



# WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED

Since the original edition of Great Ideas was published in 2017, the Gold Coast has continued to grow and mature. The 2018 Commonwealth Games broadcast the City to the world, showing what an exceptional place it is to live and learn, start and grow businesses, participate in and enjoy world-class sport and cultural activities.

Our population has continued to grow by about 15,000 people per year, an annual growth rate of approximately 2.5%. To accommodate this increased population, the City has seen greater development in our coastal locations which benefit from their accessibility to highly valued amenity. This locational and amenity-driven development reflects the new normal, as we shift towards an infill city while protecting our famous green behind the gold.

Growth will continue to occur in different areas of the City at different times, with locations that are best suited to accommodate more people with the right infrastructure undoubtably set to grow faster. This growth creates opportunities that would not otherwise exist to enhance our liveability, while improving public spaces, public transport and amenity.

Investment in and delivery of major infrastructure has continued to shape the urban form of our City, which is more connected than ever before, both physically and digitally. This connectivity is critical to our long-term economic growth and ensures that our local businesses can work productively together and reach out to the world at large.

We've also grown culturally, recognising that ongoing investment in arts and culture serves not only to diversify our economy and create new jobs, but changes the way we experience our City. The arts and creative industries play a vital role in promoting social cohesion and wellbeing, while making the city attractive to travellers from elsewhere in Australia and the rest of the world.

The momentum of this increasingly diverse and loveable city is certainly building but importantly these loveable and liveable qualities will continue to shape our City's growth.

#### **LIGHT RAIL**



**\$709 MILLION COMMITTED** to deliver stage 3 extension to Burleigh Heads

**8.4 MILLION PASSENGERS IN 2019/20** Despite COVID-19, demonstrating locals love the G

Source: Queensland Government

# **HEALTH AND KNOWLEDGE PRECINCT**



**1,200 APARTMENTS** Australia's first build-to-rent apartment operator

**14,000** new jobs across the precinct once fully developed

Source: Queensland Governme

# MESSAGE FROM YP GOLD COAST

The Gold Coast is growing. We need to plan for our long-term success, rather than a post-pandemic recovery.

YP Gold Coast brings together professionals and entrepreneurs to stimulate conversation, spark ideas and ensure our city continues to thrive. We are not confined to a single sector or interest group, which allows us to develop an agenda that focuses on our city's future prosperity and liveability.

Great Ideas for the Gold Coast drives the direction of the organisation and provides a framework for our advocacy, events, thought leadership and media activities. The original edition set out five ideas and we are delighted that a number of these ideas have been successfully realised during the past few years.

So it is time to update our strategy to ensure it remains relevant and is in-step with the issues facing business owners, residents and professionals on the Gold Coast. Once again, the YP Gold Coast committee hopes this thought-provoking strategy will stimulate high-quality and mature public debate across the established Gold Coast business community and among up-and-coming leaders to position our City for future success.

Our committee is a passionate advocate for the future of the Gold Coast as one of Australia's greatest new cities. By working together with the State Government, Council, local businesses and the community, our collective strength, determination and knowledge can help turn great ideas into practical solutions to make the Gold Coast one of the most attractive places in Australia to live, work, learn and play.

The committee is excited to be at the forefront of shaping the future of our City!

# 2018 COMMONWEALTH GAMES



\$1.8 BILLION economic boost to the City

**FIRST TIME** Commonwealth Games held in a regional city

ource: Oueensland Government, City of Gold Coast Council

### DIGITAL CITY



FIRST COUNCIL IN AUSTRALIA to invest in an 864-core carrier-grade fibre optic network

Australia's **Fastest Publicly-owned WI-FI NETWORK** 

Source: Council of the City of Gold Co

#### HOTA, HOME OF THE ARTS



The city's **16.9HA CULTURAL PRECINCT** 

**\$60.5 MILLION HOTA GALLERY** Opening in 2021

Source: Council of the City of Gold Coast

# **OUR CITY'S BUILDING BLOCKS**

#### IN COLLABORATION WITH GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

YP Gold Coast and Civity collaborated with some of Griffith University's brightest students and the Cities Research Institute in a wide-ranging review of the City's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The strategic insights and unique perspectives provided by these future leaders of our City are summarised below and informed the development of the ideas presented in this report.

