Redland CITY COUNCIL

Redlands Coast

Economic Development Roadmap

An overview of our Economic Development Strategy 2026–2031

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians and Country

Redland City Council respectfully acknowledges the Quandamooka People as the Traditional Custodians of much of Redlands Coast. Council also recognises the Danggan Balun (Five Rivers) People of the Southern Redland City Area.

Council is committed to working in partnership with Traditional Custodians and First Nations Community Groups in the Redland City area.

Message from the Mayor

Our Redlands Coast community shows resilience, resourcefulness, and a deep pride in our bayside home. Over the past two years, I have seen first-hand both the challenges and the extraordinary determination of our residents, community groups and local businesses – whether recovering from severe weather events or navigating the everyday pressures of a growing region.

The 2026–2031 Economic Development Roadmap seeks to build upon that strength. It sets a clear, practical and future focused pathway to ensure our city remains prosperous, adaptable and opportunity rich.

The Roadmap recognises a simple truth – that economic resilience is not just about numbers on a page. It is about people – backing local businesses, enabling innovation, creating meaningful jobs close to home, and ensuring our young people can see a future for themselves here on Redlands Coast. This approach brings together Council, industry, the community and wider stakeholder groups to share priorities that strengthen our economy and protect the liveability and character of our city.

Ensuring economic prosperity requires us to understand and address our challenges, be creative in seeking and nurturing our unique opportunities, and consider the impact of our decisions for today, and the future. In order to strengthen the economy of Redland City, and retain the unique lifestyle we all enjoy, we will have to ensure the right levers are in place to support our desired investment, deliver needed infrastructure, and strengthen the strategic partnerships that underpin long term success.

Council's Roadmap seeks to reflect the growing maturity of our region. It seeks to elevate the role of our activity centres, embrace the opportunities of a diversifying workforce, and position Redlands Coast to benefit from both local catalytic projects and broader south-east Queensland momentum. It also seeks to confront the challenges ahead, from skills shortages to visitor economy constraints and the distinct needs of our island communities.

The next five years will begin to shape the future of Redlands Coast, as we move towards south-east Queensland's Olympic Games delivery. With this Roadmap, Council is choosing to lean into the opportunities before us – to diversify our economy, lift our aspirations, and build a city that remains both uniquely Redlands and firmly future ready.

The goal – A prosperous economy

Our Future Redland City: Corporate Plan 2026–2031 has a clearly stated economic goal: Prosperous Economy – a flourishing and evolving economy attracting investment, innovation and opportunity.

The *Economic Development Strategy 2026–2031 (Strategy)* aligns with this goal, to set a clear, evidence driven and practical roadmap to guide Redlands Coast toward a more prosperous, inclusive, and resilient economy. It establishes a focused framework of objectives and measurable actions through which Council can influence the local economic environment – supporting business success, attracting desired investment, and enhancing community wellbeing.

Prosperity, in the context of the Strategy refers to creating the conditions to encourage a thriving, resilient and opportunity rich Redlands Coast. It is more than economic growth alone – it is about ensuring residents have access to quality and diversity of local jobs, businesses have the confidence to invest and innovate, and the community has the skills and socio economic foundations needed to adapt and succeed over time.

The Strategy, developed with insights from industry experts, input from community and feedback from key industry partners, responds through five strategic pillars, reinforced by four targeted growth sectors and highlights some extended priorities for investigation and development – each underpinned with clearly set out desired outcomes, objectives and measures of success.

A key innovation designed to track year-on-year progress is the newly developed Redlands Coast Prosperity Index (RCPI), which will provide feedback across multiple metrics, aligned with the desired priorities as articulated in this goal.

This Economic Development Roadmap provides a concise overview of the Strategy to provide clarity of direction, purpose and understanding throughout Council, for our businesses, our community, our strategic partners and those seeking to invest and participate in our Redlands Coast future.

