

Fremantle 2030

Economic
Development
Strategy

Part II – Strategy and Implementation

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Vision for Fremantle's Economy

The City of Fremantle's Community Strategic Plan 2024-2029 sets out a vision for the community, with a prosperous and innovative economy being a key aspiration within the plan.

The plan aspires to an economy that:

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

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

Key outcomes and measures of success:

- Local opportunities: Residents can find work and study opportunities locally, while workers can live and study within the community.
- Attractive urban realm: Improved urban spaces and amenities encourage investment, development, and tourism.
- Regional influence: The local economy extends beyond Fremantle's boundaries, connecting with other industry and employment hubs.
- Creative sector growth: Targeted growth in creative industries.
- Economic resilience: Industry growth and diversification create jobs, contribute to the state economy, and attract larger employers.
- State land development: Positive contributions from the development of state-owned land.
- Private investment: Increased private sector investment in the CBD, leading to a growing inner-city residential population.



Strategy

The City of Fremantle will seek to achieve the key outcomes associated with this strategy through the delivery of a series of strategic program areas and associated actions.

There will be three primary approaches to implementing the actions identified to follow:

Deliver

Direct delivery of initiatives by the City of Fremantle

Partner

Collaborative delivery with external stakeholders

Advocate

Representing Fremantle's interest to influence policy and investment decisions.

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

Monitoring and reporting

Progress will be monitored through:

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

Strategic program areas

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

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



1.0 Investment and growth

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

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

Goal

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

Priority Objectives

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

Key Actions

1.1 Incentivise investment

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

1.2 Target priority sectors

- 1.2.1 Partner:** Prioritise activities and initiatives that will support the growth of jobs, businesses and or investment into the following Fremantle based industry clusters.
 - Blue Economy
 - Green Economy
 - Creative Economy
 - Cultural Economy
 - Visitor economy
- 1.2.2 Deliver:** Carry out an audit of each of the above-mentioned sectors to determine existing capability and local content, as well as future growth opportunities within each that align with State level priorities of economic development.

- 1.2.3 Deliver:** Profile Fremantle's activities within each of these sectors and promote via investment marketing, engagement with export markets via Trades offices, advocacy activities, and through stakeholder relationships with government and industry bodies.
- 1.2.4 Deliver:** Leverage the This is Fremantle brand, investment website and prospectus to deliver a program of marketing and communications that raises Fremantle's profile as a suitable place to invest.
- 1.2.5 Deliver:** Develop a suite of content that establishes the This is Fremantle investment website as a central repository for economic data, promotional information, strategies, plans and advocacy material – providing a one stop shop for any information investors and developers require to make informed investment decisions relating to Fremantle.

1.3 Support and engage businesses

- 1.3.1 Deliver:** Deliver activities and initiatives that assist in building and maintaining direct lines of communication with Fremantle's business community, so that the City is accessible and responsive to feedback and communication from businesses.
- 1.3.2 Deliver:** Establish a business toolkit that can be provided to new and existing businesses and provides information on how to engage with the City, opportunities that exist for businesses and key projects the City is embarking on.
- 1.3.3 Deliver:** Implement methods of communication that are consistent, diverse and better align with the needs of all small businesses including but not limited to face to face communication, events, digital communications and larger event-based forums.
- 1.3.4 Deliver:** Formalise an approach to delivering a small business concierge service that supports and streamlines small business engagement with internal City processes such as planning, building compliance, health, engineering and rates.

2.0 Activation & programming

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

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

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

Goal

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

Priority Objectives

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

Key Actions

2.1 Activated and Engaging Public Spaces

- 2.1.1 Deliver:** Continue to deliver on major event, business event, activation and programming objectives outlined in the City of Fremantle Destination Development Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028.
- 2.1.2 Partner:** Support the delivery of programs that temporarily activate clusters of vacant retail and hospitality premises in collaboration with suitable partners.
- 2.1.3 Deliver:** Develop a register of City Centre vacancy that seeks to collect and track data relating to length of vacancy, type of ownership and barriers to occupation.
- 2.1.4 Advocate:** Work with WALGA and an appropriate independent advisory to investigate and advocate for a workable approach to managing long term commercial vacancy in City Centre and High Streets via differential rating, or other suitable mechanism.
- 2.1.5 Deliver:** Develop and deliver a program of street level interventions and activities that maintain a focus on driving mid-week activation in areas that rely on footfall driven economic activity.
- 2.1.6 Deliver:** Review the current calendar of City owned events/programming and determine the phasing required to drive activation across periods of lower activity (low and shoulder seasons).
- 2.1.7 Deliver:** Establish a staged program of activations that recognises and celebrates the progression of the Fremantle Dockers through milestones within the AFL and AFWL finals series and grand final, as well as the achievement of other nationally or internationally significant sporting events that have a connection to or resonate with the Fremantle community.

2.2 Safety and Amenity

- 2.2.1 Deliver:** Review city centre street cleaning schedules and work to align with key visitation periods to ensure streetscapes are clean and presentable during periods of higher visitation and foot traffic.
- 2.2.2 Deliver:** Deliver a program of education and engagement for businesses that provides guidance and advice on how best to leverage the City's community safety program as well as approaches to engaging police in managing anti-social behaviour.
- 2.2.3 Partner:** Collaborate with key agencies such as WA Police, Department of Communities and St. Patricks to deliver a cross-agency approach to support at risk and vulnerable street present members of the community.
- 2.2.4 Deliver:** Undertake an audit of City centre streets and identify opportunities to de-clutter ageing and superfluous infrastructure in order to improve walkability and amenity.
- 2.2.5 Deliver:** Assess city centre foot traffic data in order to guide and prioritise key projects within the city's footpath renewal program in line with volume of usage and impact on walkability.

2.3 Marketing and Promotion

- 2.3.1 Deliver:** Continue to deliver on marketing, activation and programming related objectives outlined in the City of Fremantle Destination Development Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028.

3.0 Jobs, Skills and Innovation

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

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

Goal

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

Priority Objectives

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

Key Actions

3.1 Start up and innovation ecosystem

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

3.2 Research and Education

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

4.0 Economic precinct planning and development

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

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

Goal

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

Priority Objectives

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

Key Actions

4.1 Economic Precinct Planning

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.2 Economic Precinct Planning

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

- Improved transport connections via the southwest corridor
- Redevelopment of Victoria Quay and relocation of RORO operations

- Delivery of residential developments planned on State Government land
- The redevelopment of the Fremantle Oval precinct.

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

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

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

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

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

Measuring Success

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

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

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

Investment and Growth

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

Activation and Programming

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

Jobs, Skills and Innovation

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

Economic Precinct planning and development

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

Annual Implementation and Review Process

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

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

Related plans

This Economic Development Strategy is one of several plans that will guide the City of Fremantle. In addition to the broader relationship with these key strategic outputs, other City of Fremantle strategic and operational frameworks also complement and align with this strategy. These include but may not be limited to:

- City of Fremantle Strategic Community Plan (2024-2034)
- Fremantle City Plan
- City of Fremantle Arts, Culture and Creative Strategy 2024
- Fremantle Bike Plan
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- City's Urban Forest Plan
- Tree retention policy
- Destination Development Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028
- Annual Budget process
- Long Term Financial Plan



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