#### **PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

- ▶ Improved connectivity for the northern growth corridor with increased bus services
- Expansion of heavy rail from Varsity Lakes Station to the Gold Coast Airport
- Extension of light rail to Coolangatta and beyond
- ▶ Behavioural change required to reduce car dependency, parking demand and congestion in the City by promoting public and active transport

# HINTERLAND ACTIVATION

- Deportunities to deliver new bike and walking trails for sport, recreation and tourism purposes
- Increase environmental education to capitalise on our world class natural hinterland
- Support expansion of hinterland tourisn attractions and accommodation

#### **EVENTS AND CULTURE**

- Family-oriented events throughout the year to encourage arts and culture
- Support neighbourhood venues to enhance vibrant local communities, in turn helping small businesses
- ▶ Localised farmers markets are a key strength that provide our community with access to local produce
- Consideration of the impacts of COVID-19 for major events and public gatherings

#### **EDUCATION**

- Established university city, with three worldrecognised universities investing in new campus infrastructure and research facilities
- Ensure opportunities exist for university graduates to fill and create local jobs
- Opportunities to build the global reputation of the City as a leading research hub, especially in health sciences

#### HOUSING

- Continue to develop policy to support greater housing diversity that meets the need of current and future generations
- ▷ Increase the variety of high-quality housing for an ageing population
- Promote good quality design outcomes that embrace the Gold Coast climate and lifestyle

#### BUSINESS

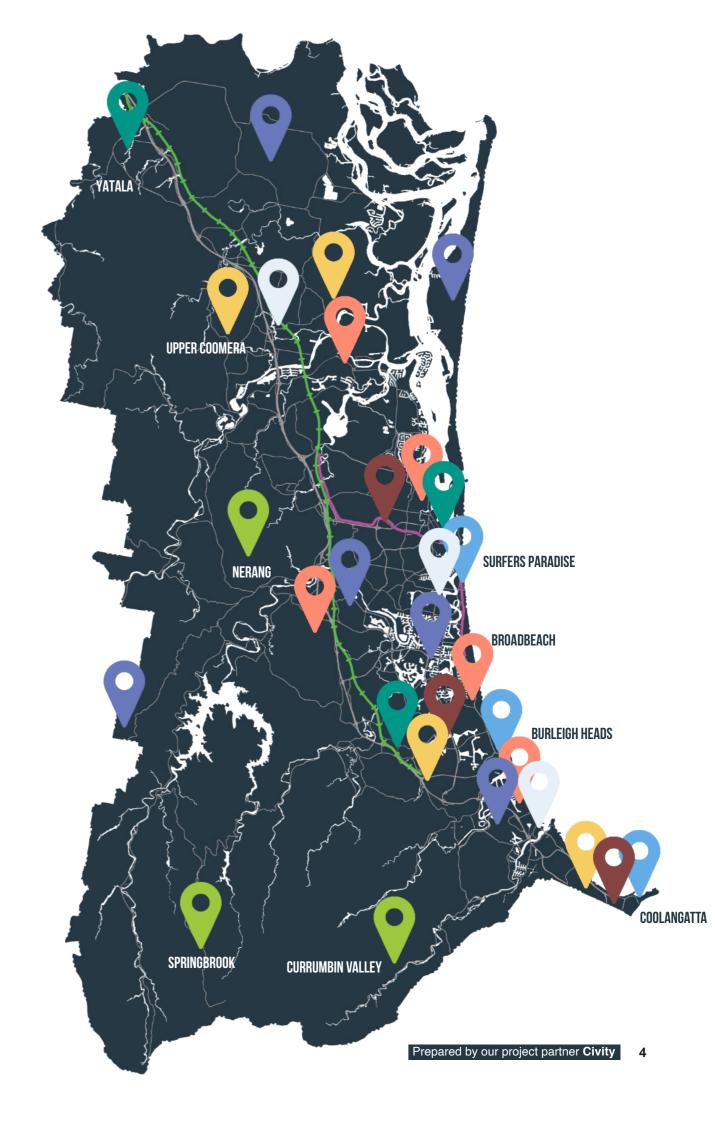
- Focus on key clusters and precincts of economic activity, recognising the linear nature of our City and the rapidly changing way in which commercial businesses operate
- ▶ Continue to invest and drive local job creation
- Plan for increased logistic and warehousing activities

