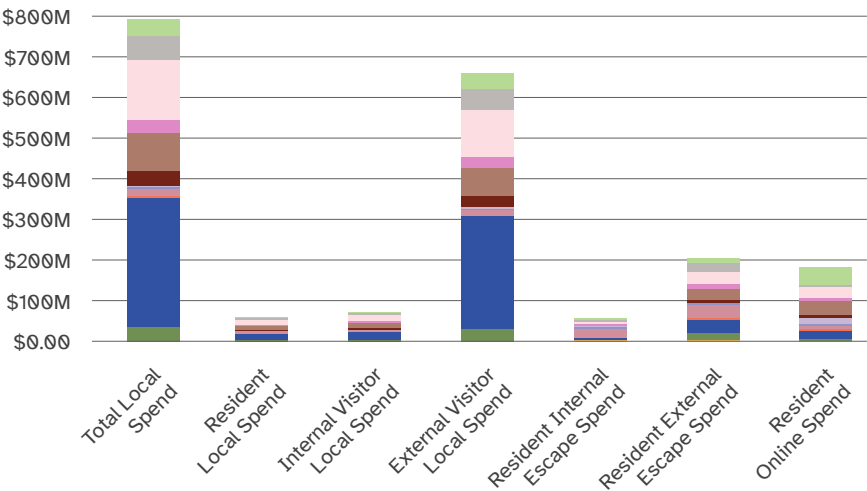
\$791 million Expenditure		
Visitor/local spend	Resident spend	Category breakdown
Visitors: \$658 million (83 per cent)	Within Fremantle: \$114.4 million (22.9 per cent)	Dining and Entertainment: \$315 million (39.8 per cent)
Local residents: \$133 million (17 per cent)	Outside Fremantle: \$202.6 million (40.7 per cent)	Specialised and Luxury Goods: \$144 million (18.1 per cent)
	Online: \$180.8 million (36.3 per cent)	Professional Services: \$94.7 million (12 per cent)

Source: Spendampp by Geografia

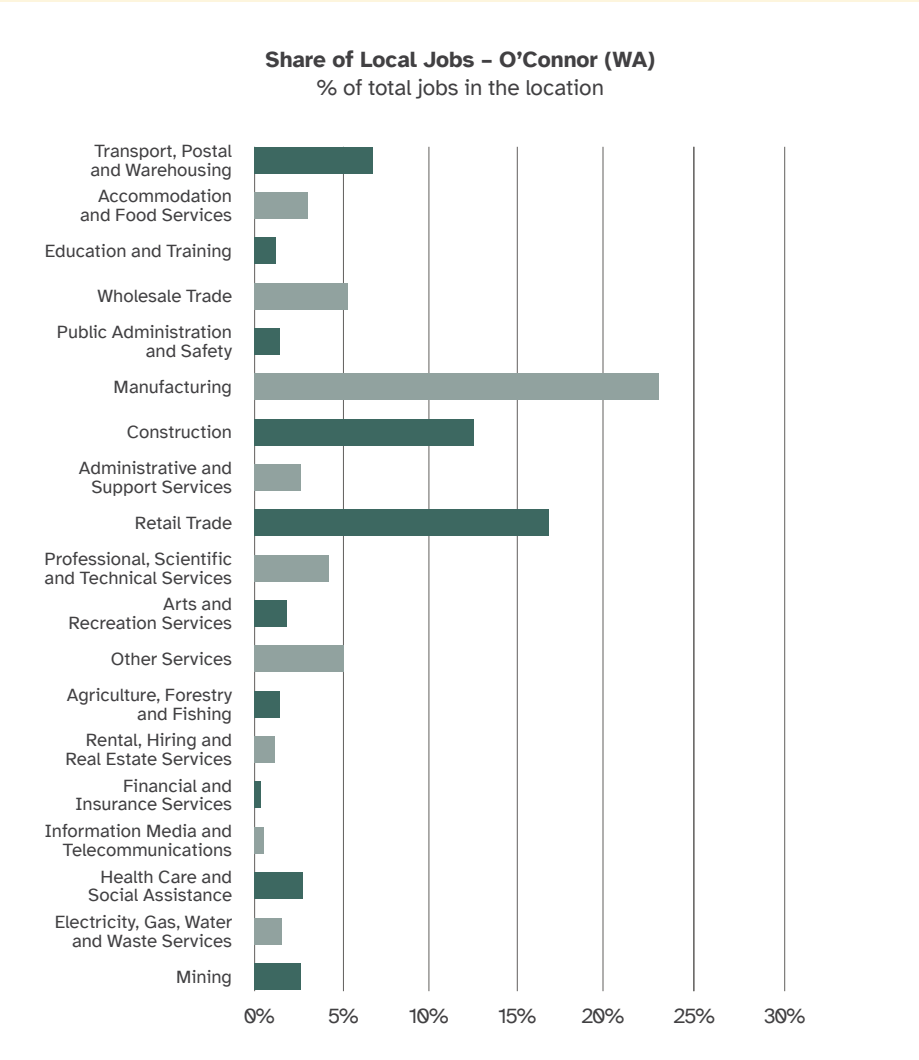
Categorised expenditure: Central Fremantle FY23–24



Central Fremantle: Expenditure Types FY23–24

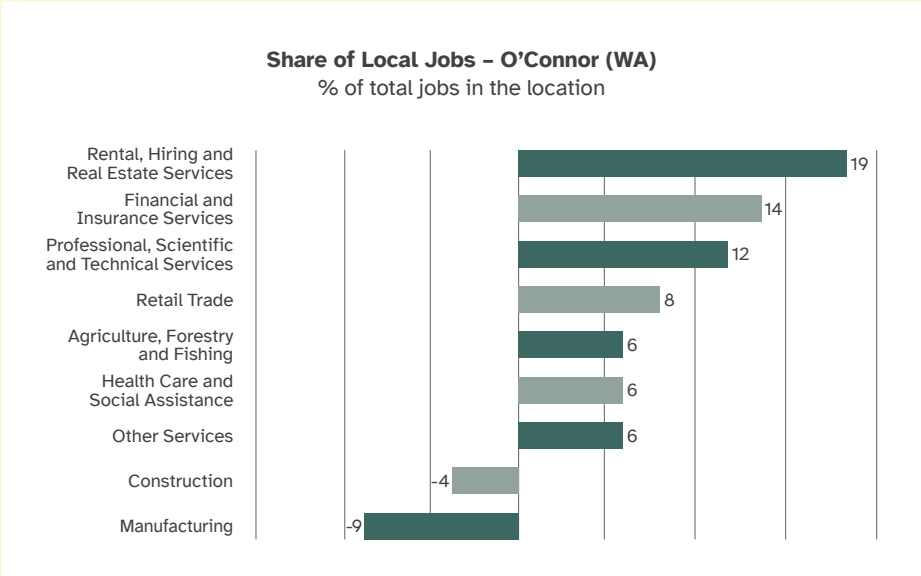


O'Connor



O'Connor (WA) plays an important role in Fremantle's economy, accounting for 17 per cent of total local jobs (approximately 4,571 jobs).

The area has a strong industrial profile, with manufacturing alone representing nearly 24 per cent of all local jobs in the suburb. This is followed by retail trade (17 per cent) and construction (13 per cent), reflecting the concentration of light industry, trade services, and commercial activity in the area. O'Connor's economic structure supports a diverse workforce and contributes significantly to the city's industrial output.

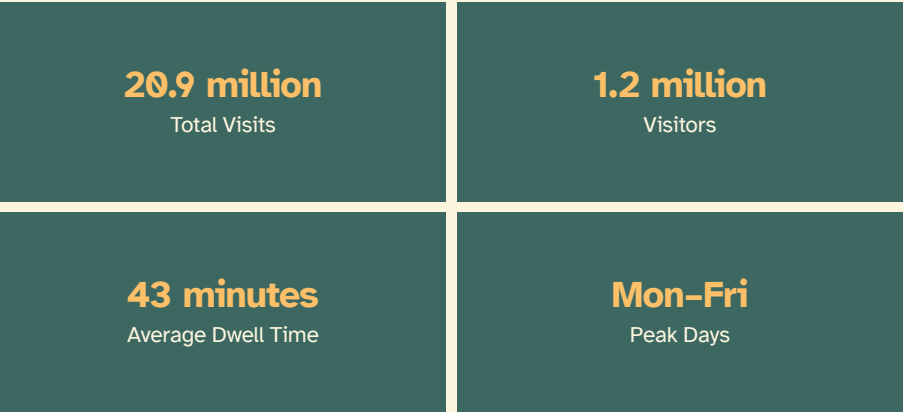


Source: ABS, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits

Visitation

O'Connor is visited by more than 1.2 million people (20.9 million visits) annually (2023–24 Pathzz pedestrian data). This includes residents, workers and those travelling through O'Connor's arterial road network.

Due to the industrial nature of O'Connor weekdays see the largest numbers of visitors. Saturday sees a modest drop from weekday visitation with Sunday seeing a 33 per cent reduction compared to midweek visitation. More than 75 per cent of O'Connor's visitation occurs between 5am and 5pm reflecting its industrial and large format retail offering.



Source: Pathzz 23-24 data

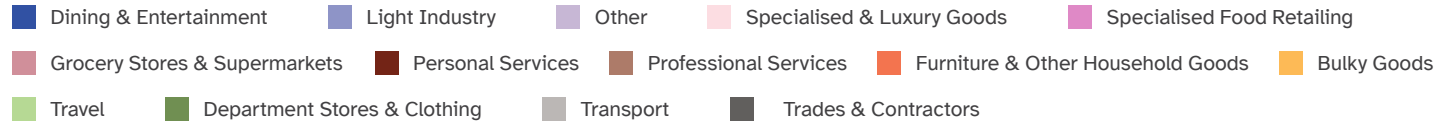
Spending

During 2023–24, O'Connor recorded a total local spend of \$398 million. Of this, 16 per cent was attributed to local residents, while 84 per cent came from visitors. Only 0.5 per cent of total spend came from O'Connor residents. This strong economic activity 23.6 per cent reflects the light industrial and large format retail nature of O'Connor's business mix. Top visitor spending suburbs include those in close proximity (East Fremantle, Hamilton Hill and Spearwood). The highest expenditure was Bulky Goods (\$91.1 million or 22.9 per cent), followed by Specialised and Luxury Goods (\$72 million or 18.1 per cent), indicating strong demand for large format retail.

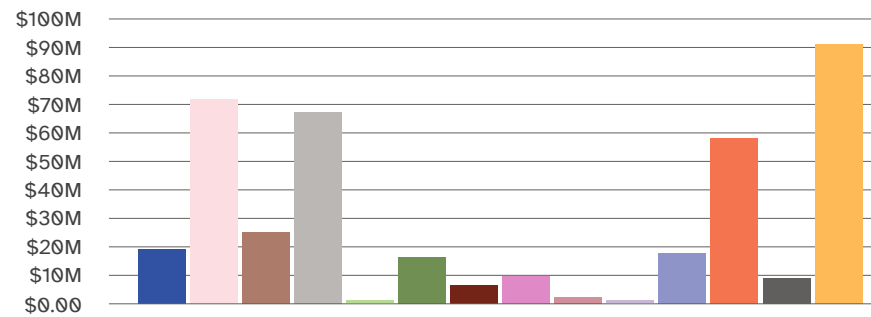
Source: Spendampp by Geografia

\$398 million Expenditure		
Visitor/local spend	Resident spend	Category breakdown
Visitors: \$334 million (84 per cent)	Within Fremantle: \$4.4 million (14.2 per cent)	Bulky Goods: \$91.1 million (22.9 per cent)
Local residents: \$64 million (16 per cent)	Outside Fremantle: \$12 million (38.7 per cent)	Specialised and Luxury Goods: \$72 million (18.1 per cent)
	Online: \$14.6 million (47 per cent)	Travel: \$67.5 million (16.5 per cent)
		Household: \$58 million (14.6 per cent)

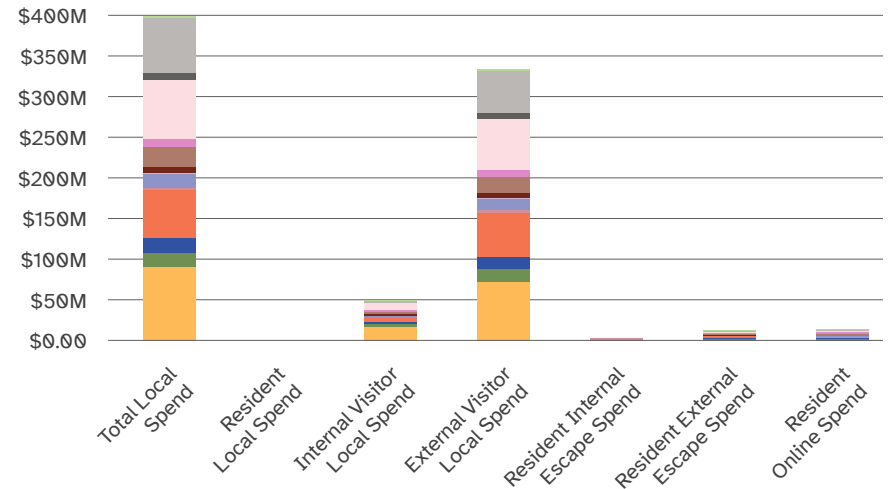
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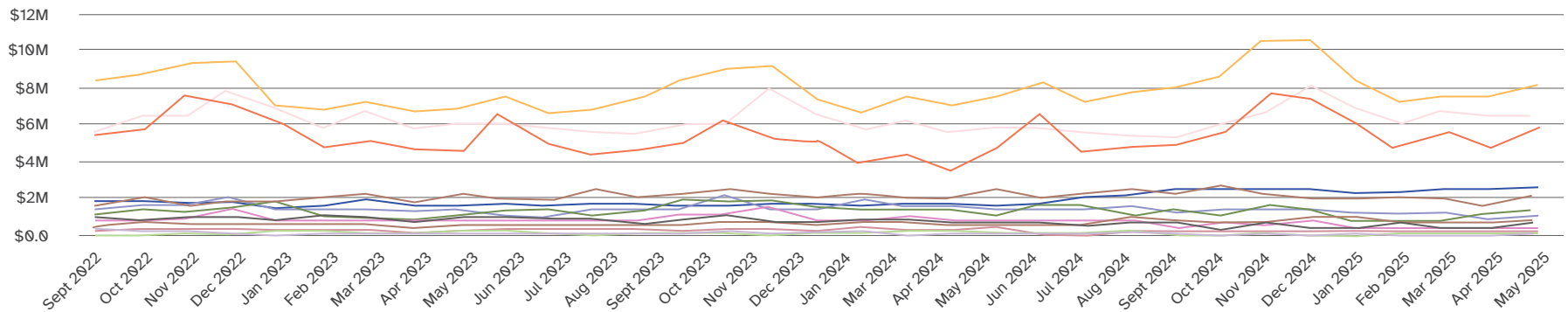
Expenditure (\$ million) in O'Connor by type for the financial year 2023-24



Expenditure (\$ million) in O'Connor by category for the financial year 2023-24



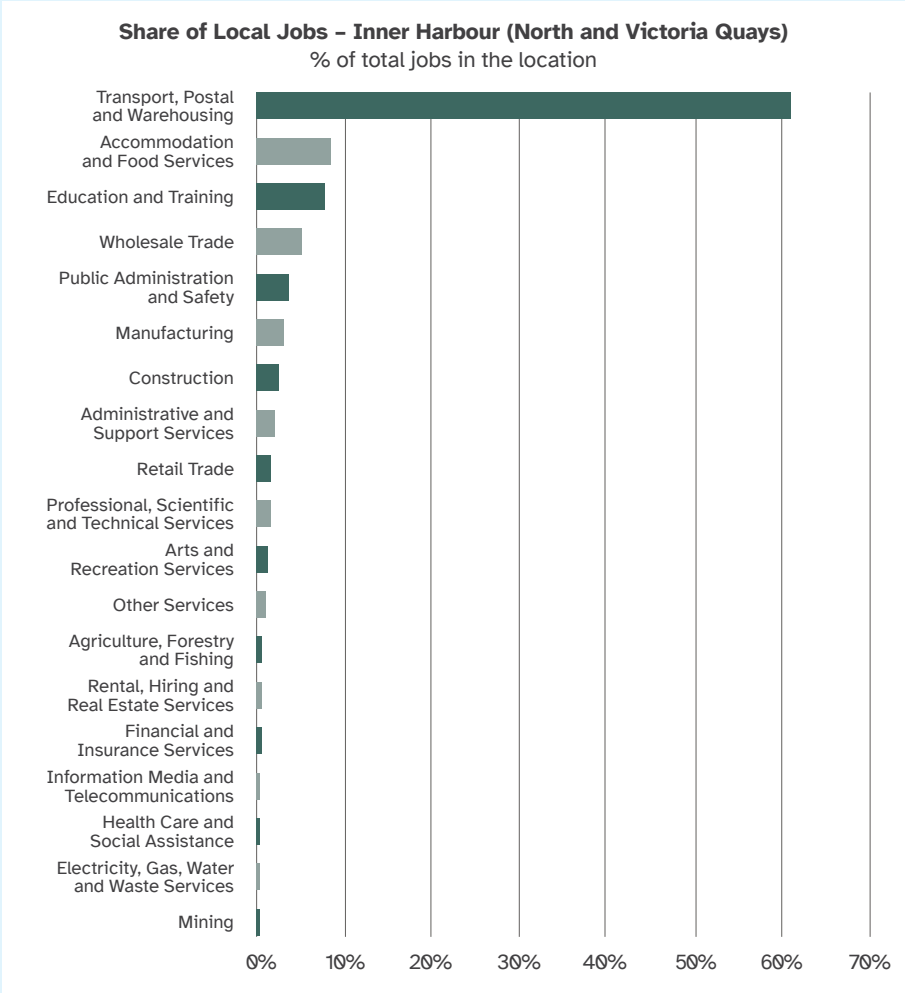
O'Connor Expenditure (\$ million) category time series (Sep 2022 - May 2025)



North Fremantle (and Inner Harbour)

Fremantle’s inner harbour supported 9 per cent of total local jobs in 2021.

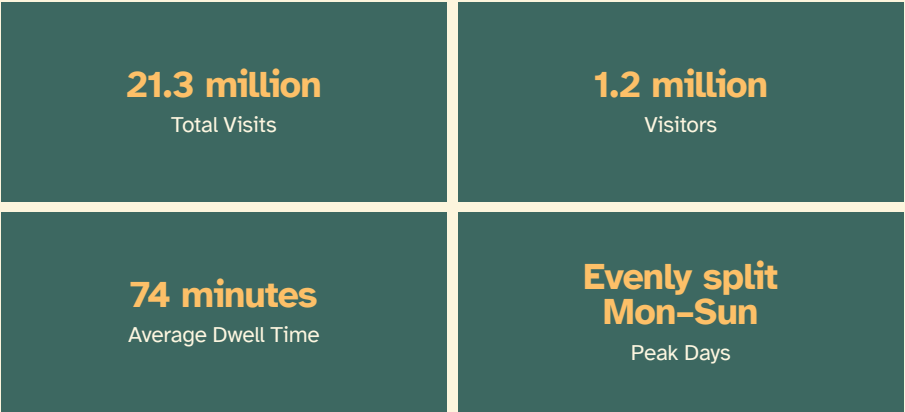
However, the area contributes substantially more in terms of economic value and brings in visitation to the centre of Fremantle via Cruise Ship visits and attractions located at the Harbour (e.g. the WA Maritime Museum). Employment is naturally concentrated in Transport which represented just over 60 per cent of all jobs in 2021. Hospitality and Education (South Metropolitan TAFE) are the next largest employing industries.



