
ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

CCL 25/05/2021 – ADOPTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Ordinary Council Meeting

25 May 2021



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CCL 25/05/2021 – ADOPTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ITEM-42 **Attachment A:** Economic Development Strategy 2021

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Ordinary Council Meeting

25 May 2021



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Economic Development Strategy

2021



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City of
Newcastle

Welcome

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding several long, thin wooden sticks over a large, shallow, circular wooden fire pit. The pit contains a fire, and smoke is rising from it. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and a patterned headband. The background is blurred, showing a natural outdoor setting with green foliage in the foreground.

Acknowledgment

We recognise and respect the cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We acknowledge the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of resistance.

The City of Newcastle reiterates its commitment to address disadvantages and to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community to attain justice.

Smoking ceremony held at the new City Administration Centre building at 12 Stewart Avenue. The ceremony also included; Wakakulang Dance Troupe, Aboriginal catering and a special guest talk by artist Saretta Fielding.

Enquiries

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Executive Summary

The City of Newcastle's (CN) Economic Development Strategy (EDS) 2021 offers a transformative perspective to economic development with a deliberate people-centred and place-led approach. Our view is that the success of our local and regional economy is built on the talent, skills and ingenuity of our people. These skills lead to innovation, creativity and ultimately the formation of new jobs and investment. Our Strategy seeks to build a skilled and innovative community supported by key city infrastructure and enhanced by a vibrant lifestyle.

Historically, it has been assumed that people follow jobs. This is changing. Jobs are beginning to follow people. The improvements to communications and technology, combined with the increasingly service-based economy of the 21st century mean that many jobs are no longer anchored to a location. This trend has been further accelerated by COVID-19. This is changing migration patterns and offers an opportunity for Newcastle to strengthen its economy.

Newcastle has a range of economic opportunities surrounding the city centre, which are described as the Innovation Arc in this Strategy. The Innovation Arc is defined as the catalyst areas identified in the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan. These catalyst sites include Williamstown (Newcastle Airport), Port of Newcastle (and surrounding industrial lands), University of Newcastle Callaghan, John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct, Hunter Park/Broadmeadow and the City Centre. To these we add Summerhill Waste Management Centre. Each of these areas is aligned to an industry, many of which have received significant government or private-sector investment. Importantly, they provide the right circumstances for new enterprises to establish and scale, as well as for new talent to locate and create new opportunities.

To enable the Innovation Arc, a skilled and diverse labour supply has become the most critical input for enterprise to enable both local and global competitiveness.¹ The service-based economy

of the 21st century demands a skilled workforce with research indicating nine out of every ten new jobs will require post-school qualifications.² Consequently, this presents a challenge for the skills base of the Newcastle population, where almost 50% of our people do not have a post-school qualification and less than 15% of our population are skilled international migrants.

The CN is responding to these trends in this Economic Development Strategy. Our approach is based on a framework called 'New Local' which advocates for a people-centred and place-led approach to economic development, and reimagines the role of local government.

First and foremost, our Strategy will invest in people, their skills, their networks and their investments. Our delivery programs will provide a suite of opportunities for local residents and seek to attract new talent to the city to fill existing skill gaps. Our programs will be inclusive and, in many cases, targeted to minority populations.

Our Vision: Strengthen existing and create new economic opportunities for all in the 2020s.

Our Mission: Empower, retain and attract people with skills for the future.

Horizon: The Strategy targets ten-year outcomes for the Newcastle economy. These outcomes will be achieved through four-year delivery programs and one-year action plans.

Review: The Strategy will be refreshed every four years (next in 2025). Action plans will be updated annually.

Governance: The delivery programs and actions will be reported annually to CN's Strategy & Innovation Advisory Committee, who provide an important advisory role to the implementation of the Strategy.

Our Collaboration: Our Strategy seeks to supplement the work of the economic development ecosystem in Newcastle. We have maintained the vision from the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan, with all Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) catalyst areas being identified with the skills that will enable their success. We have identified Summerhill Waste Management Centre and the circular economy as new emerging opportunities.