#### **NIGHT ECONOMY**

- Make the city a safer place for all and address perceptions of city safety, especially within key entertainment precincts
- Protect the City's night precincts as an important part of our social fabric
- Support the development of a vibrant 24-hour City economy

# CITY RESILIENCE

- Ongoing mitigation and management of climate risks through forward and effective resilience planning
- > Reduce the impacts of waste by transitioning to a circular economy
- Ensure neighbourhoods are supported in identifying and mitigating the risks of natural hazards such as bushfires and flooding



# **GREAT IDEAS** REFRESHED YP Gold Coast I Great Ideas 2021

# THRIVING GOLD COAST BUSINESSES

- Leverage the Gold Coast's entrepreneurial spirit
- ▷ Capitalise on talent flow

# **SEIZE CITY GROWTH**

- ▶ Promote the benefits of growth
- ▷ A new Office of Nightlife
- ▷ Density done well
- > Transport for a sustainable future

# TECHNOLOGY ADVANCED

- ▷ A Technology-neoteric city
- ▷ E-Gaming
- ▷ Industry 4.0
- ▷ Drone freight connectivity



# THRIVING GOLD COAST BUSINESSES

The Gold Coast has grown to be the largest non-capital city in Australia and for a good reason. The City's thriving entrepreneurial spirit is one critical attractor, with one in five professionals on the Gold Coast owning their own business.

Under the Queensland Government's regional plan for South East Queensland (ShapingSEQ), the Gold Coast is expected to accommodate 180,000 new jobs by 2041. This projected employment growth will be critical if the City's increasing population is to have local employment opportunities and not have to commute long distances to work.

The City has already taken significant steps to ensure support is provided to achieve local job outcomes and retain talent in the City. Just like the City as a whole, our economy is maturing. With an increased focus on health, technology and knowledge-intensive industries, we are building a strong national and global reputation as an emerging place to do business in these fields.

Now more than ever, it's important we reinforce our focus on stimulating the Gold Coast economy to capitalise on the hard work that has been done to date. This means continuing to celebrate our success, sending clear and consistent messages about our economy and building our global profile as a place where small businesses and entrepreneurs flourish and grow.





The ability of any city to attract and retain talent is fundamental to building a strong and resilient economy. The COVID-19 global pandemic provides a unique opportunity for the Gold Coast to capitalise on talent flow, particularly those people looking to relocate from Greater Sydney and Melbourne.

Like other regional cities, in the past it has been difficult to create enough employment opportunities on the Gold Coast to retain talent let alone attract new talent. The trend towards remote working presents an unrivalled opportunity for the Gold Coast to encourage this inbound talent flow, allowing some of the country's brightest minds to live on the Gold Coast while working with and for national and global companies.

Given this opportunity, we need a strategy that recognises talent flow, both in and out of the City, to ensure we stay ahead of the game. The fundamentals of the strategy should be to:

- 1. Continue to develop programs that support early student integration into the local workforce
- 2. Promote our enviable lifestyle
- Continue to enhance our City's profile and reputation on the global stage
- 4. Ensure people leaving the city (outward talent flow) are our best and loudest ambassadors
- 5. Be Australia's most digitally connected regional city
- 6. Realign our City's investment attraction program to focus on converting inward talent flow into new business

We need the best and the brightest on the Gold Coast - nothing less. Ultimately, this will support a diverse range of industries and skilled workforce as we continue to build a resilient regional economy.



Our entrepreneurial spirit is what sets us apart. Our culture of entrepreneurship helps us see and solve problems, innovating to overcome barriers and creating a more robust economic base for the City.

We need to support targeted funding and co-investment solutions designed specifically for the Gold Coast, building an ecosystem of start-ups that will become the established businesses of the future. Now more than ever, new businesses and ideas must be continually developed in order for the economic prosperity of the Gold Coast to remain strong.

The Yozma co-investment model developed by the Israeli Government has proven highly successful in supporting new businesses that need to scale-up in order to target international markets. Through this model, the government acts as a coinvestor in a start-up, alongside private sector investors.

However, the key difference is the co-investing private sector parties have an option to buy out the government's stake over time, an effective and quick accelerator program. In the current environment with low interest rates, this model can also deliver returns for government, based on their co-investment, while growing new companies that create local jobs.

The Queensland Government could deliver a pilot project on the Gold Coast, adopting the Yozma model of co-investment in start-ups that support local job creation, starting with a \$40 million investment fund to be matched by private funders.