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021

Visitation

North Fremantle (and Inner Harbour) is visited by more than 1.2 million people (21.3 million visits) annually (2023–24 Pathzz pedestrian data). This includes residents, workers, visitors and those travelling through arterial road network. Visitation to North Fremantle is evenly split across weekdays and weekends but is heavily skewed towards daytime visitation (5am –5pm represents 70 per cent of total visitation) which is reflective of a relatively small nighttime economy in the precinct.



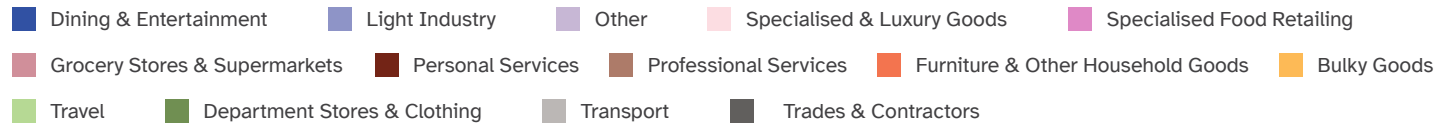
Spending

During 2023–24, North Fremantle recorded a total local spend of \$95.7 million. Of this, 19 per cent was attributed to local residents, while 80 per cent came from visitors. 11.8 per cent of total spend came from North Fremantle residents. This modest economic activity (5.7 per cent of Fremantle total) reflects the relatively small number of businesses within the precinct in particular the lack of any supermarket. Top visitor spending suburbs include those in close proximity (Mosman Park, Cottesloe and East Fremantle). The highest expenditure was Dining and Entertainment (\$27 million or 28.2 per cent), followed by Transport (\$17.1 million or 17.9 per cent).

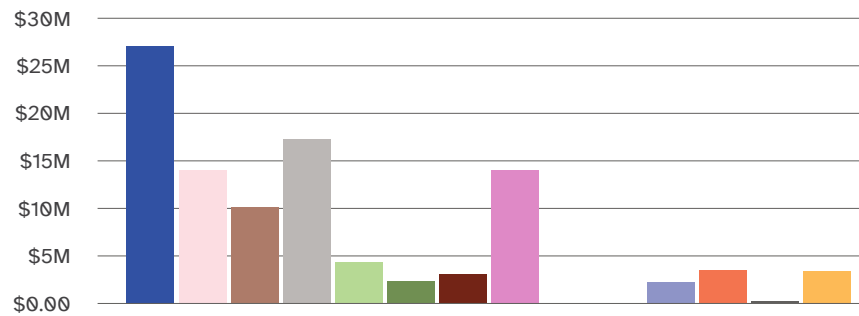
\$95.7 million Expenditure		
Visitor/local spend	Resident spend	Category breakdown
Visitors: \$76.8 million (80 per cent)	Within Fremantle: \$32.8 million (12.7 per cent)	Dining and Entertainment: \$27 million (28.2 per cent)
Local residents: \$18.3 million (19 per cent)	Outside Fremantle: \$131.9 million (51.2 per cent)	Transport: \$17.1 million (17.9 per cent)
	Online: \$93.4 million (36.2 per cent)	Specialised Food Retailing and Luxury Goods: \$14 million (14.6 per cent)

Source: Spendampp by Geografia

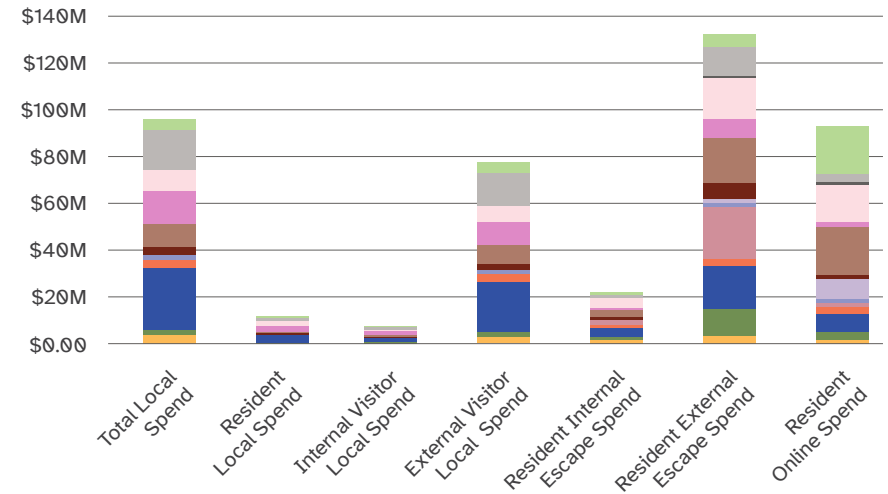
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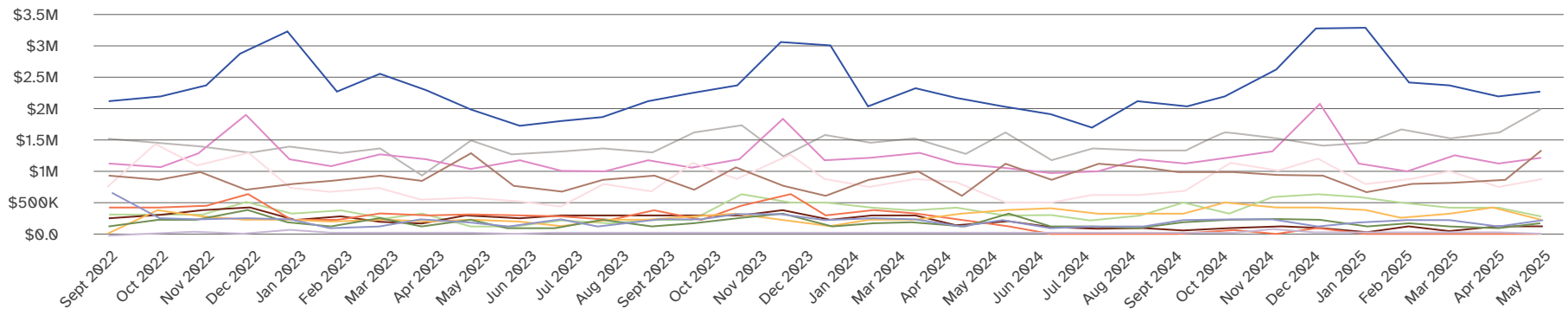
North Fremantle expenditure by category FY23-24



North Fremantle expenditure by type FY23-24



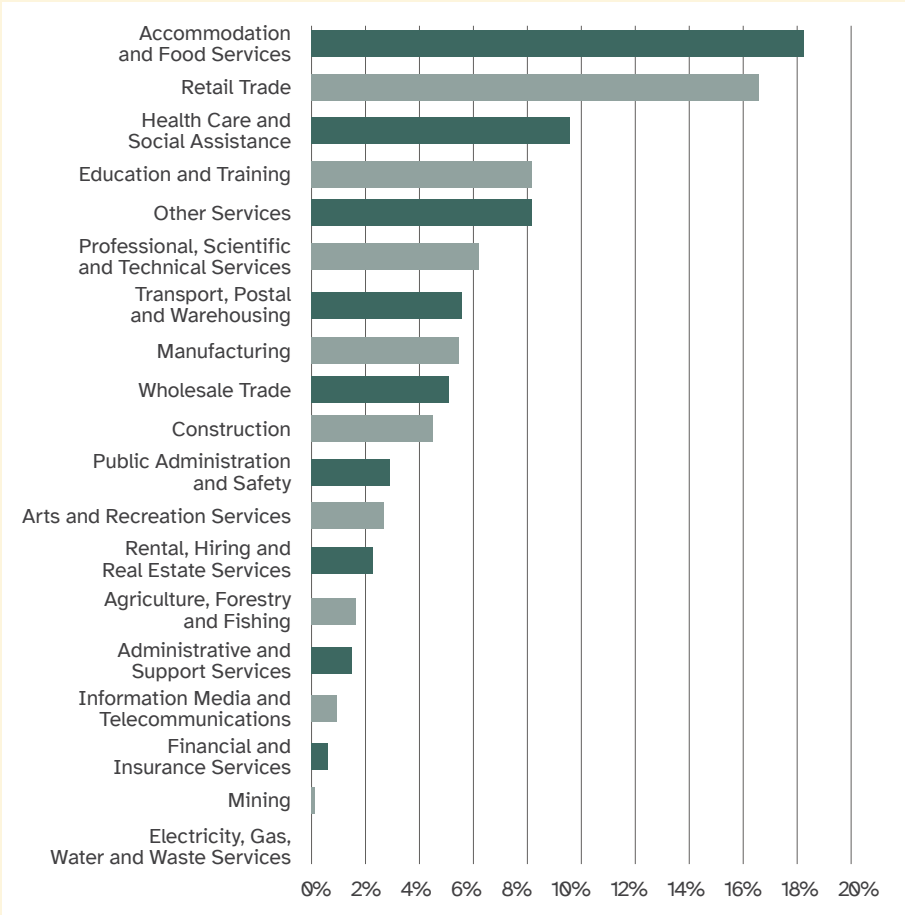
North Fremantle Expenditure (\$ million) category time series (Sep 2022 – May 2025)



South Fremantle

South Fremantle accounts for 8 per cent of total local jobs (approximately 2,300 jobs), with a job mix centred mainly around hospitality (1 in 3 jobs).

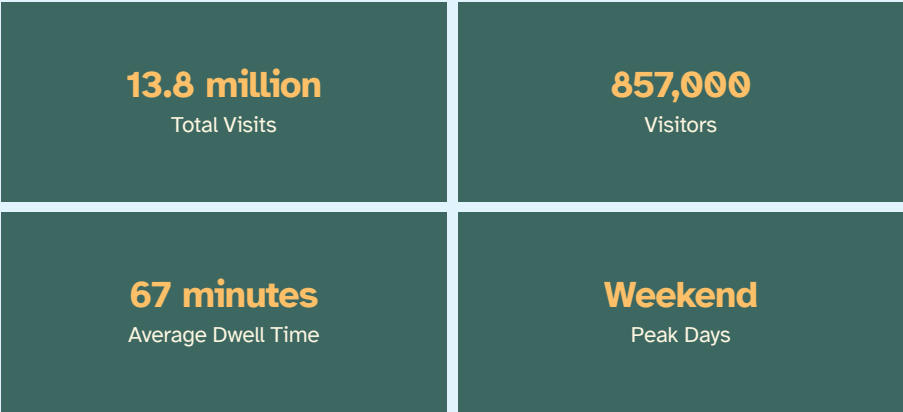
However, the rest of the economy is quite diverse with a spread across population servicing industries (Education and Training, Health Care and Social Assistance), blue collar (Manufacturing, Transport) and white collar (Professional Services) areas.



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021

Visitation

South Fremantle is visited by more than 857,000 people (13.8 million visits) annually (2023–24 Pathzz pedestrian data). This includes residents, workers, visitors and those travelling through arterial road network. Visitation to South Fremantle is skewed towards weekends with 50 per cent of total visitation occurring between Fri-Sun. This reflects the popular dining and entertainment along South Terrace, retailing (both specialised and supermarket) and the recreational amenity of the South Beach area.



Source: Pathzz 23-24 data

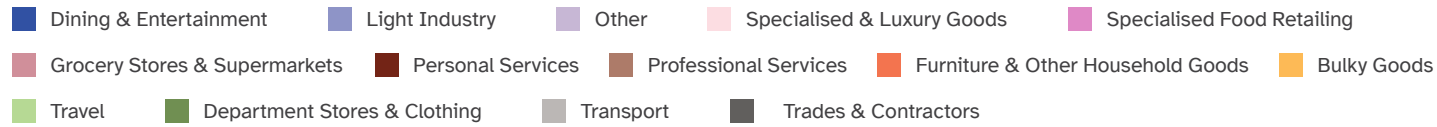
Spending

During 2023–24, South Fremantle recorded a total local spend of \$269.3 million. Of this, 36 per cent was attributed to local residents which reflects the strong affinity Fremantle residents have with the precinct. The remaining spend (64 per cent) came from visitors which is significantly lower than in other precincts. Given the visitation numbers, the economic activity of South Fremantle is significant (15.9 per cent of total in Fremantle). Top external visitor spending suburbs include those in close proximity (Hamilton Hill, North Coogee, Spearwood and East Fremantle). The highest expenditure category was Grocery Stores and Supermarket (\$102 million or 38 per cent) followed by Dining and Entertainment (\$54.9 million or 20.4 per cent), and Specialised Food Retailing (\$34 million or 12.6 per cent).

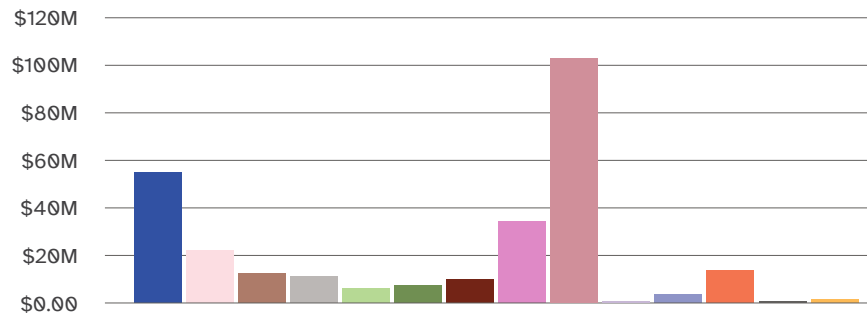
\$95.7 million Expenditure		
Visitor/local spend	Resident spend	Category breakdown
Visitors: \$76.8 million (80 per cent)	Within Fremantle: \$32.8 million (12.7 per cent)	Dining and Entertainment: \$27 million (28.2 per cent)
Local residents: \$18.3 million (19 per cent)	Outside Fremantle: \$131.9 million (51.2 per cent)	Transport: \$17.1 million (17.9 per cent)
	Online: \$93.4 million (36.2 per cent)	Specialised Food Retailing and Luxury Goods: \$14 million (14.6 per cent)

Source: Spendampp by Geografia

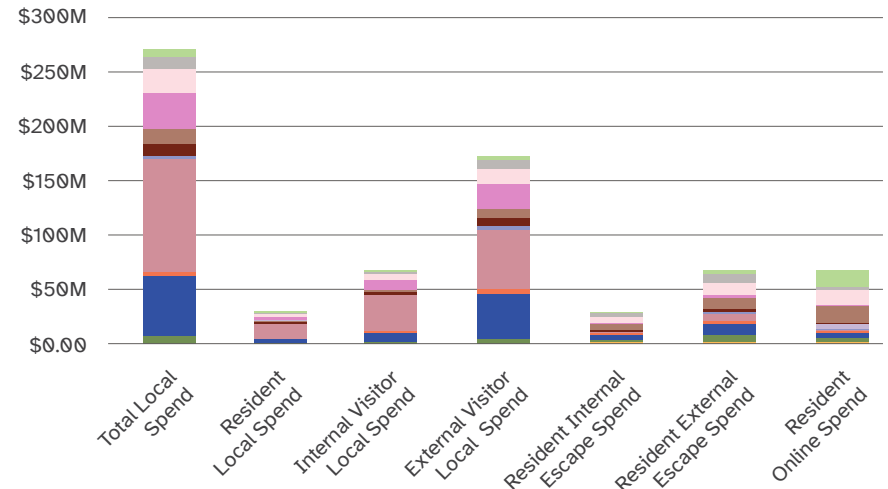
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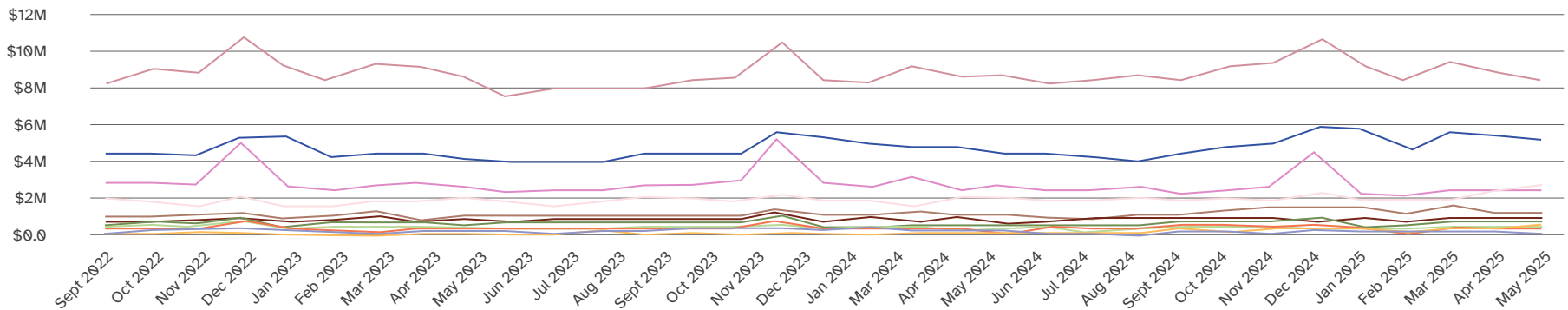
South Fremantle expenditure by category FY23-24



South Fremantle expenditure by type FY23-24



South Fremantle Expenditure (\$ million) category time series (Sep 2022 – May 2025)



Hilton

Hilton accounts for 5.4 per cent of total local jobs (approximately 1500 jobs), with a job mix centred mainly around Education and Training and Health Care and Social Assistance both accounting for 23 per cent of total jobs.

Other notable sectors include Accommodation and Food Services (12 per cent) largely down to the presence of Coles supermarket, and Construction (7 per cent).

Industry	Jobs	%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	7	0.46
Mining	8	0.53
Manufacturing	55	3.67
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	3	0.2
Construction	101	6.75
Wholesale Trade	25	1.67
Retail Trade	93	6.22
Accommodation and Food Services	182	12.17
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	22	1.47
Information Media and Telecommunications	9	0.6
Financial and Insurance Services	3	0.2
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	4	0.26
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	62	4.14
Administrative and Support Services	34	2.27
Public Administration and Safety	27	1.8
Education and Training	342	22.87
Health Care and Social Assistance	344	23.01
Arts and Recreation Services	34	2.27
Other Services	52	3.47
Industry not classified	74	4.94
Total industries	1495	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021

Visitation

Hilton is visited by more than 1.1 million people (19.9 million visits) annually (2023–24 Pathzz pedestrian data). This includes residents, workers, visitors and those travelling through arterial road network (South St). Visitation to Hilton is stable every day of the week and visitation times are weighted towards daytime (70 per cent visit between 5am-5pm).