Our Strategy also articulates that the City of Newcastle will not actively pursue a business attraction approach. The City of Newcastle will seek to supplement the work of Regional NSW and the Business Attraction Committee rather than lead our own business attraction processes. Research increasingly demonstrates that the marginal rate of return is greater in investing in existing local businesses and enabling them to grow, rather than incentivising big corporates to relocate to the region. Our view is also that business attraction is more effectively delivered at a regional level, where the LGA boundaries are not considered.

Our Approach: Our Strategy has taken an evidence-driven approach to identifying priorities, establishing delivery programs and proposing actions. We have engaged with and implemented the New Local framework to inform our Strategy development. New Local is a series of ten principles, which provide a roadmap to restart, renew and reboot our local economy in a post COVID-19 and climate emergency world. Developed by international experts, New Local advocates for a people-centred and place-led approach to economic development, which builds resilient and regenerative communities, cities, towns and mainstreets. The ten principles have been applied in the Newcastle context and underpin all our work.

Our Strategy also fronts up to the challenges facing our local community. These challenges have been informed by the CSIRO's global megatrend research, which identified significant shifts in

environmental, economic and social conditions that will play out over the coming decades. Our challenges have been disaggregated into four categories: population challenges, industry transition, climate emergency and economic impacts exacerbated due to COVID-19.

In developing this Economic Development Strategy, extensive stakeholder and expert engagement has been undertaken. This included workshops with our Strategy & Innovation Advisory Committee, the City Taskforce and representatives from the business, innovation and community sectors. Engagement also included targeted conversations with population groups most impacted by the COVID-19 economic recession including young people and international students.

Our Priorities: Our detailed and evidence-driven approach has led to four priorities being identified in this Strategy – Skilled People, Innovative People, City Shaping and Vibrant City. Two priorities focus on investing in people and ensuring that the population of Newcastle is skilled and innovative. The remaining two priorities focus on enhancing the foundations of our city, which enable people to create their own opportunities in Newcastle. For each priority there are a number of four-year delivery programs, and then a suite of clear, timely and measurable actions that City of Newcastle and partners will implement.

¹ Buss 2014.

² Goldstein 2018; Heath 2020.



Skilled People:

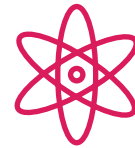
The Skilled People Priority is about enabling and expanding these human capabilities to strengthen and drive existing and future opportunities in Newcastle. This will be delivered through partnerships with business, industry and local tertiary institutions. Importantly, Skilled People seeks to integrate marginal population groups into all of the delivery programs and recognise the important uplift they can provide for the local economy.

Our vision is to see Newcastle strengthen a local skills-based labour market where job seekers, employers and educators focus on the skills required to do a job, rather than years of experience. Government, industry and business would see widespread adoption of skills-based hiring and targeted training practices.

Novocastrians will be known as a skilled people.

Delivery programs include:

NewSkills	Research, promotion, funding and advocacy to enable local residents to gain new skills.
Local Business People	New communication channels, partnerships (Business Improvement Associations) and data insights to support local business people with the skills, knowledge and networks to grow and expand their local operations.
Talent Attraction	Targeted campaigns, both domestically and internationally, to encourage talented and skilled people to move to Newcastle.
Inclusive Newcastle	Incentives for businesses to improve their environmental, social and corporate governance practices.
International Networks	Support for local business people to attract international skilled migrants and new partnerships with international business networks.



Innovative People:

The Innovative People Priority is about increasing capacity for local residents to solve problems and generate new economic growth. Enabling the right conditions for people to experiment and invest in change helps to diversify and differentiate our economy. Organisations and enterprises with a higher degree of novelty are more resilient to disruption and are typically more globally competitive.

Our vision is to see Newcastle create a supportive environment that enables local residents to be innovative in all jobs and workplaces across the city.

Novocastrians will be known as an innovative people.

Delivery programs include:

Innovation Ecosystem	Provision of physical spaces, information, governance and training to support all entrepreneurs and innovators to flourish across the city.
Living Lab	A city-wide platform to solve problems, prototype and validate new ideas for commercialisation.
Inclusive Innovation	Spread awareness of innovation resources and tools to all sectors of the local economy.
Scaling Innovation	Dedicated programming to support local innovators to scale their operations to national and global markets.