Importantly, this type of pilot project would mean more start-ups scaling, strengthening the City's entrepreneurial culture and growing the eco-system of modern small firms.

# **EMBRACE BEING A REGIONAL**

Our status as a regional city brings significant potential but considerable effort is spent trying to position the Gold Coast to compete with Australia's capital cities. As capital cities become increasingly congested and expensive places to live and work, we can strongly promote our attractive lifestyle and business opportunities as a regional city.

It is critical that our planning, reputation and future economic success acknowledges our regional city status. We need a strong unified voice that is clear on the role and function of our City, not only in the national context but the global context as opportunities from our digital connectedness come to fruition.

We must be strategic in looking for opportunities to use our regional city status to strengthen ties with the rest of the South East Queensland region as a whole and major capitals nationally. Being able to leverage opportunities through these connections is fundamental to increasing productivity and diversifying the Gold Coast economy.

While we are already leading the charge through investment in innovations centred around arts and creativity, clear and consistent messaging that reinforces the inherent reputational values of the Gold Coast is a simple yet untapped idea.

Prepared by our project partner Civity



# **SEIZE ON CITY GROWTH**

The Gold Coast's story is one that has been built on growth. In the past 20 years alone, our population has grown by more than 180,000 people and this is forecast to continue.

The Gold Coast's growth is driven by our quality of life, good food, vibrant arts and cultural scene and interesting people. These are just a few of the qualities that turn communities into great places and great places become incubators for innovation.

It's important to remember that growth isn't just about people - it's about the story of our City maturing into a great place to live and invest in business and with a vibrant and growing culture. Through smart and well-planned growth, we will continue to stand out on the world stage, attracting visitors and new residents without compromising our lifestyle and world-renowned natural environment.

However, we can't sit back and hope this happens by chance. We need to be ambitious, audacious and deliberate in our future growth story, ensuring we respect the values that have made the Gold Coast what it is today, while keeping ahead of emerging trends and building a strong and sustainable platform for future generations.



# PROMOTE THE BENEFITS OF GROWTH

All too often discussion about the Gold Coast's growth is polarised and often highly negative. However, this is a City that has grown quickly and is always changing. We cannot freeze it at any point in time, even if we wanted to.

We recognise that the root of much opposition to change is the strong connection to a place that residents of many Gold Coast suburbs have developed over many years. We understand why that's the case - we live in what many believe is one of the best places in the country. However, the City as we know it today is a product of rapid growth and that growth must continue for the City to prosper into the future.

The new restaurants, cafes, offices, revitalised parks, better digital infrastructure, new public transport and increased salaries that we enjoy as residents of the City are all, in part, a consequence of our growth.

to recognise the qualities of a place that create lovable and liveable neighbourhoods. That said, we should also be prepared to rise to the challenge of managing growth so we preserve these qualities in existing places and apply them in emerging communities.

Of course, not all growth is good growth and we need to continue

To overcome the divide about our City's future growth trajectory, we would like to work with Council in developing a bold and long-term growth strategy. It needs to look beyond the life of a City Plan and electoral cycles and reimagine the future of the City in 2050.

The process for its development must be collaborative, one where residents and business can engage positively and proactively about the future of the City. A clear long-term plan for our future growth, based on extensive and effective community and business engagement, will provide a solid foundation for the City that is economically viable, socially responsible and environmentally sustainable.

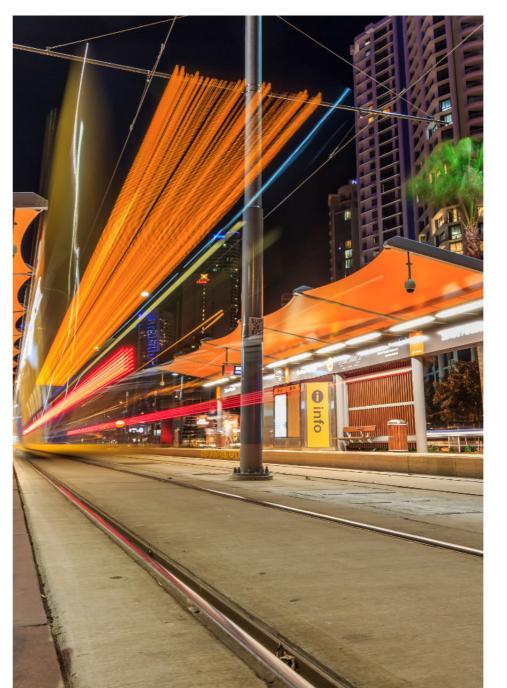


The Gold Coast, known to many for the glitter strip of Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach, has a fantastic nightlife and increasingly diverse night-time economy across the whole City. However, there is a great opportunity to capitalise even more on this economy and create a more safe, vibrant, viable and well managed nightlife.