19.9 million

Total Visits

1.1 million

Visitors

55 minutes

Average Dwell Time

Evenly Split

Peak Days

Source: Pathzz 23-24 data

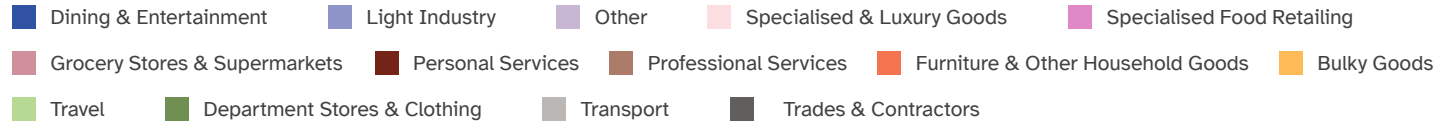
Spending

During 2023–24, Hilton recorded a total local spend of \$99.4 million. Of this, 40.7 per cent was attributed to local residents. Visitor spend in the area over the same period was 59.3 per cent. Top external visitor spending suburbs include those in close proximity (Hamilton Hill, Kardinya, Spearwood and East Fremantle). The highest expenditure by a considerable margin was Grocery Stores and Supermarket (\$54.3 million or 62.4 per cent) largely down to the opening of Coles in June 2023.

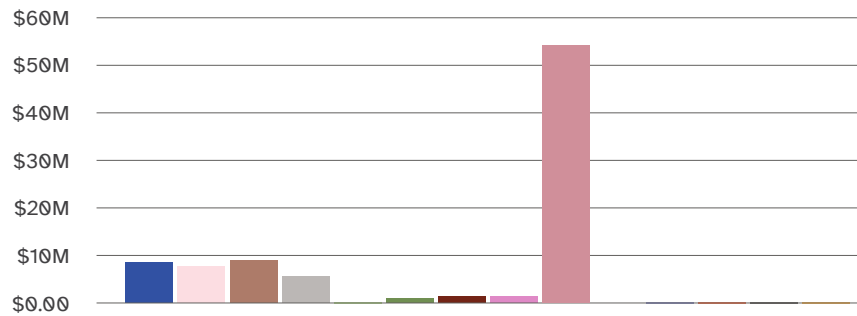
\$99.4 million Expenditure		
Visitor/local spend	Resident spend	Category breakdown
Visitors: \$58.9 million (59.3 per cent)	Within Fremantle: \$39.4 million (25.2 per cent)	Grocery Stores/Supermarkets: \$54.3 million (62.4 per cent)
Local residents: \$40.5 million (40.7 per cent)	Outside Fremantle: \$67 million (42.9 per cent)	Professional Services: \$9 million (10.1 per cent)
	Online: \$49.8 million (31.9 per cent)	Dining/Entertainment: \$8.4 million (9.7 per cent)

Source: Spendampp by Geografia

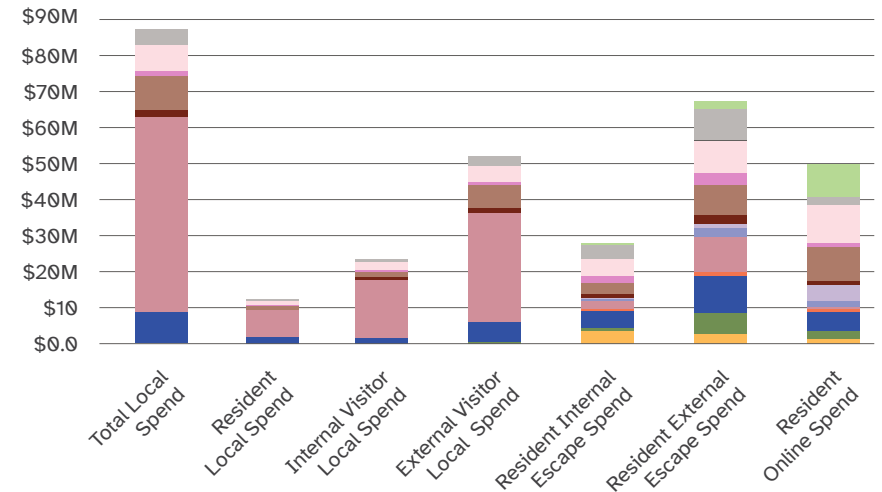
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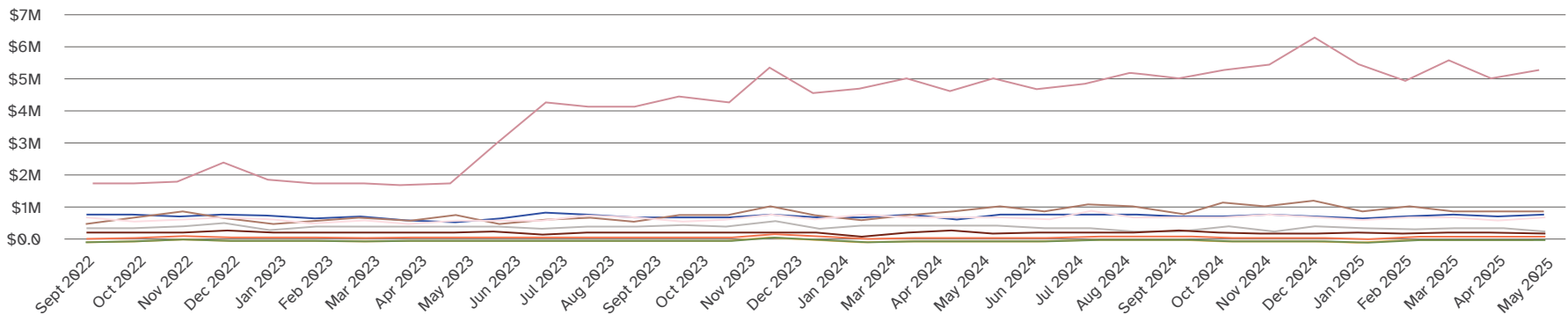
Hilton expenditure by category FY23-24



Hilton expenditure by type FY23-24



Hilton Expenditure (\$ million) category time series (Sep 2022 – May 2025)



Beaconsfield

Beaconsfield accounts for 2.7 per cent of total local jobs (approximately 750 jobs), with a job mix centred mainly around Education and Training (37 per cent) and Health Care and Social Assistance (22 per cent) of total jobs. Other notable sectors include Retail Trade (11 per cent).

Industry	Jobs	%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	5	0.67
Mining	0	0
Manufacturing	23	3.09
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	0	0
Construction	35	4.71
Wholesale Trade	8	1.07
Retail Trade	83	11.17
Accommodation and Food Services	27	3.63
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	4	0.53
Information Media and Telecommunications	5	0.67
Financial and Insurance Services	3	0.4
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	3	0.4
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	29	3.9
Administrative and Support Services	12	1.61
Public Administration and Safety	7	0.94
Education and Training	278	37.41
Health Care and Social Assistance	166	22.34
Arts and Recreation Services	17	2.28
Other Services	29	3.9
Industry not classified	21	2.82
Total industries	743	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021

Visitation

Beaconsfield is visited by more than 947,000 people (17.1 million visits) annually. This includes residents, workers, visitors and those travelling through arterial road network (South St). Visitation to Beaconsfield is even every day of the week and visitation times are weighted towards daytime (67 per cent visit between 5am-5pm).

17.1 million

Total Visits

947,000

Visitors

68 minutes

Average Dwell Time

Evenly Split

Peak Days

Source: Pathzz 23-24 data

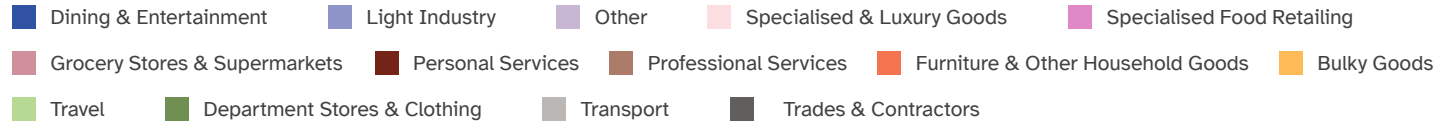
Spending

During 2023–24, Beaconsfield recorded a total local spend of \$39.6 million. Of this, 37.8 per cent was attributed to local residents. Visitor spend in the area over the same period was 62.2 per cent. Top external visitor spending suburbs include those in close proximity (Hamilton Hill,

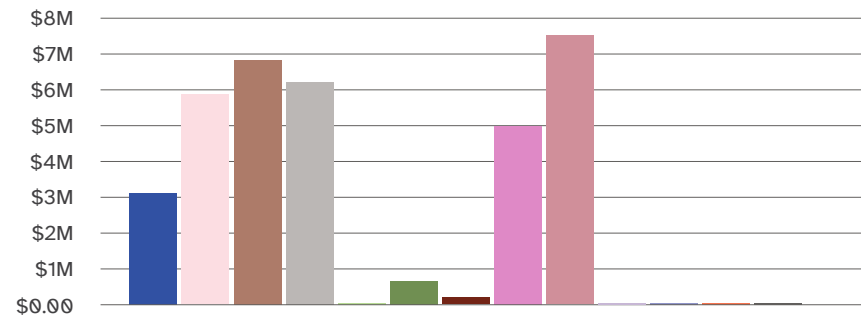
Spearwood and North Coogee). The highest expenditure by a considerable margin was Grocery Stores and Supermarket (\$7.5 million or 19 per cent), followed by Professional Services and Transport.

\$39.6 million Expenditure		
Visitor/local spend	Resident spend	Category breakdown
Visitors: \$24.6 million (62.2 per cent)	Within Fremantle: \$64.3 million (26.4 per cent)	Grocery Stores/Supermarkets \$7.5 million (19 per cent)
Local Residents: \$15 million (37.8 per cent)	Outside Fremantle: \$91.6 million (37.5 per cent)	Professional Services: \$6.8 million (17.3 per cent)
	Online: \$88.1 million (36.1 per cent)	Transport: \$6.2 million (15.8 per cent)

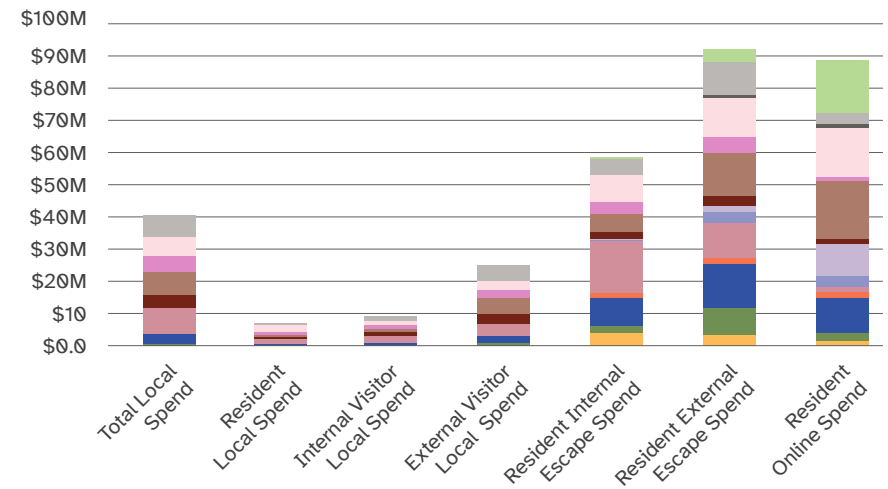
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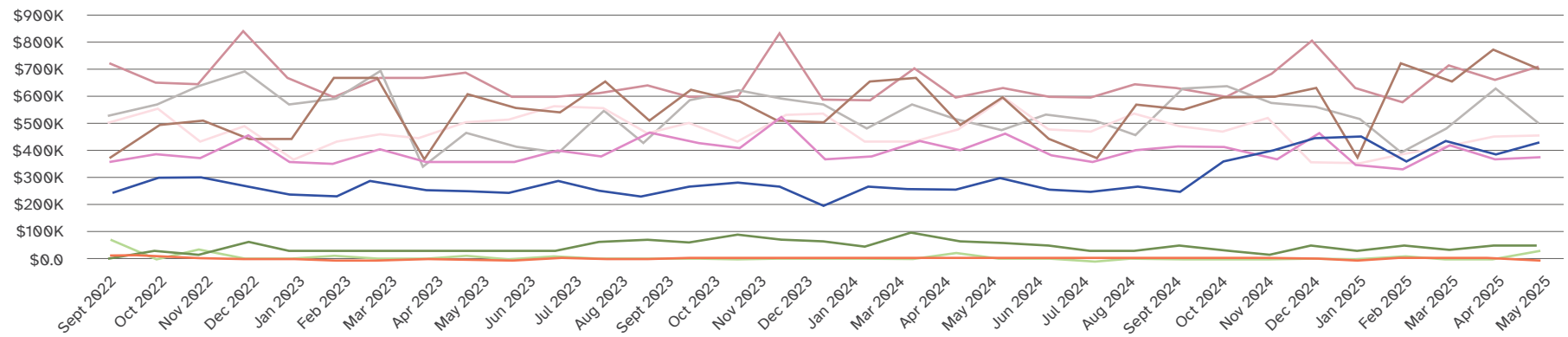
Beaconsfield expenditure by category FY23-24



Beaconsfield expenditure by type FY23-24



Beaconsfield Expenditure (\$ million) category time series (Sep 2022 – May 2025)



Business Sentiment

Economic outlook

Businesses in the City of Fremantle are more optimistic about economic conditions in the short term than they are the long term. Almost half (48 per cent) anticipate stronger economic conditions over the upcoming quarter, while one in five (19 per cent) expect weaker conditions.

For the year ahead, only 14 per cent are expecting conditions to improve, with the same proportion anticipating weaker conditions – encouragingly, the proportion expecting weaker conditions has declined 18 percentage points from the previous quarter.

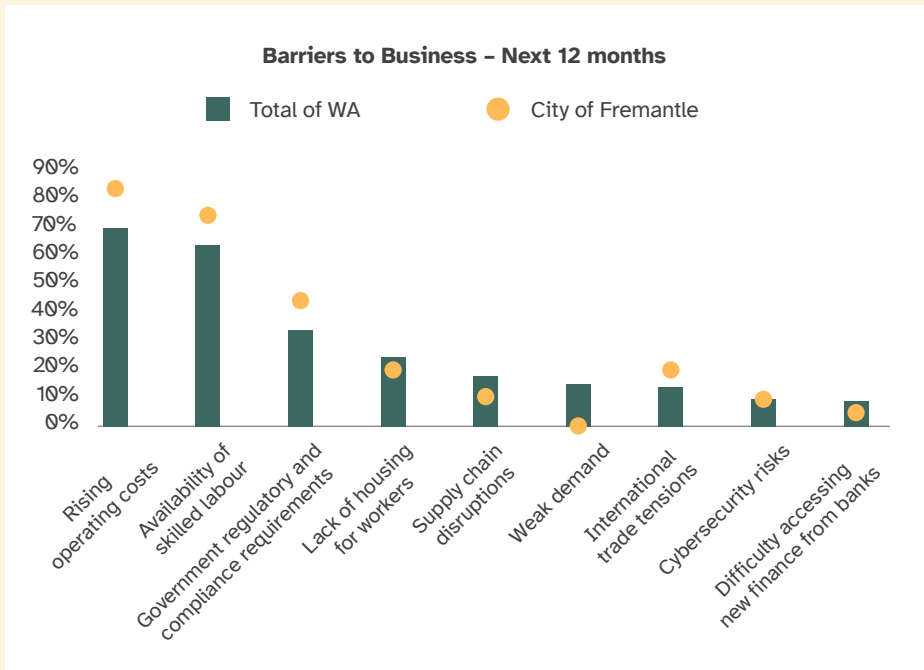
Compared with the rest of WA, businesses in the City of Fremantle are more optimistic about conditions in the short term (7 percentage points higher) but lag behind the state's outlook over the next 12 months (13 percentage points lower).



Barriers to business

Rising costs and labour shortages remain the biggest barriers over the next 12 months for businesses in the City of Fremantle. A significant 81 per cent cited rising operating costs as a major barrier – down five percentage points from last quarter – while 71 per cent reported the availability of skilled labour. Other key barriers include government regulation (43 per cent), a lack of housing for workers (19 per cent) and international trade tensions (19 per cent).

Compared to WA businesses overall, a greater proportion of businesses in the City of Fremantle identified rising operating costs, labour shortages and regulation burdens as barriers. In contrast, fewer reported weaker demand as a concern.



Business plans

The most popular action businesses in the City of Fremantle are taking to help grow their business over the next 12 months remains improving their digital presence, with more than half (55 per cent) reporting this. Expanding within WA (40 per cent), adopting new technologies (20 per cent) and responding to evolving social trends (20 per cent) are also high on the agenda.

Compared with businesses overall, a greater proportion of businesses in the City of Fremantle intend to improve their digital presence, expand within WA, respond to evolving social trends and expand overseas.

In contrast, significantly fewer plan to adopt new technologies and invest more in diversity and inclusion. Expand overseas is an interesting statistic with a significantly higher rate than WA. This suggests the respondents to the survey represent a highly specialised business mix who know their skills, products and services are in demand internationally.

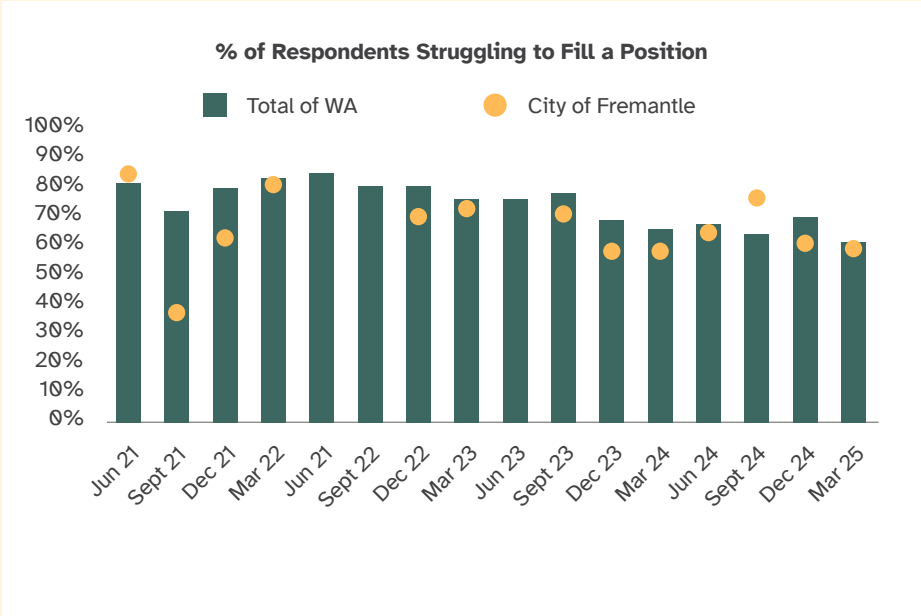


Source: CCIWA from 21 respondents, March 2025

Skilled labour shortages

Hiring challenges persist for businesses in the City of Fremantle, with almost three in five (58 per cent) businesses indicating they struggled to hire workers over the quarter. While still high, this marks the second consecutive quarter of improvement and is the lowest proportion reporting this since the same period last year.

This result closely mirrors the broader WA landscape, with three in five (60 per cent) WA businesses reporting hiring difficulties this quarter.