Roadmap to prosperity

A city of natural opportunity

Redlands Coast is uniquely distinctive – capital city adjacent, yet defined by an extensive coastline, six residential islands, and high-value natural landscapes. Significant conservation areas, rural settings, and a strong agricultural heritage all contribute to a unique urban form that blends coastal living with environmental stewardship and semi-rural character.

Redlands Coast continues to experience steady population growth and is on target to reach 210,000 by 2046 via new and expanding residential developments, an increase in medium-density housing and the future development of the Southern Thornlands priority development area (PDA), which will ultimately provide around 8,000 homes and account for up to half of that future growth.

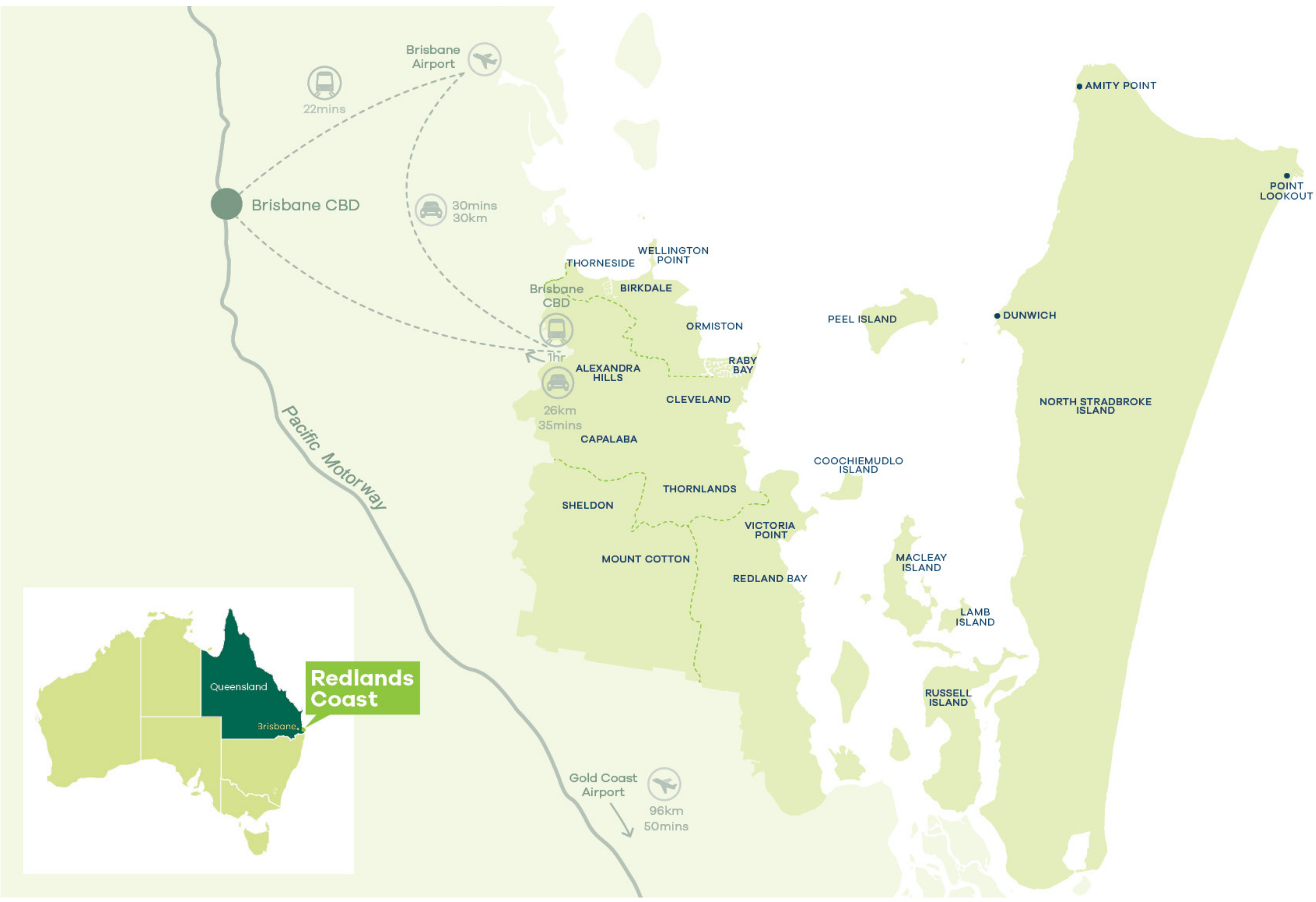
With more than 12,000 of the city's residents living across island communities, Redlands Coast really is unique amongst all other Australian local government areas. Of course, this presents challenges and adds to the level of regional distinctiveness, however, with a wealth of natural and cultural assets, balanced planning, industry and visitor experience development and investment attraction, Redlands Coast can evolve as a thriving, diversified, environmentally responsible and prosperous city.