# Creating an Office of Nightlife is one way of facilitating these outcomes in a coordinated and consistent approach.

An Office of Nightlife, already established by other cities around the world, should be established as a new division within the City of Gold Coast to support, guide and help deliver the establishment of new grassroots venues and cultural spaces across the City.

A key function of the Office of Nightlife would be to reduce unnecessary red tape, working with local businesses and residents to apply fair and proportionate enforcement and work to improve the quality of life for all Gold Coasters through a vibrant night-time economy.



# - C DENSITY DONE WELL

The Gold Coast is bordered by New South Wales to the south, Springbrook National Park to the west, Logan River to the north and the Coral Sea to the east. These geographical features dictate that much of our future growth must be accommodated through infill development within our existing urban footprint.

ShapingSEQ projects that the City will need to responsibly manage growth of an additional 351,000 people by 2041, requiring approximately 158,000 new dwellings. Delivering high-quality infill development should be the standard for new development in the City.

It is important to recognise that density is not an absolute and there is a very wide range of densities across the spectrum. In some areas, high-rise buildings are normal, while in others they would be out of place.

Typically, neighbourhoods become more dense over time and the job of good planning is to ensure that any proposal for new development that increases density is carefully assessed for all its likely impacts and that the highest standards of design are required. Density done well can help make places more liveable and vibrant, while poorly designed developments will have the opposite effect.

We want to work with city planners to create planning schemes and design guidelines that reflect the views of existing residents and those who might live here in the future. We support the thorough but timely assessment of development proposals and an expectation of high design standards.

# TRANSPORT FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Like many cities around the world, private car travel has shaped much of our City's growth. As a regional city, we have made significant improvements to our public transport in recent times, with the Gold Coast Light Rail leading to a 50% increase in overall public transport patronage in the City.

If the Gold Coast is to become a truly multi-modal City, more needs to be done including increasing investment in active transport solutions, improving public transport beyond the main coastal spine and developing initiatives that support travel behavioural change.

Connecting our existing entertainment precincts like HOTA to accommodation precincts like Surfers Paradise through a walkable network will create a better overall experience of the City, for both residents and visitors alike.

The City has a favourable climate and relatively flat landscape that together offer ideal conditions for more active travel, especially within and around our many urban villages.

New technologies are also allowing us to support 'mobility as a service' through e-bikes and ride-sharing, which reduces congestion and the need for expensive road infrastructure.



# TECHNOLOGY ADVANCED

Technology is rapidly changing the way in which we live and work. The Gold Coast already has some of the foundations but we need to strategically position ourselves to compete globally with other cities that have embraced new technologies that improve quality of life.

Our existing infrastructure provides world-class digital connectivity. Alongside industry clusters and our research-based universities, we have the foundations to evolve into a globally recognised regional city built on advanced technology.

As the internet of things continues to shape how we live, the ways in which cities function will continue to evolve. The Gold Coast needs to be at the forefront of that evolution, through new manufacturing technologies, transport solutions or tourism and leisure opportunities. Our City's youthfulness means we can nimbly pivot as opportunities arise, capitalising on what will likely be the drivers for the economy into the future.

# O- DRONES AND FREIGHT

As freight and home deliveries grow rapidly, drones provide a real opportunity to increase the efficiency of freight deliveries, especially in linear cities such as the Gold Coast.

While current technological limitations may mean that drone parcel deliveries are likely to be limited to smaller catchments, this is a space where technology is changing quickly and capabilities are increasing rapidly. Logistics companies able to adopt drone freight technology will benefit from reduced transportation expenses, both in terms of capital investments in vehicles and associated ongoing maintenance costs.

The key barrier to this idea becoming a reality is not the technology of drones, but the complexity and implications of drone use, particularly from a regulatory perspective.

We support the creation of an inter-governmental taskforce to test initial ways the regulatory framework can be developed to support the use of drones for local freight and logistic deliveries.