June 2022, September 2022 and June 2023 data not available due to insufficient sample sizes.

Source: CCIWA from 21 respondents, March 2025

Key Industry Sectors

Blue Economy

The blue economy refers to the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem. It encompasses various sectors including marine transport, fisheries, aquaculture, renewable energy, tourism, and more. It balances commercial growth and the protection of the ocean's ecology.

There is a recognition of the considerable 'blue' economic assets that Fremantle and the region hold, and that there is a potential to be more strategic about how they are positioned and utilised to achieve significant economic and environmental outcomes.

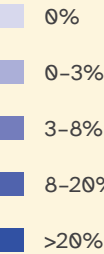
Currently supporting approximately 2,261 jobs within the City of Fremantle, marine based industries are a significant contributor to the City's local economy and a strong foundation upon which to grow Fremantle's innovation capabilities and unique know-how.

When viewed within the context of the Southwest Group of LGA's marine based economic assets and the Western Australian Trade Coast, there is a significant opportunity to position Fremantle, and Western Australia more broadly, as a centre of excellence for sustainable blue economy innovation in the Indian Ocean Rim, plugging into a growing sector that is forecast to contribute \$100 billion per annum to Australia's economy by 2025. By 2030, the global ocean economy is expected to double in value to \$3 trillion, outpacing the growth of the broader global economy by almost 20 per cent.

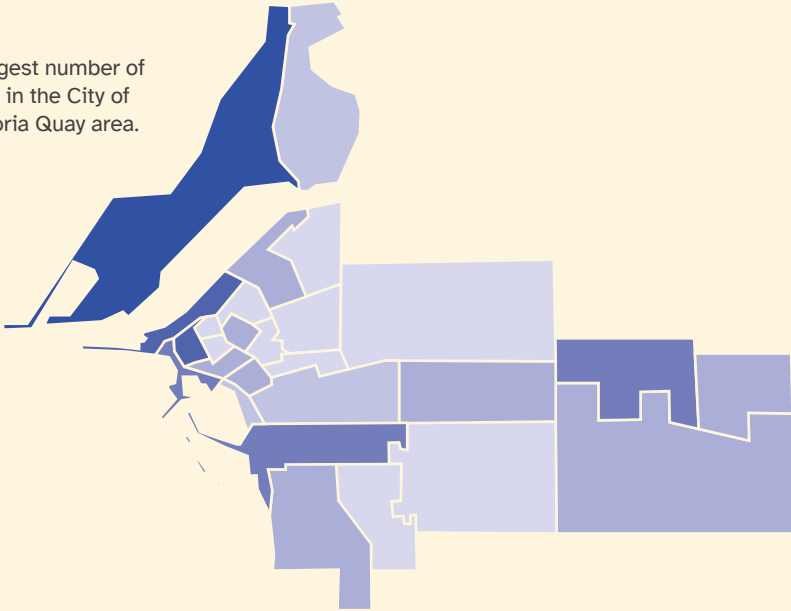
Spatial Profile

In the 2021 Census, the Inner Harbour North Quay had the largest number of Blue Economy workers who stated their place of work as being in the City of Fremantle (33%). Another 20% stated they worked in the Victoria Quay area.

Stated Workers



Source: ABS Census, 2021. Destination Zone IDZN Geographies



Workforce Profile

45 years Median Age (Perth 43 years)	24% Female (Perth 22%)	76% Male (Perth 79%)	27% Born Overseas (Perth 39%)	1.0% Identified as ATSI (Perth 0.8%)
21% Degree Educated (Perth 29%)	32% Managers/Professionals (Perth 39%)	81% Full Time (Perth 83%)	\$83,572 Median Income (Perth \$77,335)	

Source: Economy ID Informed Custom Report 2025

Sub-sectors

While the blue economy is diverse, Fremantle must identify and prioritise its unique strengths to drive job creation, attract businesses, and establish itself as a hub for the sector.

By focusing on its distinctive expertise and competitive advantages, Fremantle can support the growth of companies moving to the area and strengthen its position as a leader in the blue economy.

To remain a leader in naval architecture and shipbuilding while advancing marine environment regeneration, investment in research and development is essential. Universities and TAFEs must provide industry-aligned programs and cutting-edge research to safeguard fragile ecosystems, support sustainable growth, and ensure the long-term resilience of Fremantle's coastal environments.

The blue economy and related industries all rely on a healthy marine environment. These marine-dependent sectors play a vital role in the economic and social well-being of communities, shaping local industries and daily life. Their economic stability has significant ripple effects, influencing broader economic activity and the social fabric of Fremantle.

Changes in the marine environment, especially those driven by climate change, present significant risks. As these challenges intensify, the need for proactive and effective adaptation strategies becomes ever more critical to ensure the resilience and long-term sustainability of the industries that depend on the marine environment.



Subspecialities

01. Maritime Servicing and Engineering

Fremantle is home to a strong maritime servicing and engineering sector, backed by a variety of specialised companies, institutions, and a deep maritime heritage. With a long history as a hub for shipping and marine-related activities, Fremantle has earned its reputation as a key player in the industry due to its strategic location and established infrastructure.

Proximity to major ports: Fremantle is home to one of Western Australia's busiest ports, offering direct access to shipping lanes and a vital link for trade and logistics.

Skilled workforce: The region benefits from a highly skilled workforce, including a strong pool of engineers, technicians, and maritime professionals, supported by local training institutions and universities.

Industry ecosystem: Fremantle already has a thriving maritime industry, with established companies in shipbuilding, repairs, and marine technology, creating a robust network of businesses and services including naval architects, maritime construction and marine pilots.

Infrastructure and facilities: The city has state-of-the-art facilities, including shipyards, dry docks, making it a prime location for maritime servicing, engineering, and innovation.

Access to global markets: Fremantle's location provides easy access to international markets, facilitating the movement of goods and services while supporting global supply chain.

Key institutions and infrastructure:

- **South Metropolitan TAFE – Fremantle Campus:** This campus features comprehensive training facilities and state-of-the-art equipment for specialised courses across maritime, engineering, and marine industry areas.
- **Fremantle Ports:** Western Australia's largest and busiest general cargo port, operating through two harbours and facilitating trade vital to the state.
- **TAMS Marine** offers comprehensive engineering solutions, including repairs, modifications, and upgrades for vessels.
- **Blue HQ and SFM Marine** provides commercial and recreational vessel refit, repair and upgrades.
- **World-class maritime simulator** preparing future shipmasters, officers and engineers for their maritime careers.

02. Marine Technology and Innovation

Fremantle is home to established and emerging businesses advancing marine technologies supported by a combination of local industry expertise, research institutions, and innovative businesses looking to tackle the challenges of the blue economy.

The city's marine technology sector is heavily invested in blue economy innovations, such as renewable energy technologies (e.g., tidal and wave energy), aquaculture solutions, and marine environmental monitoring systems.

Fremantle is attracting marine-focused startups and technology firms that are exploring new ways to integrate digital solutions with maritime services. This includes developments in autonomous vessels, smart port technologies, and digital platforms for marine and defence logistics.

Fremantle is becoming increasingly known for its commitment to sustainable maritime practices, from reducing emissions in shipping to developing eco-friendly shipbuilding techniques.

Operational companies in Fremantle:

- **L3Harris:** Builds, delivers, maintains and supports complex systems and equipment for Australia and for export, supporting the Australian Industry Capability strategy.
- **Greenroom Robotics:** Develops advanced AI and robotics software that bridges the gap between human expertise and autonomous capabilities.
- **Hyperion Systems:** Advanced 3D printing process that produces sizeable, high-quality components with speed and precision for sectors like marine, construction, Defence, and education.
- **For Blue:** Develops innovative solutions that promote a healthier and more sustainable relationship between the maritime industry and the environment. Provides expertise in areas such as marine research, ocean conservation technology, and sustainable resource management.
- **Carnegie Clean Energy:** Developer of the CETO® technology, which captures energy from ocean waves and converts it into electricity.
- **IMC Naval Architects:** Naval architecture and marine engineering consultancy servicing the global commercial, private and defence sectors.
- **AMI Marine and Offshore Excellence:** Specialist agent for service, supply and survey of Defence, Government, Commercial Vessels and premium Superyachts.

03. Marine Tourism and Conservation

With its scenic waterfront, bustling port, and proximity to Rottnest Island, marine parks and wildlife reserves, Fremantle offers a diverse range of marine tourism experiences that attract local, domestic and international visitors.

Visitor activities include:

- Harbor and coastal cruises
- Bather's Beach
- Maritime history museums and exhibitions
- Fishing and aquaculture
- Water sports and recreation
- Marine wildlife tours
- Sailing and boating
- Visiting domestic and international cruises
- Seafood gastronomy

Restoration activities: Sand (beach) nourishment in 2021 provided a buffer against storm erosion to a tolerable erosion hazard risk to protect the existing assets and generally maintain Port Beach amenities.

04. Sustainable aquaculture

Fremantle is a hub for both commercial and recreational fishing, with the Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour serving as a key location for both.

The WA seafood industry generates more than a billion dollars for the State's economy annually and employs about 6,000 people in direct and indirect jobs connected to commercial fishing and aquaculture activity.

Fremantle is home to innovative aquaculture farming techniques that prioritise both sustainability and efficiency through programs like the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Marine Fish Hatchery, which looks at Yellowtail Kingfish and Barramundi nutrition, health and disease resistance.

A major focus of a number of businesses is the replacement of marine ingredients in aquafeeds through ultra-sustainable alternative ingredients that reduce or eliminate fish meal and fish oil inclusions in aquafeeds.

Infrastructure

Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour: A working harbour that caters for commercial operators and recreational vessels with service jetties and wharves, refuelling and maintenance facilities, public toilets and parking.

The harbour also has safe and convenient vessel accommodation that provides easy access to Rottnest, Carnac and Garden Island.

Fremantle Sailing Club: An integral part of Fremantle's maritime community, offering high-quality sailing experiences, fostering youth participation, hosting international events, and promoting environmental sustainability

Operational Companies

Fremantle Seaweed: Specialises in the sustainable harvest and production of seaweed products. Their focus is on providing high-quality, sustainable seaweed for various industries, including food, cosmetics, agriculture, and even environmental application.

Fremantle Octopus: Seafood company that specialises in the sustainable harvest of octopus, with a focus on providing high-quality products while supporting marine conservation.

Seastock: Creates global marine science solutions to produce and extract compounds derived from seaweed and algae.

Western Rock Lobster: Western Australian Rock Lobster fishery achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first fishery in the world to be certified as ecologically sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council.

Marine Fish Hatchery: The hatchery in Victoria Quay supplies commercial quantities of juvenile barramundi to Marine Produce Australia (part of the Barramundi Group) in Derby and have domesticated Yellowtail Kingfish broodstock populations for the emerging industry.

Creative and Immersive Economy

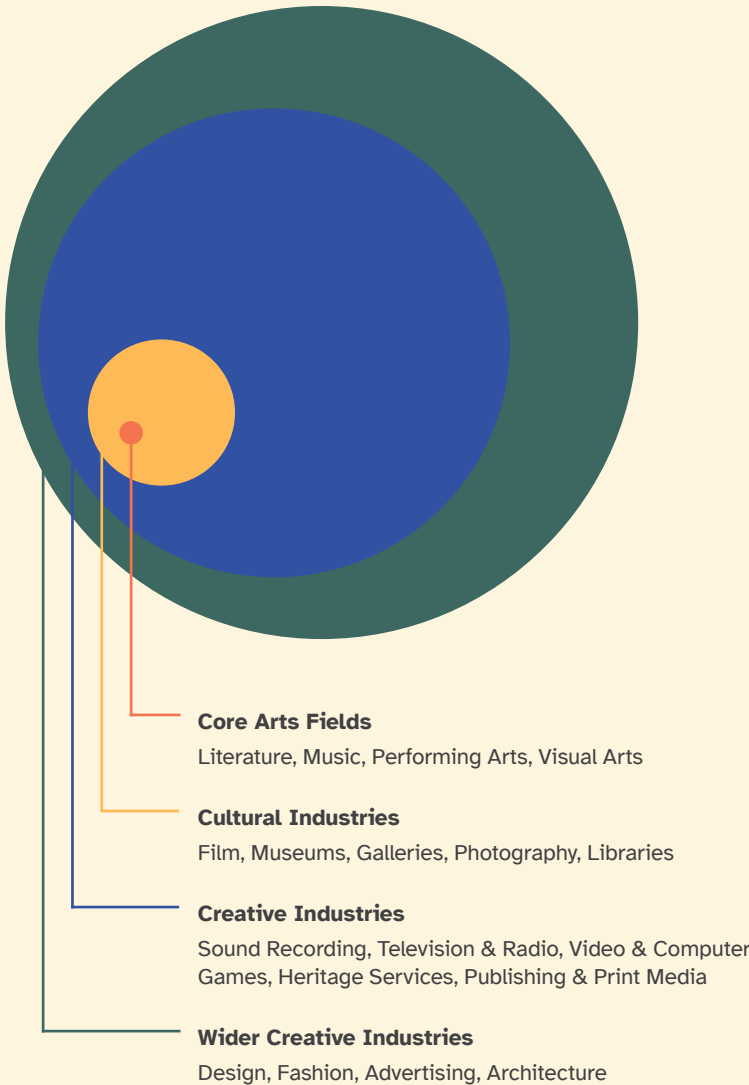
Fremantle’s creative economy is a major driver of its identity, cultural vibrancy, and economic growth.

The city 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. It also spearheads innovation which is the primary driver of economic growth in a knowledge-based economy.

In 2016, the Australian creative economy was estimated to contribute \$11.7 billion to the economy and employed 868,098 people or 8.1 per cent of the total Australian workforce. It is important to note this includes embedded creatives working in non-creative industries.

Major Contributors

- Fremantle has a rich and growing First Nations creative scene, deeply rooted in Noongar culture and storytelling. First Nations artists, performers, and cultural practitioners contribute significantly to the city’s identity, shaping its visual, performing, and literary arts landscape.
- Fremantle has the longest running street arts festival in Australia, which is the largest of its kind in Australasia.
- Fremantle Arts Centre turned 50 in 2023 and is the longest running art centre in Australia, in 2021 it engaged with 300,000 members of community.
- \$3+ million is the estimated value of the City of Fremantle Art Collection which turned 65 years old in 2023.
- Leading the country in the number of independent film productions is WA, and Fremantle is home to the highest concentration of documentary and factual television production houses and key filmmakers in WA.
- Fremantle Library since reopening in 2021 has had 249,546 visitors and an increase in visits of 120 per cent. The Fremantle Library was established as WA’s first free lending library in 1949.
- Several heritage-listed buildings have long been prioritised as cultural amenities for artists, creatives, and the community in Fremantle, including Fremantle Art Centre, The Moores Buildings, Old Fremantle Boys School (DADAA), Victoria Hall, J-Shed, Mrs Trivett’s Lane cottages, Captain Lane cottages and Kidogo Art House.



Source: The Creative Economy - Pracsys Fremantle Creative Economy Study 2024

Using ABS POW data for the City of Fremantle and other LGA's in the Southern Corridor the nature of this economy and its significance can be described. As of 2021, Fremantle's creative industry included an estimated 2,310 jobs and contributed \$181.8 million directly to the economy.

Within the context of the southwest metro sub-region (SM) roughly 18 per cent of jobs in the creative economy reside in Fremantle. This makes it the third largest contributor after Melville (30 per cent) and Cockburn (26 per cent), however given that Fremantle is the 5th largest in terms of all jobs its contribution shows the strength of this industry.

As of 2021 the SM creative economy included an estimated 12,850 jobs and contributed \$1 billion directly to wider economy. From a creative industry specific perspective roughly 32 per cent of jobs in creative industries existed within Fremantle. This makes Fremantle the largest contributor to creative industries in the sub-region, further validating its strength.

The largest employing creative industry in Fremantle was Architectural services (290 jobs), followed by computer system design (223 jobs) and then creative artists (158 jobs) (Figure 1). See appendix A for a full breakdown of jobs per industry.

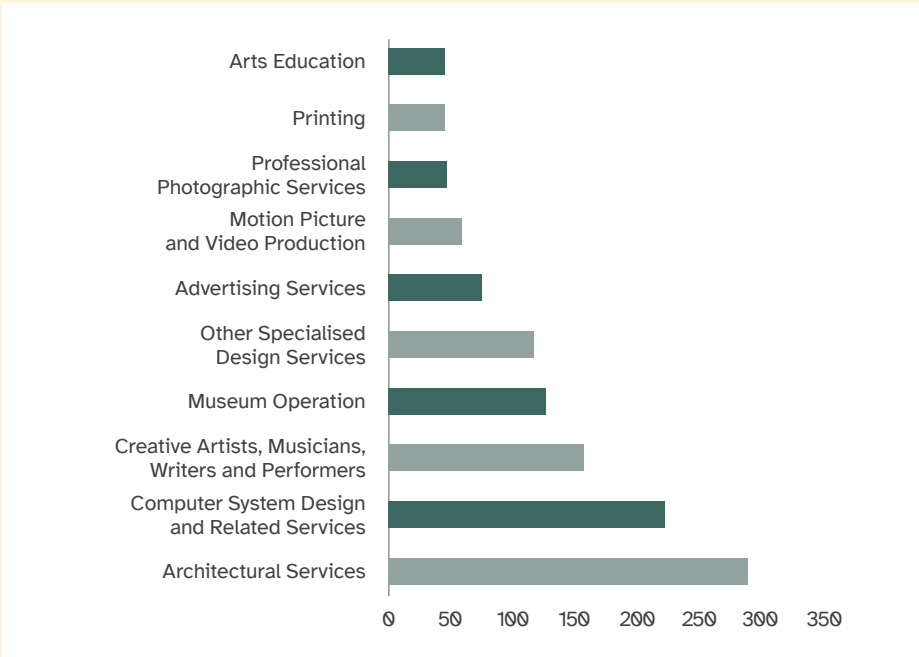


Figure 1. Largest Creative Industries in Fremantle by Employment
Source: Pracsys Fremantle Creative Economy Study 2024

Although it does not contain the most creative industry employment of all SM member governments, there are several industries that entirely or majority exist within Fremantle. Core arts and Cultural industries like museum operation (82 per cent), Free-to-air TV broadcasting (63 per cent), Book Publishing (46 per cent), Performing Arts operation (50 per cent), Sound and Music Publishing (100 per cent) and Creative and Performing Arts Activities (53 per cent) were all example industries located within Fremantle.

Another example is screen production which includes motion picture production and post-production related activities but does not include video exhibition. 62 of the 150 or 42 per cent of screen production jobs were located in Fremantle. Supporting this industry is particularly important as the WA government support for this sector continues to grow. The largest creative industries in the SM are provided below.