City Shaping

The City Shaping Priority is about continuing the transformation of Newcastle towards increased economic diversification and improved amenities. Newcastle has emerged as Australia's leading post-industrial Gateway City. It is managing a transition from a heavy industrial past to a more diverse and innovative knowledge and services-led economy, while still retaining strengths from its industrial capability, such as engineering and manufacturing skills. This positions Newcastle effectively to leverage growth sectors of the new economy.

Our vision is that Newcastle emerges as a global city that enables business competitiveness and attracts people to live and invest.

Newcastle will be known as a city where you can create your own opportunity.

Delivery programs include:

Strategic Planning and Development	Support for strategic land use planning to enable the Innovation Arc and distributed local economic centres' growth.
Digital Infrastructure	Deployment of the City Digital Corridor, enabling next-generation networks, including Internet of Things and 5G, and expanding the Living Lab testbed.
Local Capital and Investment	Improving the connection of SMEs to local finance through awareness of options and the nurturing of more grassroots investors and alternative financing models.
Strategic Government Relations Advocacy	Development of staged, evidence-based strategic advocacy plans, renewed support for regional collaboration initiatives and continued engagement with the national Gateway Cities Alliance.
Circular Economy	Development of a strategic framework to enable local support for the transformative and productive potential of the circular economy.
City Analytics	Research and data analytics program to identify underlying local social and economic dynamics. Embeds evaluation into all of our programs.



Vibrant City

The Vibrant City Priority is about enhancing the sectors that drive city vibrancy through activation, performance, interaction and cultural consumption. The City of Newcastle plays an important role in nurturing a vibrant city through facilitating major events, providing support and direction for the tourism sector and managing the city's cultural and civic venues.

Our vision is for Newcastle to be a city where things are happening, day and night. It is a city where you enjoy living, working and playing.

Newcastle will be a city of loveable places, with a sense of surprise, delight and wonder. It will be locally distinctive and globally iconic.

Delivery programs include:

City Activation	Strategic approach to Special Business Rate funding and City of Newcastle grants and sponsorships to enable the community to drive and shape a vibrant city.
Newcastle After Dark	Implementation of the Newcastle After Dark Strategy to promote and build the economy.
Visitor Economy	Implementation of the Destination Management Plan.
City Events	Development of a City Events Action Plan to provide a holistic and strategic approach to the entire events lifecycle including principles and guidelines for identifying, attracting, promoting and evaluating events.
Multiculturalism and Diversity	Celebrations of diversity through meaningful conversations and culturally focused programs and events.
Creative Economy	Development of a formal cultural precinct within the Newcastle CBD.



Vision:

**Strengthen
existing and
creating new
opportunities
for all in the
2020s.**

Summerhill

Industry Focus - Circular Economy

Skills - Advanced Manufacturing, STEMM Skills, Waste Management

Economic Opportunities

Summerhill Waste Management Centre is transforming to become a resource recovery hub and green energy precinct.

Government Investment

CN has funded the development of an organics facility at Summerhill, which may act as a catalyst for further investment.

Callaghan

Industry Focus - STEMM

Skills - Research, Innovation, Project Management, Digital Literacy, Communications

Economic Opportunities

The University of Newcastle is developing a \$207 million Regional Transformation Hub within the Hunter STEMM Precinct.

Government Investment

State Government Development Approval has recently been granted.

Williamstown

Industry Focus - Aerospace/Defence

Skills - STEMM, Aerospace Engineering, Advanced Manufacturing

Economic Opportunities

Astra Aerolab, which is co-located in Newcastle Airport and the RAAF Williamstown Base, will become Australia's pre-eminent space for innovation in aviation, defence and aerospace-related manufacturing, maintenance, research and education.

Government Investment

NSW Government announced a Special Activation Precinct (SAP) at Williamstown as a part of its 20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW. The Federal Government has committed funding to extend the runway to enable Code E aircraft. This will expand the opportunity for international flights in / out of Newcastle

Hunter Park

Industry Focus - Sports and Entertainment Precinct

Skills - Event Management, Sports Science, Arts and Entertainment Management, Hotel Management, Retail.