The taskforce will need to consider the areas in the City where drones can be safely used without impacting existing airspace users, the types of users and the possible risks involved in the use of drones for freight delivery. Critically, the use of drones for goods and freight will also require new infrastructure, which we should be exploring now while new regulatory approaches are investigated.



In an industry that has seen exponential growth around the world, video gaming is taking society by storm. In 2020, Electronic Sports (E-Sports) alone was estimated to generate \$1.49 billion in revenue, while online gaming (not gambling!) is valued at more than \$100 billion. The video gaming industry gets a larger audience watching online videos and live streams than major cable networks and subscription services such as Netflix, HBO and Hulu. With the rollout of our own fibre-optic network, the Gold Coast is in a prime position to engage with the 6 billion people worldwide that actively game every year.

The construction of an E-Sports stadium on the Gold Coast would welcome consumers and enthusiasts from all around the world to our City - physically and virtually - just like any other major sporting venue. An E-Sports stadium can also serve as a medium-sized stadium for the Gold Coast for 10.000 - 15.000 people, catering for smaller audiences than our current sports stadiums but larger than our concert venues. This intermediate capacity allows for multi-industry uses such as gigs, performances and presentations to create a sustainable multi-

With a new venue of this scale, the City will be well positioned to attract both local and international talent and continue to encourage the creative industries in our City that support this sector.

It is critical that any new stadium is strategically located to allow for detailed precinct planning to be undertaken alongside construction of the stadium. It needs to be connected to highfrequency public transport, the fibre-optic network and existing



Industry 4.0 is seen as the next industrial revolution, with the introduction of machine-learning techniques to automate, simulate, analyse and augment manufacturing processes.

Industry 4.0 has the opportunity to influence many sectors that already exist on the Gold Coast, such as health and medical research, sport and film, manufacturing including microbreweries, textiles, space technology and additive manufacturing with 3D printing. As a City, we need to continue to support these businesses as their success becomes the City's success.

Work is already under way on better understanding what Industry 4.0 means for existing Gold Coast business and their supply chains. However, there is a real opportunity for all levels of government to use the Gold Coast as a pilot project to support business wanting to digitise and improve their operations.

There also needs to be a fundamental shift in how we plan for these new types of industrial activities. Traditionally, industry activities have been located in key clusters along major transport routes based on their need to have access to freight and ensure they are separated from residential areas.

The space and location requirements for Industry 4.0 operations are very different - take modern micro-breweries with clean operations and onsite customer transactions. We need to ensure our planning policies reflect these changes, while making sure they don't impact negatively on liveability.



neoteric adjective: new or modern; advocating for new ideas.

Backed by a Council-owned, fibre-optic, high-speed internet network, the City is in a unique position to continue to drive technology-leading decisions.