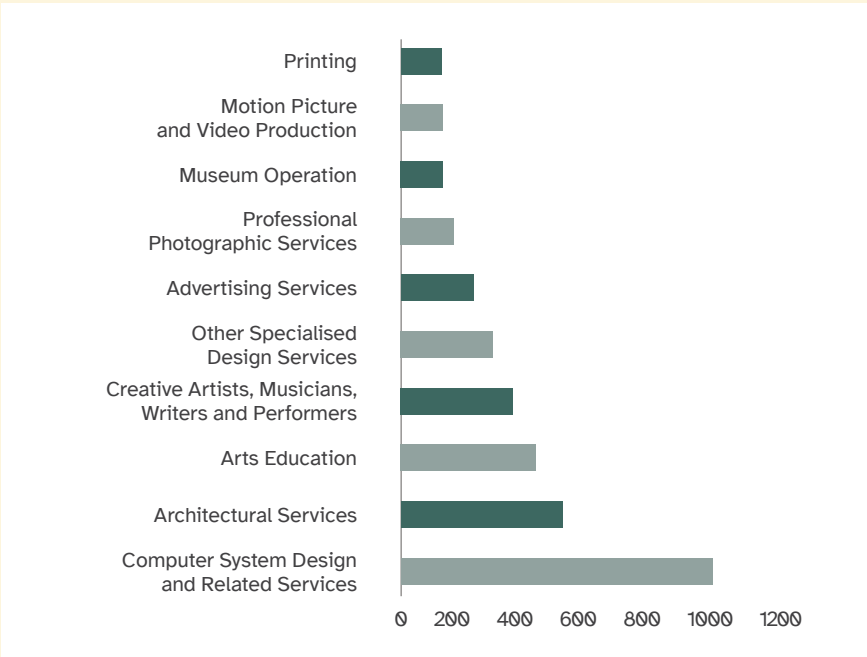
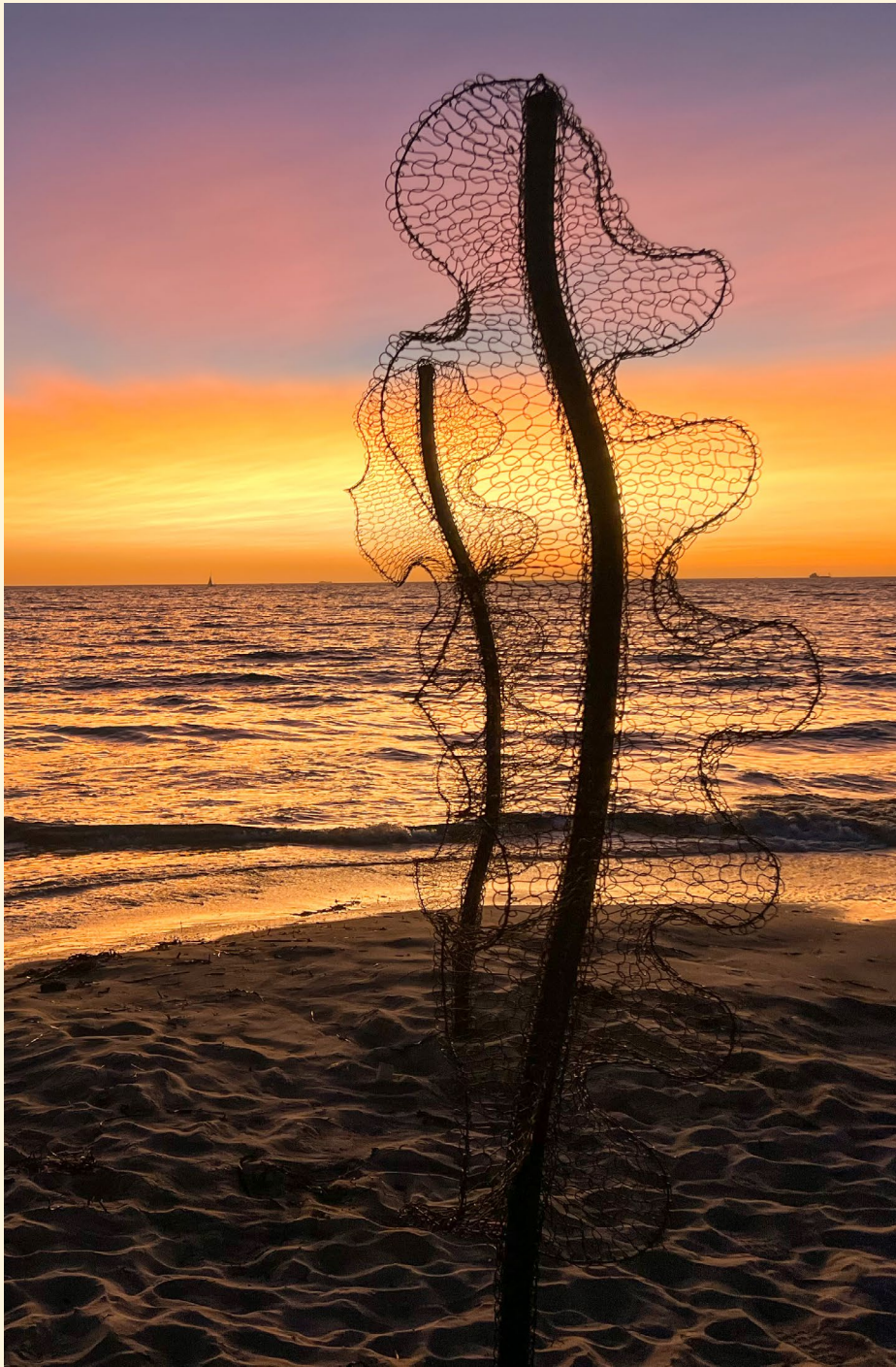


Figure 2. Largest South Metro Creative Industries by Employment
Source: Pracsys Fremantle Creative Economy Study 2024

Fremantle demonstrates an interesting characteristic of its creative economy, with the majority (36 per cent) being specialist creatives, meaning creative occupations within creative industries. This deviates from the national trend in the New Approach's study on the Australia Creative Economy in 2020, where embedded creatives were almost twice as common as specialist creatives.

This also differs from the regional trend, with the majority of employment occurring in embedded jobs accounted for 63 per cent of creative economy employment. This may reflect that although it does not contain the largest number of creative economy jobs, Fremantle is home to creative professionals that are highly knowledgeable and skilled.

Fremantle				
		Industries		Total
		Employed in creative occupations	Employed in non-creative occupations	
Occupations	Employed in creative occupations	841	832	1,673
	Employed in non-creative occupations	637	Non-creative occupations in non-creative industries	
Total		1,478		2,310



Film-friendly City

Fremantle maintains a strong creative milieu which has attracted and retained an existing critical mass of film activity over many years and received 53 filming permit applications in 23–24.

The film sector in Western Australia, including the agencies that support it and the businesses that work with it have long held Fremantle in high regard both in terms of its attractiveness as a filming location and the ease at which film productions can be delivered within our local government area.

When screen production comes to town it can provide a quick injection of revenue to local businesses. Film crews often need accommodation, food and beverage along with other lesser-known benefits like costume and prop sales play a part.

Productions can have long term benefits, boosting local employment, encouraging investment, and generally increasing the Fremantle profile. Filming projects can also create a potentially endless source of tourism opportunities. Capturing a community's appeal like Fremantle on screen can ensure a steady stream of visitors for generations to come.

Startup and Innovation

Fremantle offers the prime environment for startups to thrive, with a vibrant and growing ecosystem supported by government initiatives, private investment, and an experienced, highly skilled workforce.

Over 70 startups in Fremantle valued at \$758 million, are pushing boundaries across diverse sectors, including biotech, agritech, wellness and beauty, energy, transportation, innovative food, and fintech. Fremantle offers an ideal launchpad, just 15 minutes from Henderson and 25 minutes from Perth, and is strategically positioned as the gateway to the Western Trade Coast, WA's Global Advanced Industries Hub.

Fremantle is home to a cluster of key organisations and resources that support innovation, providing the recognition and backing needed for your startup to gain visibility and grow. The city also offers direct access to large-scale industries like Fremantle Port, MSC, L3Harris, Austal, SFM Marine, TAMS Group, Spaceagency and Fremantle Hospital, creating unique opportunities for collaboration and expansion.

Influential peak bodies including Walyalup Aboriginal Culture Centre, Immerse Australia, the Fremantle Foundation, Plastic Free Foundation and Design Freo strengthen Fremantle's connections across innovation, sustainability, and social impact sectors. Fremantle is a highly desirable place to live and work—blending coastal lifestyle, rich culture, and a strong sense of community that naturally supports and welcomes new business.

Fremantle is a centre for research and development, with active R&D across health, marine industries, sustainability, and innovation—strengthened by its proximity to leading institutions like the University of Notre Dame, the SMT Maritime Campus, Murdoch University, and Curtin University. Together, they provide startups with access to top talent, research collaboration, and specialised expertise, fostering a thriving innovation ecosystem.

In addition, Fremantle's O'Connor light industrial precinct is home to a cluster of highly skilled workers in the manufacturing and production sectors. This creates a unique community where businesses can connect with experienced professionals to bring their ideas to life and create tangible products.

The city offers a range of support for startups looking to move or relocate to Fremantle, including access to co-working space, mentorship and networking opportunities, connections with industry contacts and investors, and a ticket to the Fremantle Startup Festival. Startups also have access to experienced mentors and business advisors through local networks such as Hub on SX, Business Foundations, and FSpace.

Fremantle's proximity to our Western Trade Coast hub neighbours ensures seamless access to additional infrastructure and resources for scaling.

Propel Program

Propel Fremantle is a program designed to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and business growth in Fremantle. The program is offering subsidised access to incubators, coaching, mentoring, office space, networks, memberships, legal and accounting services or any other appropriate services identified during the assessment phase.

The program focuses on key growth sectors, including the blue economy, sustainability, immersive and creative technology, aiming to position Fremantle as a hub for forward-thinking enterprises. Propel is supported and funded by a network of ecosystem partners, including the City of Fremantle, Lotterywest, Spacecubed, and other industry stakeholders.

Across the 2023–24 and 2024–25 funding rounds, Fremantle's Propel program has successfully supported 18 startups, helping to accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship in the region. These early-stage ventures have gone on to secure additional investment, form strategic partnerships, and bring new products and services to market—strengthening Fremantle's reputation as a hub for emerging industries. The program has played a pivotal role in nurturing local talent and fostering a culture of creativity and resilience within the startup ecosystem.



Health and Medical Life Sciences

Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest employment sector in the City of Fremantle, supporting 6,494 local jobs in 2023–24. Fremantle plays a key role in supporting Western Australia’s ambition to become a global leader in health, medical, and life sciences, with key institutions driving research, education, and clinical innovation across the state.

As part of the Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospitals Group, Fremantle Hospital is a key public teaching hospital offering a broad range of medical services. It plays an essential role in WA Health’s clinical and research network. Recent upgrades – such as the refurbishment of operating theatres – demonstrate continued investment in high-quality healthcare. A major expansion is currently underway, including the construction of 40 new mental health beds, purpose-built wards, and a 24-hour urgent care service as part of the Fremantle Hospital Redevelopment.

The University of Notre Dame Australia’s Fremantle campus is a cornerstone of health and medical education. Its School of Medicine and School of Health Sciences offer programs in medicine, biomedical science, health promotion, and physiotherapy. These programs emphasise hands-on learning through internships in hospitals, clinics, and community health organisations.

The University’s Institute for Health Research (IHR), based in Fremantle, leads collaborative research initiatives across various health disciplines. The IHR provides expertise in designing and analysing complex health research, offering support for grant applications, and mentoring health research students.

Fremantle is home to two companies operating in the Biotech Therapeutics and Diagnostics sector, along with the Hospital Research Foundation Group. The Foundation’s presence in Fremantle strengthens its capacity to deliver impactful research, engage meaningfully with the community, and support improvements in regional healthcare.

These institutions collectively underscore Fremantle’s role as a dynamic centre for health and medical life sciences, fostering innovation, education, and research that contribute to the advancement of healthcare in Western Australia.

Visitor Economy

The visitor economy is a vital pillar of Fremantle’s economic and cultural identity, driving business activity, job creation, and community vibrancy.

As one of Western Australia’s most visited destinations, Fremantle attracts tourists through its unique blend of heritage, arts, culture, dining, retail, and waterfront experiences.

The activity of the visitor economy provides direct revenue for businesses in Fremantle and generates investment in essential services for the community. The community benefits through improvements in public infrastructure and amenities, and enhanced lifestyle opportunities.

Beyond supporting existing businesses, the visitor economy fosters the growth of new businesses, encourages population growth, and nurtures the city’s cultural and artistic landscape. Major events, contribute to these outcomes by attracting visitors and investment, ultimately supporting Fremantle’s ongoing development and vitality. The intrastate market (i.e. Western Australian residents) has been, and will continue to be, a core market for Fremantle, as it is larger in volume than all other markets combined.

After Northbridge, Fremantle boasts the strongest night-time economy in Western Australia, offering a diverse and thriving mix of hospitality, live entertainment, arts, and cultural experiences. With its historic pubs, boutique bars, and waterfront venues, Fremantle attracts both locals and visitors looking for a unique and vibrant after-dark experience. The city’s commitment to live music, creative activations, and extended trading hours further cements its reputation as a premier night-time destination.

Strengthening and promoting this sector will be key to Fremantle’s ongoing economic and cultural growth.

In 2023–24, tourism in the City of Fremantle generated \$1.2 billion in total sales and \$821.9 million in added value. The sector supported 6,087 total jobs (direct and indirect), making up 18 per cent of the local industry, and attracted 1.3 million visitors (international, domestic and local) to Fremantle.

COVID had a strong impact in Fremantle with the loss of employment in hospitality in 2021. Visitation has gradually recovered but by 2024 visitation was still estimated to be down 18 per cent from 2019. This decline was slightly greater than the Greater Perth average (-4 per cent), largely due to a drop in day trips.

Fremantle represents 8.3 per cent of all day trips and 6.4 per cent of overnight stays in Greater Perth. Most of the fall has been in day trips and international visitors, however domestic overnight stays were up 6 per cent demonstrating Fremantle’s strength as a tourism destination supporting hospitality employment.

Fremantle has a surplus of jobs, particularly in sectors like retail and hospitality but struggles with employment sufficiency as many of the workers commute in.

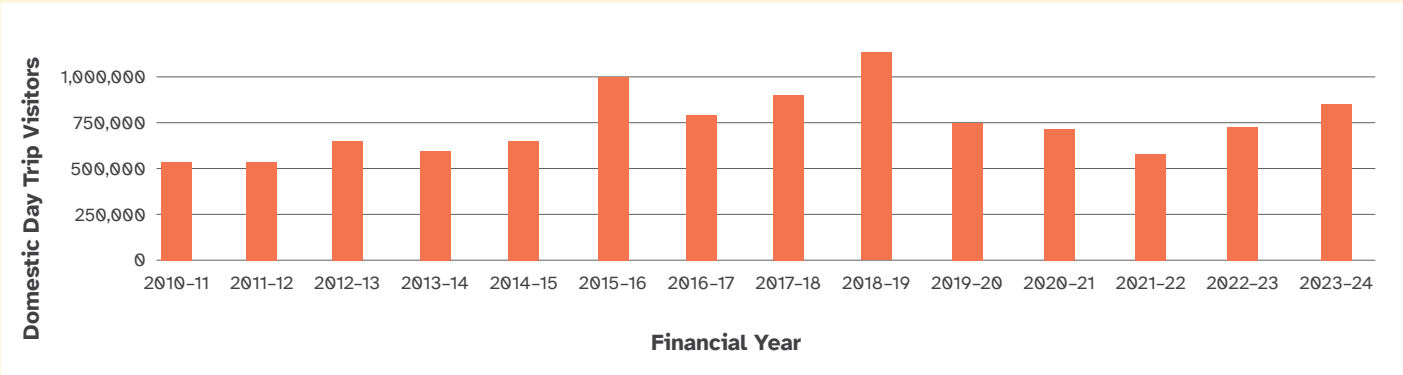
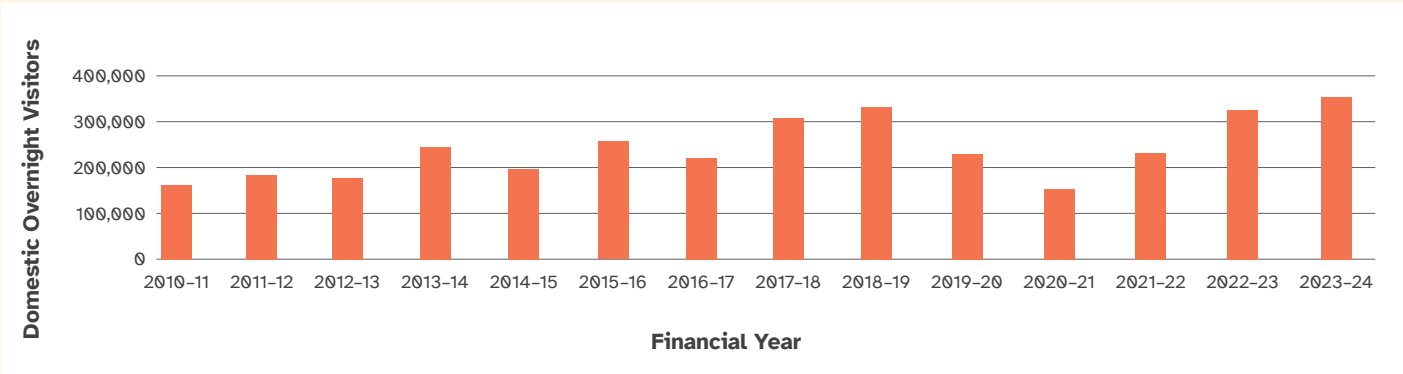
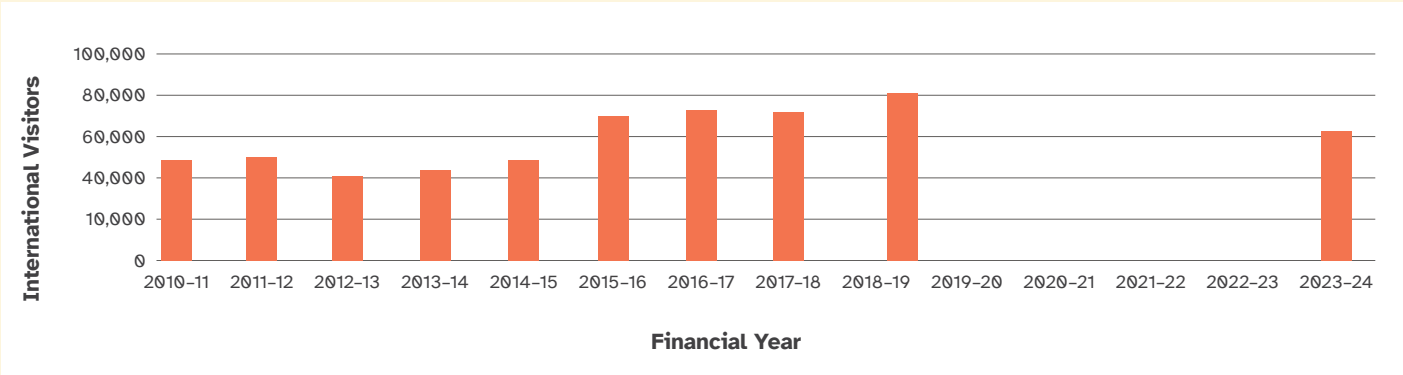


Type	2018–19 Visits	2023–24 Visits
Domestic Day Visit	1,160,606	879,823
Domestic Overnight Visit	338,328	359,800
International Visit	80,089	61,749
Total	1,579,023	1,301,372

Visitor and Local Spend

Data for 2023–2024 (financial year) broken down between residents and visitors, was as follows:

- Resident Local Spend: \$367.2 million (21.7 per cent)
- Visitor Local Spend: \$1.323 billion (78.3 per cent)
- Resident Escape Spend: \$674 million (should be lower than local spend)
- Visitors contribute the vast majority (78.3 per cent) of all local spending
- This highlights the economic importance of tourism and day-trippers to the local economy however this also indicates some level of risk associated with the city relying on visitor spend
- It suggests that businesses in the area heavily rely on non-resident expenditure



Section Sources: Tourism Research Australia. Unpublished data from the International Visitor Survey 2023–24

Top Visitor Origins

- Fremantle's visitor profile is primarily driven by intrastate travelers, with the majority coming from the Perth metropolitan area, followed by visitors from regional and rural Western Australia.