Economic Opportunities

Hunter Park has the opportunity to become a nationally significant sporting and entertainment destination incorporating a best in class entertainment centre and mixed leisure and swimming facility. The new urban precinct will incorporate open space, transport infrastructure, new employment opportunities and residential development.

Government Investment

Infrastructure Australia has identified Hunter Park as a nationally significant infrastructure project in its 2021 Infrastructure Priority List

John Hunter Hospital

Industry Focus - Health Innovation

Skills - Biomedical Science, Public Health, Communications

Economic Opportunities

The John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct will deliver updated and enhanced facilities providing a larger facility to meet the demands of the Greater Newcastle, Hunter New England and northern NSW Regions. The precinct will encourage partnership with key health, education and research partners.

Government Investment

The NSW Government has committed \$780 million for Stage One of the John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct. Further funding for Stage Two is being considered.

City Centre

Industry Focus - Innovation/Education/Tourism

Skills - Research, Prototyping, Advanced Manufacturing, Education, Communications, Marketing

Economic Opportunities

A business district in the West End; and education/innovation precinct in the Civic Precinct; and arts/tourism opportunities in the East End and Civic Precincts.

Government Investment

All levels of government have invested in the deployment of smart city infrastructure throughout Newcastle City Centre. This infrastructure underpins the city-scale testbed for technology development and prototyping.

Newcastle Port

Industry Focus - Renewable Energy/Hydrogen

Skills - STEMM, Project Management, Supply-Chain Management, International Relations

Economic Opportunities

The existing port infrastructure has capacity to generate port-associated industry and regional/local employment opportunities. Renewable energy/ hydrogen has been identified.

Government Investment

A Renewable Energy Zone has been identified in the Hunter / Central Coast.

Our City

In 2030, Newcastle will be a smart, liveable and sustainable global city

We will celebrate our cultural heritage and history, protect our natural environment and support our people to thrive and prosper. As an inclusive community, we will strive for equal rights and access for all. We will face challenges with integrity, innovation and creativity. Support business growth, education and employment opportunities. We will be a leading lifestyle city with vibrant public places and spaces, connected transport networks and unique urbanism. This will be achieved within a framework of open and collaborative leadership.

Vision Definitions

Smart - is a city that puts its community at its centre; enjoys smart and digitally connected public and urban infrastructure; and works to develop a thriving ecosystem to drive innovation and creativity.

Liveable - are the factors that influence our quality of life, including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment and recreation possibilities.

Sustainable - are both environmental and financial sustainability. Sustainability is about meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Inclusive - is used to reflect the community's desire to not just be welcoming and open, but to actively recognise and embrace differences.

Community - refers to everyone; residents, workers, businesses, visitors and stakeholders.

Newcastle Urbanism - (refer to City of Newcastle's Local Planning Strategy) is the built environment that addresses public spaces, is scaled for pedestrians, and respects culture, heritage and place. Urban form that encourages safe and activated places; promotes active and healthy communities and provides opportunities for social interaction.

The City of Newcastle is revising its Community Strategic Plan. Newcastle 2040 will soon be considered by Council.

Newcastle at a glance

Our Population

Newcastle LGA population 2020: **167,363**
Population by 2041: **199,680**



Greater Newcastle/Hunter region population 2019: **747,381**
Population by 2041: **863,131**

Source: ABS 2021a

Our People

Largest age cohort:
20-24 year olds
(about 8.8% of total population)
Estimated annual population growth rate:
1%



3.5%
of our population identify
as Aboriginal or Torres
Strait Islander

Source: NSW DPIE 2020, ABS 2020a

Our Workforce

102,800 jobs in Newcastle
Over **65,000** Newcastle residents
have formal professional qualifications



Largest industry sector by employment:
**Health Care and
Social Assistance**
18,880 jobs, or 19.4%

Source: ABS 2017a, ABS 2017d, Remplan 2021.