The Redlands Coast workforce is characterised by high skill levels, strong labour force participation, and comparatively low unemployment, underscoring the region's economic resilience.

Business activity is expanding, with more than 12,800 active local businesses contributing to a dynamic and entrepreneurial environment. Exporting industries are continuing to bring new income into the region making them critical for productivity and wage growth, and rising demand from local markets is supporting strong growth in multiple professional service sectors.

As an important cross sector contributor, the tourism sector continues to draw in valuable visitor expenditure, with distinct opportunities to strengthen the proportionate role it plays in the broader economy.

Overall, Redlands Coast presents a compelling economic story – one of steady growth, sector diversification, and strategic opportunity. These trends position the LGA for continued prosperity and invite deeper exploration into the industries, talent, and investment pathways shaping its future.



Supporting island economic resilience

Island communities are inherently shaped by distance, transport dependency, constrained land availability, seasonal visitation and limited commercial activity. With high reliance on mainland transport, limited commercial and industrial spaces, higher operating costs and strong community identity, there is growing demand for localised economic activity. As day and overnight visitation on the islands increases at varying rates, stakeholders will need to collaborate to support effective management of impacts to support sustainable tourism outcomes. This includes service, environmental and operator capacity. Tailored approaches for North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah) and the Southern Moreton Bay Islands (SMBI) will ensure targeted, place-based solutions and support a sustainable economic future across all islands.

Job self-containment – a window to workforce capability

More than half (52.3%) of resident workers leave Redlands Coast each day to work elsewhere – predominantly in Brisbane. Through targeting existing workforce specialties in sectors that suit desired industry and employment, the necessary planning strategies to facilitate the required spaces and places are clearer, which in turn informs investment attraction priorities aligned to workforce availability. Analysis of journey to work data has highlighted some key opportunities that have in turn informed the focus on target sectors.

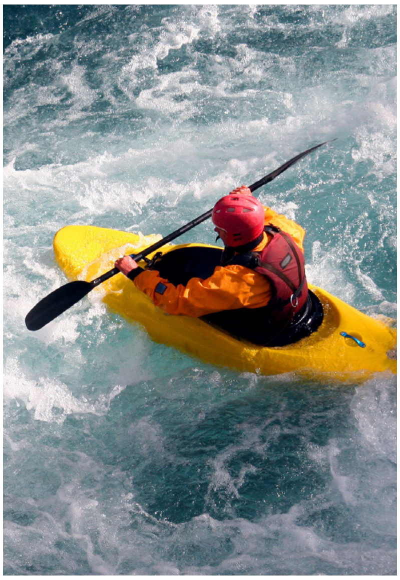
New City Plan – a foundation for economic transformation

As an economic instrument that influences investment confidence, shapes the city's employment base, supports diversification, the new City Plan will be critical to facilitate desired investment and position the city to compete within a rapidly expanding south-east Queensland (SEQ) region.

Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games – opportunity on our doorstep

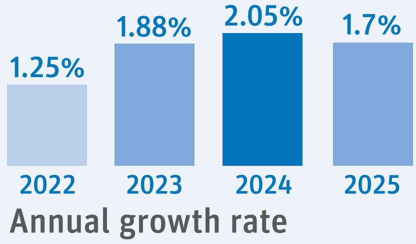
The new Redland Whitewater Centre, to be located within the 62-hectare Birkdale Community Precinct, is a legacy first investment designed to deliver enduring community, economic and resilience benefits for Redlands Coast and the broader region. It is earmarked to host the Canoe Slalom events for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Whilst still in the planning phase, this majority funded state and federal investment project signals external confidence in Redlands Coast, will provide a long-term training base for elite athletes and emergency services and a boost to adventure tourism, sport, events, recreation, and hospitality. This is in addition to providing a major community asset supporting water safety, wellbeing, and public recreation.

To maximise the economic benefits before, during and after the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the city must ensure our workforce, industry and destination capability is strengthened and aligned to capitalise on the opportunity. This is in addition to building destination appeal and awareness and ensuring a well-connected and quality visitor experience.



172,831

Estimated resident population (2025)



Median age
43

Older couples without children
14%

Couples with children
32%

Trade qualification
26%

Suburbs with significant population growth

between 2020 and 2025

Southern Moreton Bay Islands
27.57%

Thornlands
16.3%

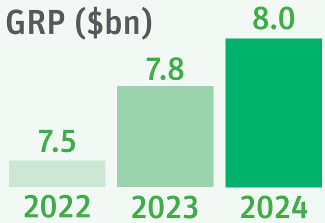
Redland Bay
13.66%

Age breakdown in 2024

0 to 14 years old	17.8%
15 to 64 years old	61.3%
65 and over	20.9%

$8 billion

Gross regional product (GRP)



GRP growth rate
2.2%

Local jobs
55,454

Employed residents
89,006

Unemployment
2.9%

Top employing sectors

Health care and social assistance
21%

Construction
14%

Retail trade
13%

Registered businesses

12,821

1 in 4 registered businesses were in construction

Catalytic projects

With a pipeline of major projects, Redlands Coast is set to undergo transformational change, accommodating a growing population and providing the facilities, infrastructure and services to meet future demand.

Capalaba Town Centre Project, delivered in partnership with Shayher Group and Redland Investment Corporation. Artist impression only for illustrative purposes.

Birkdale Community Precinct and Whitewater Centre – the proposed 2032 Canoe Slalom venue and recreation and training centre anchors the broader 62-hectare community precinct.

Capalaba Town Centre Revitalisation – a $250 million new urban heart for Capalaba delivering office building, new library, community hall, arts facility and village green.

Cleveland Town Centre Revitalisation – delivery of a new master plan to transform Cleveland's urban renewal activation including commercial, hotel, retail and civic spaces.

Weinam Creek PDA (Redland Bay) – creation of a vibrant waterfront and critical transport hub servicing SMBI and Redland Bay.

Toondah Harbour Redevelopment (Cleveland) – development of a stronger tourism gateway to North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah), improved ferry port and public amenities, accommodation, retail activation, boardwalks, green spaces and protection of GJ Walter Park/ Ramsar wetlands.

Dunwich (Gumpi) Ferry Terminal Upgrade – a $41 million upgrade to enhance North Stradbroke Island's (Minjerribah) main ferry terminal (new pontoon, shelters, retail and commercial hub).

'Always on' business and industry support

In addition to working with stakeholders to deliver strategic, collaborative and catalytic initiatives to support economic development, Council provides an 'always on' support service for business and industry though the Economic Development and Partnerships Group – this includes access to economic and community data and insights, business and investment concierge service, industry workshops and events and resources to help anyone looking to start, grow and diversify their business in Redland City.