Top Expenditure Categories

- The highest expenditure categories are Dining and Entertainment, followed by Transport.

Top Visitor Origins		
Origin	Share	Spend
Greater Perth	85.4%	\$1.23b
Rural/Regional WA	6%	\$86.99m
Greater Melbourne	2.1%	\$30.27m
Greater Sydney	2.1%	\$29.92m

Top Expenditure Categories		
Category	Share	Spend
Dining & Entertainment	25.2%	\$363.6m
Transport	17.7%	\$255.7m
Specialised & Luxury Goods	14.2%	\$204.7m
Professional Services	8.4%	\$121.7m

Visitors come to Fremantle for many reasons, including holidays, visiting family and friends, attending events, and experiencing arts and culture. Many also travel for education, sports, entertainment, business meetings, conferences and work incentives.

The four major market segments that the council has prioritised includes leisure tourism, major events, business events and cruising.





Business Events 23-24

Business events play a crucial role in sustaining a 7-day economy in Fremantle by driving year-round mid-week activity, diversifying the visitor economy, and supporting local businesses beyond the weekend tourism peak.

Business event delegates typically spend more per day than leisure tourists, particularly on:

- Accommodation
- Dining and hospitality
- Corporate entertainment or cultural activities
- Team-building and incentive experiences

This high-value spending can sustain and grow local businesses year-round. In the 2023-24 financial year Fremantle secured:

- Total number of events secured for Fremantle was 36. This included 6 Corporate meetings and 30 Association meetings.
- The resultant Estimated and Materialised Direct Delegate Expenditure (DDE) was \$33.2 million
- This equated to 27,262 room nights
- Top sectors for Fremantle in business events are Health and Medical Life Sciences and Business
- Number of incentive groups that included Fremantle in their itinerary was 78 groups with 3,559 delegates.

Cruising

The City of Fremantle, in partnership with Tourism Western Australia, is actively enhancing cruise visitation to bolster the local economy and promote the region's unique attractions.

Western Australia has eleven port destinations. The most frequented for ships with 100 or more passengers is the port of Fremantle.

Cruise tourism has become a vital component of Fremantle's economic landscape. In the 2023–24 financial year, the cruise industry contributed approximately \$145.6 million value added to Fremantle's economy, supporting 925 jobs and welcoming more than 62,000 passengers and 9,000 crew members across 35 cruise visits.

Cruise Growth in Fremantle (2023–24 vs 2022–23)

	Port/Destination			
	Western Australia		Fremantle	
	2022–23	2023–24	2022–23	2023–24
Output (\$M)				
Direct	\$148.0	\$154.0	\$125.9	\$115.1
Indirect & Induced	\$185.5	\$230.9	\$159.5	\$174.4
Total	\$333.5	\$384.9	\$285.5	\$289.5
Wages Income (\$M)				
Direct	\$53.9	\$58.5	\$46.9	\$44.8
Indirect & Induced	\$51.2	\$69.0	\$44.1	\$52.2
Total	\$105.1	\$127.5	\$91.1	\$97.0
Employment (FTEs)				
Direct	566	627	500	481
Indirect & Induced	489	584	424	444
Total	1,055	1,211	924	925
Value Added (\$M)				
Direct	\$77.1	\$76.0	\$65.7	\$57.2
Indirect & Induced	\$95.3	\$117.3	\$81.9	\$88.5
Total	\$172.4	\$193.3	\$147.6	\$145.6

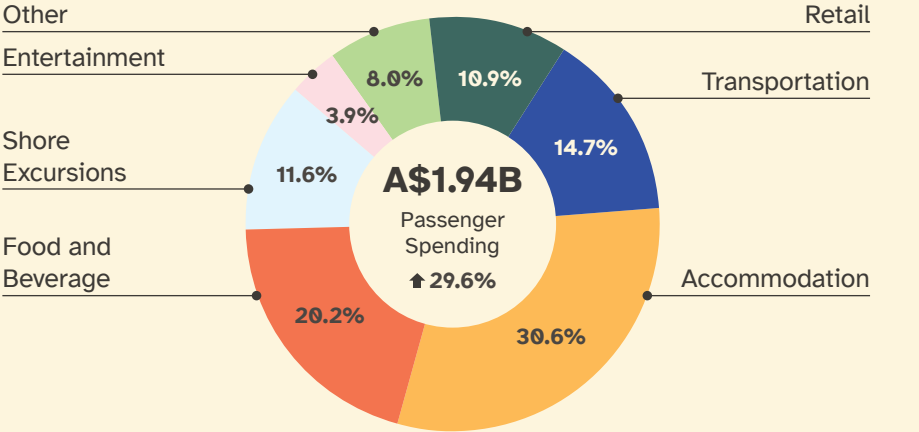
Overall the Cruise sector has demonstrated the following characteristics since 22-23:

- Increase in output of \$4m primarily driven by stronger indirect activity
- Growth in wages income of \$5.9m driven by indirect wage growth
- Stability in employment with growth of 1FTE in support/related sectors.
- Modest decrease of \$2m in direct value added.



Passenger Expenditure in Australia

Direct spending by cruise passengers was up 29.6 per cent in 2023-24, boosted by a 35.0 per cent increase in turnaround passengers who spend significantly more per day than transit passengers. Passenger spending benefits local businesses in areas like accommodation, food and beverage, tour operations, transport, retail and entertainment.



Average Passenger Spend Per Day: A\$455			
Turnaround Ports		Transit Ports	
Domestic pax	International pax	Domestic pax	International pax
A\$507	A\$660	A\$197	A\$283

Crew Expenditure in Australia	
A\$60.4m Total crew spend	A\$138 Crew member average spend per day



To accommodate the growing cruise sector, the Western Australian Government has invested \$35.5 million in wharf works and major fender upgrades at the Fremantle Passenger Terminal. Additionally, a \$1 million allocation has been made to support the Western Australian Cruise Tourism Strategic Plan 2023–2033, aiming to further develop and promote cruise tourism in the region.

Larger vessels make an important economic contribution to Western Australia’s largest port, Fremantle. Fremantle welcomes tens of thousands of guests annually, has the ability to home-port vessels on a seasonal basis, and can accommodate multiple ships at one time.

It is estimated that every cruise ship visit to Fremantle generates approximately three additional regional port visits.

Tourism WA will maintain a focus on cruise line attraction by securing a range of cruise brands to visit the state, expanding the itineraries of cruise ships already visiting, and by attracting more seasonal home-ported vessels to call Fremantle home. This collaboration has led to significant developments, including Fremantle’s successful bid to host the 2025 Australian Cruise Association Conference, marking the first time in two decades that this national event will be held in the Fremantle.

Events

Major events generate economic impact for a destination and raise its profile through media channels. They give people a specific reason to visit a destination and at the same time promote the brand. Fremantle was once known for its hosting of international events, notably sailing events ranging from the America's Cup to the Whitbread Round the World race. The major events landscape changed long before COVID hit and Fremantle's focus turned to its arts and cultural festivals as well as leveraging its fame as the home of live music. City owned events such as the Fremantle International Street Arts Festival and Fremantle Festival: 10 Nights in Port are aligned perfectly with the brand and successfully target the domestic market, while city-sponsored events such as the Fremantle Biennale are growing in stature. These events not only elevate the brand but also encourage overnight stays in the city's varied accommodation. Together with high-quality community-owned events such as Sculpture at Bathers, they create a calendar of regular events which, spread across the year, adding to Fremantle's reputation as a vibrant destination where there is always something happening.

In 2023–24, City-led and supported events attracted substantial attendance including an estimated 521,000 event attendees hosted across city owned and independent venues. The city regularly partners with Tourism WA to bid for major events and securing a three-year commitment from a global event like SailGP, estimated to attract 20,000 visitors, highlights Fremantle's position as a leading destination for world-class experiences.

School holiday activations have been a highly effective catalyst for visitation and economic growth in Fremantle, drawing more than 48,000 visitors and generating an estimated \$8.9 million in economic value. These initiatives have successfully encouraged families to explore and spend across the city's retail, hospitality, and cultural precincts, creating broad benefits for local businesses.

Fremantle has demonstrated the long-term value of sustained school holiday programming — not only in boosting local spending, but in shaping a reputation as vibrant, family-friendly destinations. By continuing to invest in engaging, accessible activations during the school holiday period, Fremantle can strengthen its position as a leading tourism destination, support local businesses year-round, and enhance community connection to the city centre.



Strategic Context and Alignment

Influencing Trends for the Region

Increasing demand for qualified workforce

The majority of jobs are increasingly requiring more cognitive skills and/or rely on non-routine work. Going forward, these jobs will become more and more important as they are difficult to automate, often requiring creativity, problem solving and/or human presence e.g. Child Care. The Fremantle workforce is relatively higher educated with 46 per cent of employed residents with Bachelor or Higher degree in 2021, higher than the Greater Perth average (31 per cent).

Strategic Implication - Fremantle has a strong foundation for growth in industries requiring qualified workers, tech, health, and professional services.

Impacts from ongoing urbanisation and job concentration

Driven by population growth, commercial and residential development in Greater Perth continues at a rapid pace. This accelerated expansion has made it difficult for state and local governments to conduct comprehensive planning, often leading to community pushback.

Strategic Implication - Ongoing development needs to balance growth with the protection of Fremantle's unique identity and environment.

Climate change influencing investment decisions

Global focus on sustainability and clean industries is drawing interest from green economy investors. Businesses are seeking locations that support emissions reduction and offer long-term resource security.

Strategic Implication - Investment in electric vehicle infrastructure, renewable energy access, and efficient logistics will be critical to attracting clean-tech and low-emission industries.

Ageing population driving health care

Australia's elderly population (individuals aged 65 and above) is steadily increasing in size and proportion to the overall population. The aging demographic presents both opportunities and challenges for Australia's health and welfare sectors. Health care and social services, especially Medical and Other Health Care Services, are the largest employer for Fremantle. The strong growth in older residents in Fremantle will further boost the demand and entrench this specialisation.

Strategic Implication - Growth in healthcare employment will likely continue. There are opportunities to explore higher-value care models including telehealth and med-tech solutions.

International migration driving population growth

Population growth in Fremantle has been supported by both domestic and international migration. Proximity to the coast, character housing, and relative affordability have made Fremantle attractive for new arrivals.

Strategic Implication - Diversifying housing options can help attract skilled migrants and support workforce growth, especially younger and mobile populations.

E-commerce becoming common place

Changing consumer habits and the growth of online shopping are reshaping retail in Fremantle. Demand is shifting toward health, food, wellness and lifestyle offerings. This trend has accelerated post-COVID.

Strategic Implication - Local businesses need support to enhance digital capabilities and logistics. Demand for flexible workspaces and last-mile delivery solutions is likely to grow.

State and Local Initiatives

The following provides an overview of key strategies, initiatives and policy positions that have implications for this strategy.

City of Fremantle Strategic Community Plan

The Strategic Community Plan (SCP) 2024–2034 was developed in consultation with the community. From more than 5,000 ideas and comments gathered during the engagement process, the following five themes emerged as the most commonly raised by participants.

- Fostering greater social connection, engagement, and community safety.
- Improving public transport and connectivity.
- Nurturing and building community development capacity.
- Diversifying Fremantle's economy.
- Championing or facilitating activations and events to increase footfall and activity across the City of Fremantle (not just the city centre).

The following five key themes were identified as priorities through the Let's Talk, Freo! community engagement program and form the strategic focus areas that flow from our vision for the 2024–2034 Strategic Community Plan.

1. Liveable City that is vibrant, socially connected and desirable.
2. Thriving city with a prosperous and innovative economy.
3. Creative city that is inspiring, diverse and dares to be different.
4. Resilient city that plans for the future and is empowered to take action.
5. Inclusive city that welcomes, celebrates and cares for all people, cultures and abilities.

This Economic Development Strategy supports the implementation of the Strategic Community Plan 2024–2034 by driving outcomes aligned with the community's vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient Fremantle. The SCP highlighted a desire for thriving local business, job creation, greater connectivity and innovation. This strategy directly responds by focusing on growing key sectors, supporting local enterprise, and enabling investment in precincts aligned with those ambitions.

SCP Priority	Economic Development Strategy (EDS) Response/Opportunities
Liveable city that is vibrant, socially connected and desirable	Focus investment on precinct revitalisation and main street activation to enhance public spaces, support extended trading hours, and attract diverse retail, hospitality, and experience-based businesses that bring life to the city.
Thriving city with a prosperous and innovative economy	Support business growth through concierge services, innovation hubs, and partnerships with universities and startups. Prioritise emerging sectors like blue economy, creative industries, clean tech, and advanced manufacturing to drive long-term economic resilience.
Creative city that is inspiring, diverse and dares to be different	Invest in the creative economy through support for film, festivals, cultural tourism, and artist spaces. Encourage adaptive reuse and place-making that reflect Fremantle's unique identity and cultural edge.
Resilient city that plans for the future and is empowered to take action	Build economic resilience by diversifying industry, encouraging sustainable business practices, and integrating climate-smart strategies. Maintain a strong pipeline of employment land, infrastructure, and investment-readiness to adapt to change.
Inclusive city that welcomes, celebrates and cares for all people, cultures and abilities	Promote inclusive economic participation by supporting Aboriginal businesses, social enterprises, and programs that remove barriers to employment. Activate places that are accessible, welcoming, and representative of all community groups.



City of Fremantle City Plan – City Centre

The City Centre Plan builds on a decade of transformation, guided by Freo 2029: Transformational Moves.

While progress—such as the revitalisation of Walyalup Koort has been made, challenges remain. Retail is evolving, economic diversity is limited, and housing affordability is an increasing concern. At the same time, major opportunities are emerging.

The potential for port relocation could bring renewed investment, but Fremantle’s historic centre must remain its heart and the foundation for a unique, sustainable, heritage-driven urbanism. This distinct identity has made Fremantle a vibrant, attractive city with an unmatched lifestyle and amenity in Australia.

Inspired by global regeneration strategies, the City Plan envisions a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient city centre. It prioritises strategic infill, heritage-sensitive development, better transport, and a greener public realm, identifying key precincts for renewal, including Victoria Quay, Northern Gateway, and Cantonment Street.

The City Plan priorities include:

- Embrace culture and heritage
- Densify the city centre
- Resilient natural systems
- A city for everyone
- Connected and walkable

Among other things it aims to:

- Establish a cohesive spatial blueprint for the city centre’s development.
- Look at ways to increase residential population within the city centre to foster vibrancy.
- Coordinate major projects and enhance infrastructure to attract investment
- Create a well-connected, secure, and pedestrian-friendly urban environment that encourages walking and cycling.
- Enrich cultural assets while preserving heritage, ensuring that development.
- Identify specific precincts and innovative development proposals to guide targeted growth.

Westport Business Case

Fremantle Inner Harbour (Fremantle Port), opened in 1897, and is the only major container port in WA, handling 99 per cent of WA’s seaborne container trade.

The closest alternative port is in South Australia, approximately 2,700km away by road. Situated at the mouth of the Swan River, Fremantle Port accommodates a range of port activities, including container trade, non-container trades (NCT), cruise ships and ferry services.

Key freight corridors for containers are provided by Stirling and Leach Highways, as well as a single freight rail line through Fremantle’s heritage and tourism precinct. Fremantle Port has serviced WA very well for the past 100 plus years and is still functioning well today. The Westport Business Case has flagged that over the coming decades, Fremantle and its surrounding freight links, which run through highly urbanised areas, may face constraints that impact its ability to function as an efficient container supply chain, with flow-on impacts on the economy and increased costs for businesses and the community.

Source: Securing our Future Westport Business Case 2024

Key Points

- **Preferred Option:** Build a new container port in Kwinana (“Westport Now”), with full transition from Fremantle by the late 2030s.
- **Why:** Fremantle’s port is nearing capacity. Delays could cost WA up to \$244 billion by 2070.
- **Economic Case:** Strong benefit–cost ratio (BCR of 1.96); long-term value for WA economy and supply chains.
- **Funding Secured:** \$273 million from the WA Government and \$33.5 million from the Federal Government for planning and design.
- **Environmental Goals:** Focus on net-zero operations, sustainable freight, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** Includes upgrades to rail, intermodal terminals, and road networks.

Strategic Implications for Fremantle

- **Relocation of container port:** Fremantle may lose container trade by early 2040s, requiring economic and workforce transition planning.
- **Urban Redevelopment Opportunity:** Up to 260 hectares of inner harbour land may be unlocked for housing, public spaces, and mixed-use development.
- **Economic Diversification:** Creates potential for Fremantle to shift focus to the visitor economy, maritime tourism, education, and creative industries.
- **Improved Amenity:** Reduced freight traffic will improve safety, walkability, and urban amenity in the city centre.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Supports City Plan goals including density, liveability, and reduced industrial pressure on the inner city.

The Westport Business Case outlines a major infrastructure shift that will relocate container port operations from Fremantle to Kwinana. While there are risks for port-related businesses and workers, the transition could redefine Fremantle’s economic identity and deliver long-term benefits in liveability, sustainability, and resilience.

WA Defence and Defence Industry Strategy

Fremantle Inner Harbour (Fremantle Port), opened in 1897, and is the only major container port in WA, handling 99 per cent of WA's seaborne container trade.

Key Points

- **Strategic Vision (to 2040):** Position WA as a world-class defence hub—homeport for nuclear submarines, naval shipbuilding, and sustainment.
- **Six Strategic Pillars:** Workforce, Infrastructure, Industry, Community, Research and Innovation, and Veterans
- **AUKUS Role:** WA will host conventionally armed nuclear-powered subs and sustain Collins-class and Hunter-class frigates.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** \$8 billion for HMAS Stirling upgrades, plus support for AMC and other facilities.
- **Economic Benefits:** Strategy aims to create ~10,000 skilled jobs; defence is projected to become WA's second-largest economic sector.
- **Industrial Capability and Diversification:** Support local SMEs to join UK/US supply chains, enter new domains (cyber, autonomous systems, space).
- **Skilling and Innovation:** Expand training (e.g. South Metropolitan TAFE Naval Campus), establish Defence Science Centre, and advance RandD.