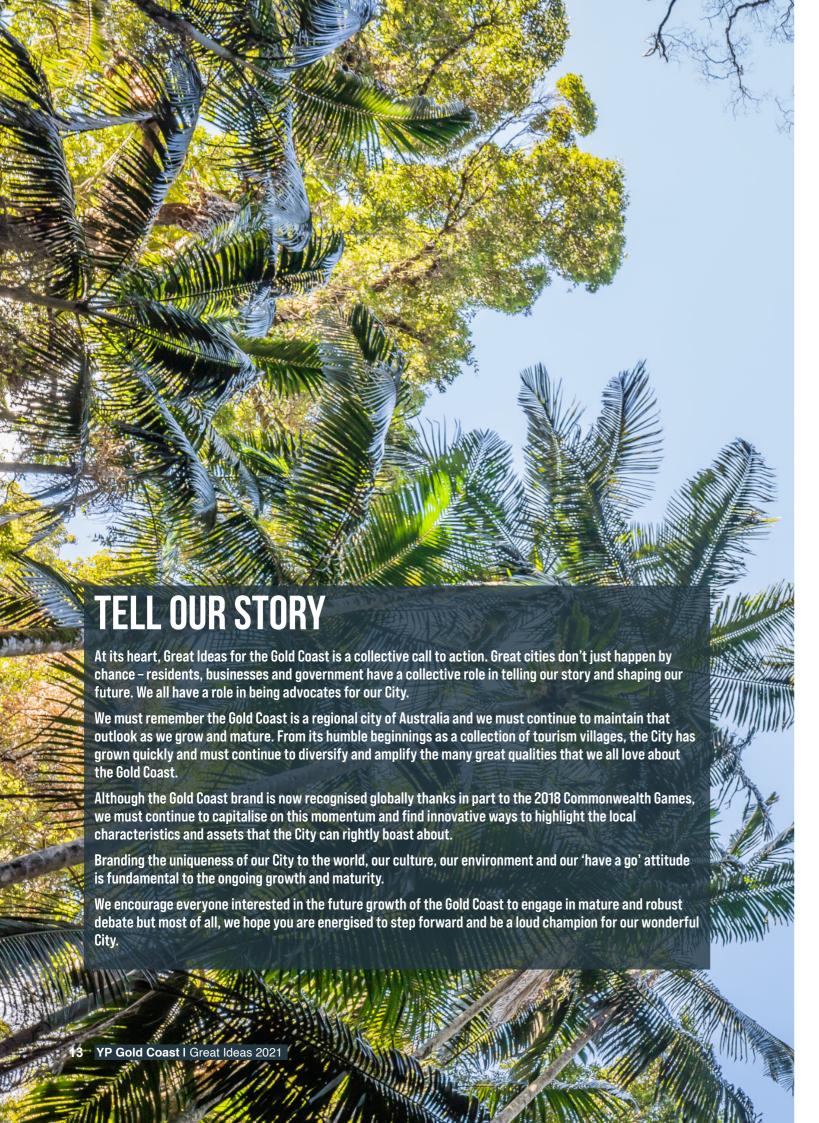
To be a technology-neoteric city is to be at the forefront of rapidly evolving technology advancements. That's not to say the Gold Coast needs to be the next Silicon Valley but we should excel in creating opportunities for the people and businesses of the City that value technology and the efficiencies and opportunities it can create.

Advanced technology has the possibility to create so many opportunities for the Gold Coast and it is important that as the City grows, so does our commitment to technology. This means it should be at the forefront of our City's strategic plan, government strategies and our overall City vision.

This is necessary to ensure that both government and business have technology at the forefront of investment decisions moving forward, ensuring the City is ahead other cities competing in this

Technology empowers a multitude of opportunities for the City and being able and ready will put the Gold Coast on the world

YP Gold Coast I Great Ideas 2021 Prepared by our project partner **Civity** 



# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

#### In partnership with Griffith University

YP Gold Coast is excited to have worked with the Cities Research Institute at Griffith University in the development of this publication. The Cities Research Institute is Australia's largest research facility focused on all aspects of cities and processes of urbanisation.

A wide range of researchers and students participated in a thought-provoking workshop held in November 2020. Many of the ideas and inputs from that workshop have shaped the strategic direction and ideas presented in this publication.

Contemporary cities are increasingly complex and connected places and that's what makes them great and also presents them with challenges that are complex and interconnected. YP Gold Coast's partnership with Griffith University allows us to be at the forefront of new ideas that will shape the Gold Coast into a more prosperous and liveable City.



#### **YP Gold Coast Sponsors**

YP Gold Coast would like to thank our sponsors for their support of this report and for their broader sponsorship of the YP Gold Coast's events and advocacy efforts.

Our sponsors are leading Gold Coast businesses that are future focused and outcome driven. Their combined investment underpins our ongoing advocacy and business networking activities, enabling us to grow our impact. This collectively allows us to create a better Gold Coast with unparalleled opportunity, which hopefully motivates, inspires and connects future city leaders.

We are also proud to be working with Civity, our advocacy partner in the preparation of this report.



















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# **GROWING TOGETHER**

#### A message from Civity

At Civity, we turn complex urban challenges into opportunities, guiding the Gold Coast to position itself competitively in a global network of interconnected places.

The Gold Coast is one of Australia's fastest growing cities but this doesn't mean we need to compromise the loveable and liveable qualities of our City. Shaping well-designed and responsive growth of the Gold Coast is at heart of our modern rationale.

The Gold Coast is at a turning point in its evolution, providing a rare opportunity to reimagine the future. We are delighted to have partnered with both YP Gold Coast and Griffith University in the preparation of this report. We hope the ideas presented stimulate and encourage debate among the Gold Coast community as this discussion is fundamental to our future success.

We are excited to be growing with the Gold Coast and see a thriving future of rich opportunities in our own back yard.