Find out more at
www.redland.qld.gov.au/Business-and-investment

Strategic pillars

Five strategic pillars respond to identified challenges and opportunities that underpin the city's economic trajectory.

1 Business support, retention and investment attraction

Desired outcomes	Objectives	Measures of success
A business environment that enables growth, confidence and reinvestment. Increased stability and expansion of local enterprises. Enhanced attractiveness of the region as an investment destination.	Improve business retention, survival and expansion rates. Build a compelling investment proposition aligned to priority sectors. Strengthen direct engagement and support for key employers and small and medium enterprises.	Growth in local business count and survival rates. Increased uptake in support programs and direct engagement. Increased investor enquiries and investment commitment.

2 Growth sectors and industry diversification

Desired outcomes	Objectives	Measures of success
Increased economic output and productivity in priority industries. Growth in high value, knowledge intensive and export-oriented activity. Stronger supply chains and advanced capability within local firms.	Support growth in high-value and high-growth sectors. Accelerate the adoption of advanced technologies and innovation practices. Promote professional and knowledge based jobs within activity centres.	Greater contribution of high value add services as a proportion of gross regional product. Increased localised employment of non-population servicing sectors. Attraction of new businesses in targeted sectors.

3 Workforce, skills and youth opportunities

Desired outcomes	Objectives	Measures of success
Strong alignment between local skills and employer needs. Improved engagement, retention and career pathways for young people. Better access to VET and tertiary options education, jobs and services.	Advocate for increased vocational, tertiary and industry linked opportunities. Strengthen youth pathways into employment, entrepreneurship and training. Increase the proportion of jobs filled by local residents.	Reduced youth unemployment and disengagement. Increased completions of traineeships, apprenticeships and micro credentials. Improved job matching outcomes, participation rates and local opportunities.

4 Visitor economy and strategic place based activation

Desired outcomes	Objectives	Measures of success
Improved accommodation options and precinct infrastructure. Vibrant centres and coastal destinations that drive local spend and activation. A higher yield, experience rich visitor economy.	Attract investment to expand commercial accommodation capacity. Improved island and coastal connectivity and visitor infrastructure. Explore opportunities where zoning changes can improve outcomes. Support place activation and revitalisation in key activity centres.	Growth in visitor expenditure and stays. Increases in accommodation stock and occupancy. Footfall and dwell time improvements in activated precincts. Growth of tourism businesses and adventure/cultural/ecotourism offerings.

5 Economic governance, leadership and partnerships

Desired outcomes	Objectives	Measures of success
Clear, transparent and accountable economic delivery. Strong partnerships unlocking opportunities, funding and investment. An enhanced reputation for being investment ready and strategically aligned.	Establish effective internal and external communication and collaboration pathways that support the delivery structures for the EDS. Foster targeted partnerships with education, industry, Traditional Owners and State agencies. Improve transparency through accessible reporting and metrics. Strengthen advocacy for major projects and investment.	Delivery of annual action plans and KPIs. Number and quality of formal partnerships. Improved stakeholder satisfaction and reputation. Value pipeline of citywide investment.

Targeted growth sectors

In addition to an ongoing commitment to continue delivering a level of 'always on' business and industry support to all Redlands Coast businesses, targeted efforts will support identified sectors that are expected to deliver valuable benefits in 2026–2031. These sectors have been identified to build broader economic capability attract new investment and diversify the current economic base, which is heavily weighted to population serving sectors.

Advanced manufacturing

Manufacturing plays a vital role in the Redlands Coast economy, ranking second to construction in economic output and standing as the city's largest export contributor. Despite a relatively small industrial footprint compared with other SEQ local government areas (LGAs), Redlands Coast manufacturers have continued to strengthen productivity through innovative technologies and advanced manufacturing practices. The shift toward advanced manufacturing, the State government's focus on Transforming Queensland Manufacturing 2025–30 and the expansion of activities tied to statewide growth and supply chain demand present clear opportunities for renewed sector growth and greater long-term economic contribution. Central to realising this potential is ensuring Redlands Coast businesses are supported to access knowledge, expert advice and industry opportunities for capability uplift that allow them to adapt, grow and thrive.