Strategic Implications for Fremantle

- **Workforce and Business Growth:** Fremantle businesses can tap into training and job placement programs supporting naval and defence contracts especially through the AMC and local SMEs.
- **Infrastructure and Precinct Activation:** Improvements at nearby defence facilities like HMAS Stirling and AMC may trigger complementary infrastructure and investment in Fremantle's maritime precincts.
- **Economic Diversification:** The expansion into high-tech and dual-use industries (cyber, space, autonomous systems) provides an opportunity for Fremantle to attract spin-off enterprises and innovation partners.
- **Veteran Integration and Community:** The strategy's focus on veteran retention and support aligns with Fremantle's inclusive development goals; there's opportunity for local services, housing, and employment tailored to veterans.
- **Education and Innovation:** Presence of defence-oriented educational institutions offers Fremantle a chance to collaborate on research, entrepreneurship, and create pathways through Dawesville and Vic Quay precincts.

The WA Defence and Defence Industry Strategy 2025 outlines a bold pathway for military and industrial expansion, underpinned by AUKUS commitments and substantial infrastructure and workforce investment. For Fremantle, this presents a rare opportunity to connect into the defence supply chain through workforce initiatives, precinct development, and sector diversification.

Importantly, Fremantle's greatest potential lies in the knowledge and technology services that will support Pillar 2: Infrastructure and Capability including design, engineering, project management, cyber security, and sustainability consulting. These services are essential to the success of major defence infrastructure upgrades and can be delivered locally by Fremantle-based professionals and SMEs.

By aligning local planning, business support, and innovation precincts with WA's growing defence corridors, Fremantle can position itself as a valuable contributor to the state's defence future while stimulating high-value local employment and investment.

Tourism WA Western Australian Visitor Economy Strategy 2033

Fremantle Inner Harbour (Fremantle Port), opened in 1897, and is the only major container port in WA, handling 99 per cent of WA's seaborne container trade.

The visitor economy encompasses a wide range of industries that offer goods and services to individuals travelling for holiday, visiting friends and relatives (VFR), business and international education.

The Western Australian tourism industry operates in a high value globally competitive market. In recognition of the breadth of the industry, this strategy adopts a broader perspective of the visitor economy that encompasses all types of visitors and businesses involved in delivering visitor facing services throughout the entire visitor experience. It recognises that people travel for many purposes beyond leisure and there are numerous individuals and businesses catering to these visitors.

Key Points

- **Vision:** Position Western Australia as a world-class destination that immerses visitors in its unique cultures, communities, and environment.
- **Target:** Increase annual visitor expenditure to \$25 billion by 2033, up from \$16.8 billion in 2022-23.
- **Guiding Principles:** Sustainability, inclusivity, collaboration, and innovation.
- **Investment:** The WA Government has committed \$530 million over four years to support the strategy's implementation.
- **Strategic Focus Areas:**
 - Aviation: Enhance air connectivity to and within WA.
 - Accommodation and Attractions: Develop and diversify tourism offerings.
 - Aboriginal Tourism: Promote authentic Aboriginal experiences.
 - Events: Support and grow major events to attract visitors.
 - Destination Brand: Strengthen WA's global tourism brand.
 - High-Performing Industry: Foster a resilient and adaptable tourism sector.

Strategic Implications for Fremantle

- **Cultural and Heritage Tourism:** Fremantle's rich maritime history and vibrant arts scene position it well to offer immersive cultural experiences, aligning with WAVES 2033's emphasis on unique community engagement.
- **Event Hosting:** Leveraging existing venues and public spaces, Fremantle can attract and host diverse events, contributing to the state's goal of expanding its events calendar.
- **Aboriginal Tourism Development:** Collaborations with local Aboriginal communities can create authentic tourism experiences, enhancing cultural understanding and economic opportunities.
- **Sustainable Tourism Practices:** Fremantle can lead in implementing eco-friendly tourism initiatives, supporting the strategy's sustainability principle.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity:** Improvements in transport and accommodation infrastructure will be essential to accommodate increased visitor numbers and enhance the overall tourist experience.

Fremantle is well positioned to align with the Western Australian Visitor Economy Strategy 2033 by delivering the authentic, cultural and sustainable experiences the strategy prioritises.

The city can play a leading role in Aboriginal tourism by partnering with Noongar Traditional Owners to co-design cultural walking tours, events and interpretive wayfinding that reflect local stories.

Fremantle's vibrant calendar of arts, maritime and food events support the strategy's focus on major events and experiences, while its unique waterfront and heritage assets create opportunities for new attractions and boutique accommodation through adaptive reuse. As a gateway to Wadjemup/Rottnest Island and a key cruise ship port, Fremantle can also strengthen WA's visitor connectivity by improving shore experiences and local transport options.

The city can reinforce WA's destination brand by positioning itself as the creative and cultural heart of the state, while supporting local operators through business capability building, grant access, and marketing support. With its strong track record in sustainability and innovation, Fremantle also has the opportunity to lead in regenerative tourism practices, including eco-certified experiences, waste-conscious events and walkable precinct design.

The City will continue to deliver on the outcomes and objectives of its Destination Development Strategic Plan 2024-28 which demonstrates strong alignment to WAVES 2033.

Western Australia Innovation Strategy

Western Australia enjoys a world class, vibrant, innovation ecosystem.

The State continues to demonstrate the economic strength and adaptability which enabled it to navigate the pandemic from a position of relative strength. As global megatrends intensify and the call to respond to climate and other challenges heighten, a new level of innovation focus is required and a clearer role for the State to lead the way in innovation is needed.

The Western Australian Government's Innovation Strategy sets out a vision to become a world leader in innovation. Innovation doesn't exist without people, so this Strategy will ensure that equity and diversity are encouraged and Western Australians have the skills necessary for the jobs of tomorrow. At its core, this Strategy is a call for everyone to play a role and is backed by an associated, practical Action Plan and strong governance.

Key Points

- **Vision:** Position WA as a globally recognised hub for innovation, commercialisation, and impact by 2030.
- **Connected Ecosystems:** Strengthen collaboration across government, research, industry, and investors.
- **Commercialisation:** Improve pathways to scale for startups and SMEs.
- **Talent and Skills:** Build a future-ready workforce through training and partnerships.
- **Access to Capital:** Grow local investment and attract global capital.
- **Place-based Innovation:** Support innovation precincts and hubs across WA.
- **Inclusive Innovation:** Ensure underrepresented groups are supported in the innovation economy.
- **Key Enablers:** Digital infrastructure, regulatory reform, open data, and innovation procurement.

Strategic Implications for Fremantle

- **Innovation Hubs and Precincts:** Fremantle can activate underutilised spaces to establish innovation hubs—supporting startups in areas like sustainability, marine tech, creative industries, and digital services.
- **Workforce and Talent Pathways:** Partnering with Notre Dame, South Metro TAFE, and nearby universities, Fremantle can champion new training pipelines in high-growth sectors such as clean energy, defence tech, or circular economy industries.
- **Access to Funding and Procurement:** The city can help local SMEs and entrepreneurs better navigate state-led innovation grants, angel funding, and innovation procurement programs especially in areas of climate adaptation and infrastructure.
- **Inclusive Innovation:** Support participation from women, Aboriginal entrepreneurs, young people and social enterprises through targeted programs, co-working access, and mentorship building a diverse local innovation ecosystem.

- **Place Branding and Sector Leadership:** Fremantle can position itself as WA's creative testbed for regenerative and purpose-led innovation, aligned with its strong cultural identity, community values, and sustainability focus.
- **Commercialisation Support:** Provide wraparound support for local businesses seeking to scale from incubators to investor readiness programs particularly in fields like ocean science, design, and wellness tech.

Fremantle can support the strategy by nurturing innovation precincts that bring together startups, researchers, artists, and entrepreneurs particularly in sustainability, ocean science, creative industries, and social enterprise. The city can also help grow a future-ready workforce by collaborating with education providers like University of Notre Dame and South Metropolitan TAFE to build skills in clean tech, digital, and advanced manufacturing. By championing inclusive innovation and making space for underrepresented entrepreneurs, Fremantle can showcase how local character, creativity, and community values can contribute to a globally competitive innovation economy.

Committee for Perth and Scitech 2050 Report

This report sets out a vision to guide Perth’s evolution into a sustainable, inclusive, and economically diverse city by 2050, accommodating a projected population of 3.5 million.

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Key Points

- **Decarbonisation:** Transition to a low-carbon economy to address environmental concerns.
- **Urban Density with Identity:** Promote higher density living while preserving unique community identities.
- **Infrastructure and Transport:** Reimagine infrastructure to support efficient, sustainable transport options.
- **Housing Affordability and Availability:** Ensure accessible and diverse housing options for all residents.
- **Technological Integration:** Adopt emerging technologies thoughtfully, maintaining human-centric approaches.
- **Economic Diversification:** Expand beyond traditional industries to foster a resilient economy.
- **Community Insights:** A survey revealed that while 68 per cent of Perth residents are optimistic about the future, only 22 per cent feel the city is prepared for 2050. Key concerns include environmental sustainability (90 per cent), healthcare (89 per cent), housing (86 per cent), economic diversification (81 per cent), and inclusive communities (78 per cent)

Strategic Implications for Fremantle

- **Sustainable Urban Development:** Fremantle can lead in creating higher-density housing that respects the city’s unique heritage and character, aligning with the goal of urban density with identity.
- **Green Infrastructure Initiatives:** By investing in sustainable infrastructure and promoting active transport options, Fremantle supports the broader vision of reimagined infrastructure and transport.
- **Affordable Housing Projects:** Collaborating with stakeholders to develop affordable and diverse housing options will address concerns about housing availability and affordability.
- **Embracing Technological Advancements:** Fremantle can pilot smart city technologies that enhance liveability while ensuring community engagement remains central.
- **Economic Diversification Efforts:** By nurturing sectors like creative industries, tourism, and sustainable maritime activities, Fremantle contributes to a diversified and resilient economy.

By aligning with the Perth 2050 Report’s strategic priorities, Fremantle can play a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable, inclusive, and economically resilient future for the broader Perth region. As Fremantle’s residential and worker population continues to grow, the city has an opportunity to demonstrate how higher-density, mixed-use neighbourhoods can support housing diversity while preserving local identity. Fremantle can also lead in green infrastructure, decarbonisation, and active transport to support long-term liveability. With a strong foundation in the creative, maritime, and tourism sectors, Fremantle is well positioned to contribute to the economic diversification agenda, while piloting smart, human-centred technologies that enhance the urban experience. By embedding affordability, sustainability and community values into planning and innovation, Fremantle can help realise the shared vision for a thriving Perth by 2050.

Western Trade Coast Infrastructure Strategy – WA Global Advanced Industries Hub

The Western Trade Coast Infrastructure Strategy intends to assist in realising the Cook Government’s vision to transform the precinct into a Global Advanced Industries Hub – positioning WA as a leader for defence and clean energy industries, to create long-term local jobs and diversify the State’s economy.

The Western Trade Coast covers 3,900 hectares of land in Kwinana, Rockingham and Cockburn and is the only heavy industrial precinct in the Perth metropolitan area, supporting 42,900 direct and indirect jobs – almost 3 per cent of the State’s entire workforce.

Key Points

- **Vision:** Transform the Western Trade Coast (WTC) into a Global Advanced Industries Hub by addressing infrastructure constraints and enhancing industrial capabilities.
- **Transport Infrastructure:** Enhance road, rail, and port facilities to support efficient logistics and connectivity.
- **Maritime Development:** Upgrade maritime infrastructure to accommodate future trade and industrial activities.
- **Utility Services:** Improve utility provisions, including energy and water, to meet industrial demands.
- **Land Use Planning:** Optimise land allocation to support industrial growth and diversification.
- **Policy and Regulatory Frameworks:** Streamline policies to facilitate industrial development and investment.
- **Strategic Initiatives:**
 - Expansion of the Kwinana Bulk Jetty with a \$20 million investment to enhance storage and logistics capabilities.
 - Allocation of \$125 million to develop new industrial land at Latitude 32.
 - Integration with the Westport project to relocate container trade from Fremantle to Kwinana, freeing up land in Fremantle for redevelopment.

Strategic Implications for Fremantle

- **Economic Diversification:** Fremantle can leverage its proximity to the WTC to attract businesses in advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and maritime industries, contributing to economic diversification and job creation.
- **Infrastructure Enhancement:** Improving local transport links, including road and rail connections, will be essential to support increased economic activity and ensure seamless integration with the WTC.
- **Sustainable Development:** Fremantle can align with the strategy’s emphasis on sustainability by adopting green building practices, enhancing public transport, and promoting active transport options to reduce carbon emissions.
- **Community Engagement:** Engaging with local communities to ensure that redevelopment efforts meet the needs of residents and workers will be crucial in fostering inclusive growth and maintaining Fremantle’s unique character.

By leveraging its proximity to the Western Trade Coast, Fremantle can support the growth of advanced manufacturing, maritime industries and clean energy sectors by offering a base for innovation services, workforce training, and support industries. Investments in sustainable transport, infrastructure upgrades and place-based planning will further enhance Fremantle’s ability to attract talent, support business growth and contribute to a more connected and prosperous region.

Business and Industry Engagement

The City engaged with the business community and industry stakeholders to better understand their priorities and what matters most to them. Below are summaries according to their sectors.

Arts and Culture Sector

- Stakeholders from the arts and culture sector emphasised the need for stronger state government advocacy and funding—either directly to the sector or to local government—to enable Fremantle to realise its vision as a true City for the Arts. There is a strong desire to see increased promotion of the city's nationally and internationally recognised artists, with suggestions to expand coverage through existing platforms like FRE-OH and This is Fremantle local media.
- Practical support ideas included advocating for free public transport to connect key cultural venues and improve mobility for visiting artists and activating vacant port buildings for arts and cultural enterprise—especially accommodating key assets like the Leeuwin sail training ship.
- Concerns were raised about Fremantle being too narrowly branded as a destination for “coffee, alcohol and beaches,” at the expense of celebrating its unique cultural infrastructure, including a permanent circus big top, traditionally rigged boat, and independent publishing sector. There is also a call to better embed Noongar heritage through public art and streetscape interpretation.
- Barriers to investment raised included the visibility of vagrancy and antisocial behaviour in the public realm, a high number of disused or deteriorating buildings, and a lack of activation in side streets and laneways. Suggested solutions included peppercorn rents for start-ups, vacancy taxes or levies on unused buildings, and improved signage and wayfinding to encourage foot traffic and business diversity off the main streets.

Professional Services Sector

- Feedback from professional services highlighted the need for more supportive signage regulations and access to free or subsidised local advertising to increase visibility and attract clientele.
- Businesses also expressed concern about Fremantle's retail mix and physical appearance, noting that a lack of street cleanliness, grubby shopfronts, and an overconcentration of vintage, ice cream, and convenience stores contribute to a tired and repetitive feel.
- There is a strong call for more variety in retail, especially in the West End, where there is currently no access to essential shops like food stores, chemists, or florists. Businesses also want to see more European-style offerings, such as specialty grocers and designer retail.
- Concerns were raised about early café closures, with many noting that closing at 1:30–2:00pm does not align with the expectations of international visitors who are used to all-day café culture. This is seen as a lost opportunity for tourism and business vibrancy.
- Motivations to invest in Fremantle include its unique character and the ongoing operation of the Fremantle Markets, but key barriers include street cleanliness, public safety concerns, and visible homelessness.
- There's a strong desire to feel heard, with calls to implement free public transport, diversify the retail offering, and reposition the city to attract more high-end, contemporary businesses. Many believe Fremantle has potential but needs to “un-shabby” the streets to appeal to a broader range of investors and shoppers.

Blue Economy and Innovation

- Businesses see the city as a strong base for research, development, prototyping, and early-stage commercialisation, rather than full-scale manufacturing. They value Fremantle's liveability, cultural identity, proximity to the port and ocean, and supporting industries, which together create an attractive location for talent and innovation.
- Identified critical infrastructure gaps—including a lack of marine testing facilities, shore-based infrastructure, and coastal laydown areas—which often force businesses to relocate to Henderson or regional areas.
- There is strong support for the city to take a more active advocacy role with state and federal government, research bodies, and funding agencies. Stakeholders recommended leveraging Fremantle's existing strengths to attract venture capital, promote innovation-ready businesses, and secure infrastructure investment.
- Called for a more strategic and welcoming approach to business attraction—proposing a business concierge model to assist with onboarding and integration.
- Participants highlighted the need for better digital connectivity, improved transport and parking, and consistent promotion of Fremantle's business success stories to build investor and market confidence. They see opportunity in showcasing Fremantle's emerging identity as a hub for blue economy innovation and aligning it with national strategies such as "Made in Australia." A unified development pipeline or "hit list" was suggested as a tool to engage government partners and signal Fremantle's readiness to support Western Trade Coast priorities.
- Concerns raised include a shortage of specialised education pathways (e.g. computer science), vacant or underutilised buildings, and the need for greater activation and incentives for property owners. While the city's cultural vibrancy is a strength, attracting new industries will depend on resolving these infrastructure and amenity issues and telling a cohesive story about Fremantle's economic future.

Visitor Economy

- Fremantle stakeholders from across tourism, retail, hospitality, and cultural sectors called for the city to play a more proactive role in enabling business growth through improved advocacy, infrastructure, and collaboration. Key themes included the need for more effective access to heritage funding, better support for tour bus operations and clear signage, and investment in city presentation—cleaner streetscapes, activated public spaces, and stronger promotion of Fremantle's unique assets.
- There is wide support for increasing event activity and music festivals, especially in quieter months, to boost vibrancy and economic resilience. Several stakeholders pointed to the value of festivals for both local engagement and product testing and recommended greater investment in winter activation and conferencing.
- The city was also encouraged to explore flexible licensing and parking arrangements to support high-traffic periods.
- Business leaders advocated for clearer communication and planning, particularly around opportunities such as tourism awards, major events, and investment pathways.
- A "business concierge" approach was suggested to help operators navigate red tape, access support, and align with City priorities. Likewise, stakeholders see a role for the city in championing Fremantle's blue economy and broader economic vision—by promoting success stories, facilitating partnerships, and engaging with state and federal agencies to attract funding and investment.
- Connectivity remains a challenge, with calls for better links between the city centre and surrounding neighbourhoods, mid-tier public transport options, and easier parking. Fremantle's unique culture, walkability, maritime history, and hospitality offer are seen as core strengths, but are undermined by underutilised spaces, inconsistent shop trading hours, and a perceived lack of visible action on new developments.
- There's a desire to maintain Fremantle's heritage and independent character while also attracting a more diverse mix of retail—balancing local charm with more contemporary offerings. To remain competitive, stakeholders urged the city to shift from a cautious mindset to a "City of Action" approach: agile, welcoming to bold ideas, and focused on delivery over process.

Challenges and Opportunities

Current and Future Challenges

Fremantle's core strengths have played a significant role in its enduring appeal. However, to secure its long-term prosperity, certain challenges must be addressed to unlock new opportunities for growth and resilience.