High value add services

High value add services including professional, technical, scientific and financial services represent a major opportunity to the Redlands Coast economy. With close to 7,000 residents already employed in these sectors and more than 4,000 commuting daily to adjacent LGAs, there is strong latent potential to grow office-based employment locally by encouraging development within principal activity centres like Cleveland and Capalaba. Redlands Coast can create the conditions for significant growth in these knowledge-intensive high value sectors by delivering clear centre plans that support higher-quality commercial office space and targeting investment attraction that promotes local capability and decentralised traditional CBD-based roles.

Visitor economy

With its natural beauty, indigenous culture, 335 kilometres of coastline and unique islands, Redlands Coast has all the foundations for a much stronger visitor economy than its current economic contribution. This underperformance is in stark contrast with the city's lifestyle appeal and proximity to major visitor markets and is largely a result of supply side constraints including limited accommodation stock along with gaps in access, infrastructure, investment facilitation and destination development.

There is opportunity to extend visitor stay and spend by strengthening the capacity of existing operators, in addition to increasing the offering of quality experiences that lean into the cultural and natural assets of the area. Addressing supply constraints, supported by strong planning frameworks, enabling policy, strategic marketing and industry partnerships, presents a clear opportunity for Redlands Coast to evolve from a predominantly day trip location into a higher yield and experience rich destination that contributes far more significantly to the city's long term economic prosperity.

Construction

Construction is a foundation stone of the Redlands Coast economy, contributing the largest output by industry, driven largely by local residential and precinct-based development. With Queensland's capital program forecast value of $153 billion in major projects statewide (30% of which is in SEQ), Redlands Coast construction businesses are well-placed to benefit from unprecedented infrastructure investment due to the city's strategic location.

Local demand will remain strong through ongoing housing needs and major initiatives such as the revitalisation of Cleveland and Capalaba, the PDAs at Weinam Creek, Toondah Harbour and Southern Thornlands, the Dunwich Ferry Terminal Upgrade and the Birkdale Community Precinct. Maximising these opportunities requires strong engagement between industry, education and training providers, state agencies and local stakeholders to ensure workforce readiness and strong sector capability.

Extended priorities and opportunities

Redlands Coast's economic future will be shaped not only by its core industries and catalytic projects, but also by a number of emerging and place-based issues and opportunities that require targeted attention.

Opportunities for young people

Redlands Coast is home to around 25,000 young people aged 12-24, representing an important segment of the city's future workforce, innovation pipeline and community identity. We recognise that we lose young people due to lack of tertiary education opportunities, desired jobs and environment. People in this cohort tend to return to the area when they are aged 40 and over. The Strategy aims to arrest this trend by focusing on economic levers that enable young people to stay, participate and thrive. It's a challenge, but a worthwhile one.

What role can Council play? Support education and career pathways, youth innovation and entrepreneurship and improve access and connectivity.

Circular economy leadership

For Redlands Coast – with its strong small to medium enterprise base, marine sector, growing visitor economy and island communities – circularity represents a practical pathway to lowering costs, building local capability and enhancing environmental performance. Strategic leadership in circular practices positions Redlands Coast as a forward thinking, sustainable and investment-ready region.

What role can Council play? Build business capability, support industry innovation and collaboration and strengthen local supply chains.

Marine services and supply chain

The marine sector is foundational to the identity and economy of Redlands Coast. Ferry networks linking the mainland to North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah) and SMBI underpin mobility for residents and visitors, whilst supporting a network of local service providers including repairers, maintenance specialists, marine fabricators, and vessel manufacturers. Our geographical advantage as a gateway to the islands creates enduring demand for marine logistics, maritime tourism and supply chain activity.