- **Supporting inclusive housing and workforce diversity.** Fremantle's growing appeal and new up-market developments, such as the Woolstores and Beaconsfield, have lifted amenity, but rising property values risk impacting affordability. Strengthening housing diversity will support local workforce retention, protect community identity and ensure Fremantle remains an inclusive place to live and work.
- **Enabling coordinated growth through streamlined planning.** Perceptions of Fremantle as a complex and costly place to develop – due to heritage constraints and infrastructure limitations – can limit investment and renewal. By improving flexibility, zoning, and coordination of infrastructure such as energy capacity, the city can encourage precinct-sale development and attract higher-density projects aligned with its values. Investment in public realm will be key to signalling confidence in Fremantle's future growth.
- **Diversifying Fremantle's economic base for long-term resilience.** Fremantle's economy remains heavily reliant on visitor spend, making it vulnerable to global shocks, shifting travel patterns and climate impacts. Addressing infrastructure gaps, such as the lack of purpose-built venues and international hotel brands, will also improve Fremantle's capacity to host business events and international travellers, helping strengthen economic resilience.
- **Repositioning Fremantle as a vibrant, all-week destination.** Fremantle continues to be perceived as a weekend and leisure-focused destination. To remain competitive, the city can better showcase local business capability, promote available parking and highlight emerging investment opportunities. A more visible narrative around Fremantle's strengths and growth potential will help attract new industries, visitors and talent across the full week.
- **Revitalising commercial precincts to reduce vacancy and improve economic activity.** Fremantle's town centre faces persistent retail and office vacancy due to its high proportion of small tenancies and older buildings. While some improvements are expected as retail patterns shift, long-term revitalisation will depend on attracting consistent mid-week foot traffic and diversifying commercial offerings. Supporting a healthy mix of retail, hospitality and services can help activate the city across day and night and support the high proportion of independent businesses.
- **Enhancing public amenity to support safety, vibrancy and longer stays.** Perceptions of antisocial behaviour and cleanliness are limiting Fremantle's appeal, particularly for longer visits and the night-time economy. Improving public space presentation and amenity standards presents a clear opportunity to support investment, encourage visitation and reinforce Fremantle's reputation as a vibrant, welcoming city.
- **Improving connectivity to strengthen access and precinct linkages.** Fremantle's transport network presents barriers to accessibility, with limited public transport options and poor flow between key areas like North Fremantle and the city centre. The potential closure of Fremantle's main bridge also highlights the need for well-managed infrastructure transitions. Enhancing city access and precinct connectivity will support movement for residents, workers, freight and visitors alike.
- **Supporting residential growth and night-time economy.** As more people move into Fremantle's city centre, particularly around entertainment precincts, there is growing pressure on the night-time economy from noise and amenity concerns. Supporting venues and creatives while managing residential interfaces will be essential to preserving Fremantle's cultural identity and ensuring the city remains vibrant after dark.
- **Strengthening Fremantle's education offering through student accommodation.** The absence of purpose-built, affordable student accommodation limits the city's potential as a university and training destination. Supporting the growth of local campuses and international enrolments will require dedicated student housing that enables better integration and wellbeing. A stronger student presence would add vibrancy, talent and long-term economic benefit to the city.
- **Increasing city centre density to support services and business sustainability.** Fremantle's low residential and worker density in the city centre limits demand for services and reduces daily activity. Despite a surplus of local jobs, particularly in retail, hospitality and government, many workers commute from outside the area. Encouraging more people to live and work in Fremantle will strengthen local businesses and support long-term sustainability.

Current and Future Opportunities

- **Growing city centre residency to drive economic vitality:** Recently approved inner Fremantle developments and the City Plan's focus on increased residential density present a significant opportunity to boost the local economy. A larger resident base within walking distance will provide consistent customers for hospitality, retail, and service businesses. This increased population supports extended trading hours, strengthening the evening and weekend economy. Additionally, more professionals living locally will drive demand for essential services such as gyms, medical clinics, childcare, and dry cleaning, fostering job creation and vibrant community growth.
- **Public sector investment driving private development confidence:** Significant public investments such as the new Police Complex, 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.
- **Leveraging a highly educated and entrepreneurial resident base for business growth:** Fremantle's resident population has a higher proportion of degree-educated individuals compared to Greater Perth, accompanied by a notable rise in knowledge economy business registrations. 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.
- **Capitalise on the Work-From-Home Shift:** 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 attracting investment into 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.

In 2021, Fremantle experienced a strong growth in remote working residents, well above the Greater Perth average. Furthermore, the city has a relatively high share of residents in professional occupations, with strong levels of tertiary qualification. 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.

- **Unlocking renewal through inner-harbour redevelopment:** The potential 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. If progressed, this has the potential to elevate Fremantle's global appeal and deliver flow-on benefits to suburbs beyond the city centre through improved connectivity, increased visitation, and broader economic activation.

- **Celebration and Growth of Walyalup's Cultural Identity:** Walyalup's rich Aboriginal heritage, coastal- character, and creative culture offer a unique foundation for inclusive economic growth. 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. This identity-led approach fosters community connection, supports social wellbeing, and attracts talent, tourism, and investment to power a resilient and equitable local economy.
- **Adapting O'Connor into a modern industrial and employment hub:** O'Connor presents an opportunity to evolve this light industrial precinct into a more diverse and productive employment area. By modernising zoning, improving infrastructure, and supporting a broader mix of businesses—including advanced manufacturing, circular economy industries, and creative production, O'Connor can meet the needs of a future-focused workforce while retaining its vital industrial role. This transition will boost local job creation, attract investment, and support Fremantle's broader economic resilience.

Current and Future Opportunities (continued)

- **Blue economy cluster:** Fremantle is well placed to lead in marine tech, aquaculture, and ocean-based sustainability. With targeted infrastructure and policy support, the city can grow its blue economy cluster and strengthen its international innovation profile.
- **Reputation as a vibrant social enterprise hub:** Fremantle's legacy of activism, ethical entrepreneurship, and community-led innovation positions it as a natural home for social enterprise. This values-driven identity, combined with its walkable scale, deep community networks, and strong local talent pool, makes Fremantle an ideal testbed for piloting new policies, sustainable infrastructure, and smart technology. By embracing its role as a "sandbox city," Fremantle can attract mission-aligned partners, investment, and state attention as a leader in progressive urban solutions.
- **Manufacturing, transport, logistics and service industries:** Fremantle's growing creative and service sectors, along with advanced manufacturing, transport and logistics sector, can capture new value through digital adoption, especially as 5G infrastructure continues to expand. There is potential to foster collaboration across Fremantle's creative, tech, and advanced manufacturing businesses. Leverage Green economy opportunities to build smart capabilities. Develop partnerships with local suppliers and startups to accelerate adoption of smart technologies and improve productivity.
- **AI in Fremantle's health sector:** Fremantle's economy, with its large health and social services sector and transport and logistics is well positioned to benefit from AI adoption. AI has the potential to alleviate healthcare workforce shortages and improve service delivery. Opportunity to build a strong telehealth industry in the local market and alleviate the shortage of health care professional workers, which is forecast to intensify with the ageing population.
- **Rebalance of supply chains:** Fremantle can play an enabling role in the shift toward more resilient and locally anchored supply chains by advocating for infrastructure improvements, fostering industry collaboration, and supporting access to innovation networks. While direct investment may be limited, the city can help stimulate this transition by facilitating partnerships between local manufacturers, wholesalers, and logistics providers, promoting government and industry grant opportunities, and encouraging land use planning and policy settings that support agile, high-value production and distribution.
- **Support green economy businesses through innovation and circular solutions:** A 'green/circular economy' has been identified as a major (up to \$4.5 trillion) commercial opportunity with the concept that everything, even after its 'useful' life, can become a source for something else. 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.

There is also significant potential in most LGAs for reuse of plastics, organic waste, e-waste, and lithium battery recycling. Fremantle can also support the development of closed-loop systems and small-scale bio-industrial or clean-tech precincts that convert waste into energy or new products. These precincts are likely to draw both government support and private investment while helping to diversify the local economy and create sustainable jobs.

Transformational Projects

A number of large-scale projects present opportunities to realise economic growth or address existing challenges.

A breakdown of estimated value across development stages is as follows:



Woolstores Developments

The Fremantle Woolstores were large buildings adjacent to Victoria Quay at the northern entrance to Fremantle town centre. The sites have sat vacant for decades but are now undergoing redevelopment.

- Woolstores Shopping Centre opened in March 2025 and includes a carpark, retail and childcare facilities. A proposed stage 2 development including build to rent accommodation and a hotel is currently being considered.
- Elders Wool Stores Redevelopment: A \$110 million proposed development to include 39 multiple dwellings, 174 co-living (residential building) units, office, restaurant/café. Construction is planned to commence in 2026 and be completed by mid-2028.

Fremantle District Police Complex

The complex is a significant infrastructure project initiated by the Western Australian Government to enhance law enforcement capabilities in Fremantle. Situated at 49 South Terrace, adjacent to Fremantle Hospital and Fremantle Oval, the complex aims to centralise various police services and improve public safety in the region.

The project is estimated to support more than 500 construction jobs and be completed by mid-2027.

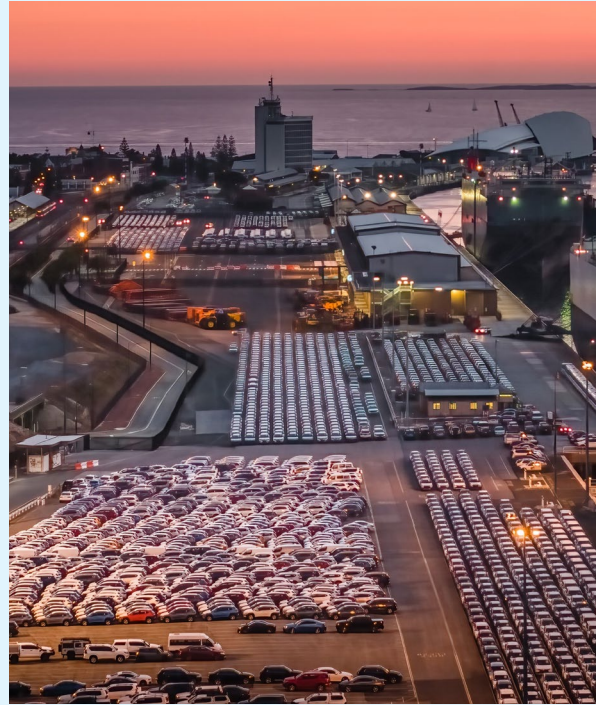


Expansion of Fremantle Hospital

The Fremantle Hospital is undergoing a significant redevelopment to enhance its mental health services, with a \$63 million investment by the Western Australian Government. This project aims to transform the hospital into a major mental health hub for the southern metropolitan region.

The redevelopment will increase the number of inpatient mental health beds from 64 to 104, marking a 60 per cent boost in capacity. Construction commenced in early 2024, with completion anticipated by mid-2025.

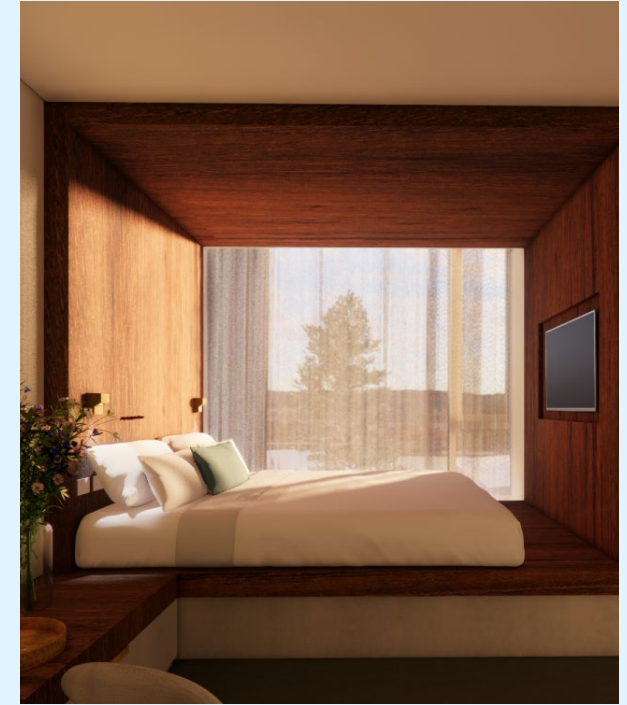
Fremantle Hospital Expansion image sourced from ADCO Constructions



Fremantle Port Upgrades

The WA Government is investing an additional \$40.5 million in the next stage of activation of Fremantle's Victoria Quay precinct, including improvements to historic B Shed and cruise ship infrastructure at Fremantle Passenger Terminal.

The new facilities will provide the ferry companies and their customers and cruise passengers with a much-improved visitor experience.



Garde Hotel

The Garde Hotel is a major luxury accommodation project set to open in September 2025. The project incorporates 106 luxury rooms and suites as well as an on-site Japanese restaurant.

Garde Hotel is a central feature of Fremantle's newly designated Convict Quarter, a precinct that includes the Fremantle Prison, Warders Cottages, and other historic sites. This area aims to boost tourism by highlighting Fremantle's rich heritage.

Case Studies and Exemplars

The following section provides case studies and exemplar approaches/initiatives that are linked to problems/opportunities that have been identified within this strategy.

High Street Environment

London, UK – Oxford Street and West End

- Oxford Street is undergoing a major transformation, including pedestrian prioritisation, greening, and attracting experience-based and tech-forward retail.
- Westminster Council has launched an Oxford Street Program with a £150 million investment.
- Focus: reducing vacancies, attracting diverse uses (e.g. pop-ups, galleries), and improving public realm
- Key features of the programme include:
 - 75 per cent increase in pavement space along Oxford Street.
 - 16 new amenity spaces for rest and play including Old Quebec Street.
 - A high quality and consistent palette of materials, improved lighting and seating.
 - New trees and other greenery to support Wild West End objectives, creating a network of green corridors and improved air quality.
 - Implementation of modern infrastructure to support better traffic management and digital connectivity.
 - Initiatives to attract diverse retailers and encourage pop-up spaces for emerging brands.
 - Introduction of public art installations and spaces for performances to enrich the visitor experience.

Designed to address key challenges such as climate change, evolving retail environments, safety concerns, accessibility issues and the lack of public spaces, the programme will deliver local economic benefits alongside improved biodiversity and increased pedestrian accessibility.

Heritage Precinct

Toronto, Distillery District

- A former industrial complex converted into a pedestrian-only heritage precinct focused on arts, entertainment, and boutique retail.
- Hosts festivals and markets while protecting the historic fabric.
- Highly successful model for cultural and commercial adaptive reuse.
- Key features
 - Minimal intervention
 - Prioritising retention of historical integrity and character
 - Adapting buildings for new uses like arts, culture and retail
 - Changes designed to be reversible and not compromise original structures.

The Distillery District in Toronto is a prime example of successful heritage preservation and adaptive reuse, safeguarding North America's largest collection of Victorian-era industrial architecture through its designation as a National Historic Site and protection under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Port Diversification

Netherlands, Port of Rotterdam

The Port of Rotterdam, Europe's largest seaport, is a global leader in port diversification. Over the past two decades, Rotterdam has actively transformed its port economy to prepare for a post-fossil fuel, innovation-driven future, while maintaining its role as a logistics powerhouse.

- Rotterdam has become a testbed for port innovation, not just a logistics centre.
- It attracts startups, researchers, and clean energy companies, not just freight.
- It has activated its city-port interface, making the waterfront more accessible and economically diverse
- Key features
 - Established the research, design and manufacturing innovation dock
 - Invested in the energy transition
 - Created a digital twin of the port
 - Redeveloped inner-city port areas
 - Focused on talent and collaboration
 - Encouraged sustainable logistics and modal shift

Rotterdam's port diversification strategy has been largely successful, transforming it from a traditional logistics hub into a global leader in innovation, clean energy, and sustainable urban development. Through initiatives like the RDM Innovation Campus, Port accelerator, and major investments in hydrogen and offshore wind, the port has attracted global companies, startups, and researchers.

Former industrial areas have been revitalised into vibrant mixed-use precincts, while smart technologies like a real-time digital twin have made port operations more efficient and future ready. Although the transition away from fossil fuels is ongoing, Rotterdam's long-term, innovation-led approach is widely seen as a model for modern port cities aiming to remain competitive and relevant in a changing global economy.

Integration of Sectors

Singapore, ArtScience Museum

Singapore is internationally recognised for successfully integrating art and science as part of its broader innovation, education, and placemaking strategies. The city-state uses interdisciplinary collaboration to position itself as a global creative and knowledge hub.

- Curates' exhibitions that blend art, science, design, and technology—often featuring global partnerships (e.g., with teamLab, NASA, or the British Museum).
- Acts as a bridge between the disciplines, promoting STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) learning.
- Architectural design itself (lotus-shaped building by Moshe Safdie) embodies the convergence of nature, geometry, and creativity.
- Key features
 - Iconic design and immersive experiences
 - Sustainability leadership
 - Community engagement and education
 - Contribution to the precinct and city

While the museum is the prominent feature, the broader area around Marina Bay Sands is often considered a hub for cultural and technological attractions in Singapore.

Port Diversification

Wellington, New Zealand

Wellington holds the distinction of being a UNESCO City of Film and is home to a hub of world-class production and special effects facilities, as well as a number of talented filmmakers and crew who've worked on global movie releases such as Avatar and Avatar II.

- Punches above its weight due to Weta Workshop and Weta FX (Lord of the Rings, Avatar).
- Major hub for VFX, animation, and cinematic innovation.
- Strong public-private support and links between education, industry, and international markets.
- Key features
 - Film industry hub
 - Digital and gaming sector
 - Creative ecosystem
 - Skilled workforce and institutions
 - Government support and incentives
 - Cultural vibrancy

Wellington's overall vision is to be an incubator of creativity, exploration and innovation, as well as to create a sustainable future in which the New Zealand's screen industry can thrive and grow.

The city's key policies impacting on the screen sector are delivered by the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC). This includes investing in New Zealand feature films and short films, supporting script development and the careers of filmmakers, fostering screen professional guilds and interest groups, such as Women in Film and Television (WIFT), and Pacific Islanders in Film and Television (PIFT). Furthermore, the policies also support the promotion of the New Zealand films on a national and overseas platform, facilitating co-productions, and administering the New Zealand Screen Production Grant and other grants.

Integration of Sectors

Canada, Halifax

Halifax is Canada's ocean city and a global leader in ocean science, technology, and business.

- Hub for ocean tech innovation and marine research.
- Startups focus on autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs), sustainable aquaculture tech, and ocean data analytics.
- Supported by the Ocean Supercluster and strong ties with Dalhousie University.
- Key features
 - Largest centre for ocean research with 600 scientists, engineers and technicians
 - Ocean-related industries generate approximately \$6 billion of Nova Scotia's GDP
 - Over 500 ocean sector companies including the most ocean tech startups in Canada
 - Ocean-technology industry accounts for 1/3 of total RandD among Nova Scotia businesses
 - The Innovation Equity Tax Credit provides a non-refundable personal income tax credit to individuals taking an equity stake in a small-to-medium-sized Nova Scotian business
 - Aquaculture loans are available to support in starting, expanding, or purchasing an aquaculture business.

Halifax has successfully attracted ocean startups by fostering a supportive ecosystem that leverages its strong maritime heritage and deep-rooted expertise in ocean technology.

Key factors include the presence of the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship (COVE), which serves as a world-class hub for ocean innovation with specialised facilities and a collaborative environment, and the Halifax Innovation District, which connects researchers, entrepreneurs, and mentors within a strong network.



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