What role can Council play? Support industry capability and workforce development, strengthen marine precincts and infrastructure and enhance supply chain efficiency and innovation.

Silver economy

The silver economy recognises the ageing demographic as economic contributors, mentors, consumers, investors and key participants in community wellbeing. Opportunities exist to drive growth in innovative health services, wellbeing and lifestyle offerings, accessible tourism, and flexible employment models that leverage experience.

What role can Council play? Strengthen industry engagement and business support, leverage skills, experience and community capacity and enable age-friendly economic participation.

Strategy monitoring and reporting

The Strategy sets out clearly defined desired outcomes, objectives and measures of success. Reported outcomes and progress will be measured via:

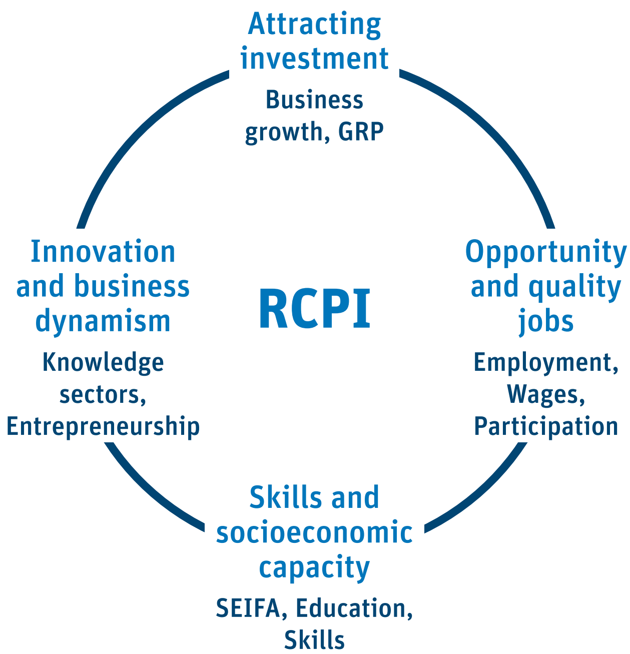
- Year by year action/implementation plan
- Monthly activity reporting
- Yearly review and report to Council and stakeholders

Redlands Coast Prosperity Index (RCPI)

The RCPI was conceived and developed as a measure that brings together key indicators from published data in an innovative format to track and measure progress toward the goal of a prosperous economy: a flourishing and evolving economy attracting investment, innovation and opportunity. Added to these three metrics was the underlying foundational requirement of skills and socio-economic capacity – measuring the underlying strength of the community.

Rather than relying solely on traditional measures such as gross regional product that only provide a partial view of local economic performance, the RCPI offers a more holistic and place-specific framework. It enables year-on-year monitoring of economic and social prosperity through a single Redlands Coast-focused score, making the city's development trajectory easier to communicate and understand. The index draws on robust and regularly updated datasets from sources such as Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australian Business Register (ABR), Small Area Labour Markets (SALM), the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) and the Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA).

The RCPI is a weighted score that utilises a traffic light system across all individual and combined measurements to indicate **expanding, moderating** and **contracting** conditions.



Acknowledgement of support and contribution

Redland City Council would like to thank key stakeholders who provided input to the development of the 2026–2031 Economic Development Strategy and Roadmap, including Redland Chamber of Commerce, Straddie Chamber of Commerce, SMBI Chamber of Commerce, Council of Mayors South East Queensland (CoMSEQ), Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Regional Development Australia – Logan & Redland, Redlands Coast 2032 Legacy Working Group, Redlands Regional Jobs Committee, The Minjerribah Moorgumpin Elders-in-Council Corporation, Logan Redlands Connect, Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA), AusIndustry, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Small and Family Business, and Redland Investment Corporation.

Council would also like to thank all community members who provided economic development related insights and ideas through the community consultation process for the new corporate plan. This feedback was also utilised for the development of the 2026–2031 Economic Development Strategy and Roadmap.

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