Our Economy

Value of building approvals in 2019-20
\$1.15 billion



\$18.2 billion
Newcastle's Gross Regional
Product (2019, nominal)



Newcastle is home to:
80% of the Hunter's office space
30% of developed industrial space

Source: Remplan 2021, City of Newcastle

Our Economic Journey



Lycett, Joseph, approximately 1775-1828



Looking across the silo wharf from Honeysuckle 1935, Gold Collection, Newcastle Regional Library



BHP Newcastle Steelworks closure: final walkout, 30th September 1999, Newcastle Libraries Collection



Pre 1700's

The Awabakal and Worimi peoples are descendants of the traditional custodians of the land situated within the Newcastle LGA, including wetlands, rivers, creeks and coastal environments. It is known that their heritage and cultural ties to Newcastle date back tens of thousands of years. Muluubinba is the traditional name for the people. Its name is attributed to a local sea fern that was traditionally harvested as a food crop⁴. Large numbers of clan groups were known to have lived along the river and coast, around the wetlands and hinterlands. Living a settled life managing and farming their lands according to their cultural and family obligations and the lore, carefully moving with the seasons and for ceremonial necessities.

The Awabakal people were the first peoples in the world to recognise the use of Nikkin (coal) as a fuel source.

⁴ Hunter 1998.

⁵ City of Newcastle 2020a.

⁶ op cit.

1797

The year 1797 marked the first time British colonists came ashore on the banks of the Hunter River. The abundance of coal in the area was immediately apparent, and over the next two years several ships sailed from Sydney to the Hunter to collect coal. By 1799, sufficient stockpiles had been gathered to ship overseas - thus Newcastle coal became the first commodity export from a British colonised Australia⁵.

Surviving what was the complete upheaval of traditional life with the onset of settlement, the survival and growth of Muluubinba, and then what became Newcastle, can be attributed to Awabakal and Worimi peoples. Their intricate knowledge of the flora and fauna of this country was fundamental in the survival of those early settlers. The securing of food, water, bush medicines and building materials were vital in the establishment of the colony in Newcastle.

1800's

Newcastle's coal industry grew in importance during the 1800s and sea transport to Sydney became more frequent. By the latter part of the century, schools, churches, harbour infrastructure, a rudimentary roads network, sewerage, street lighting, telegraph services and other municipal buildings had been constructed. The populations of Wallsend, Merewether, Stockton, Tighes Hill, Carrington, Lambton and Hamilton mining villages grew rapidly, accelerated by the opening of a direct rail line to Sydney in 1896⁶.

1900s

Due to the abundance of coal in the region, BHP opened a steelworks in the city in 1915. This facility dominated Newcastle's economy for much of the 20th century and was interlinked with the city's growth. The steelworks also marked Newcastle as a key centre for heavy industry and manufacturing: in 1961 manufacturing jobs peaked at over 39% of total employment in the city, with the metalworking, founding and engineering industries alone accounting for over 26% of the total workforce⁷. The BHP steelworks was by far the largest single employer in this sector. Between 1960 and 1975, the number of jobs at the steelworks never fell below 10,000⁸. This reliance on heavy industry exposed Newcastle to the structural decline of manufacturing in developed countries over the past 50 years. Due to trends towards largescale production, declining international shipping costs, trade policy changes and the rise of the Asian tiger economies, Newcastle's industrial economy has declined since the 1970s

In 1999, the BHP steelworks closed and, as of 2016, the manufacturing industry's share of employment had fallen to 5.9%⁹. However, Newcastle continues to have strengths in the fields of engineering linked to energy production, which may provide new opportunities for the future.

⁷ ABS 1962

⁸ Kirkwood 2019.

⁹ ABS 2017b.

¹⁰ ABS 2021.

¹¹ ABS 2020c.

2000s to Today

Newcastle's economy has changed significantly in the past two decades, with the growth of digital technology, service industries and advanced manufacturing industries. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were many indications of strength and growth for Newcastle's local economy. For example, between 2015 and 2019, the total number of operating businesses increased from 12,475 to 14,312. In the year ended 30 June 2019, the value of building approvals was more than \$814 million, well above long-term averages. In the same year, only three local businesses reported insolvencies related to "economic conditions", which again was well below longer-term trends¹⁰. In January 2020, immediately prior to the pandemic outbreak, the official unemployment rate in the Newcastle region was at a historic low of 3.5%¹¹. The continued challenge for the city's development is how to transition to a more diversified, resilient and sustainable local economy. The growth of local world-class research institutions, such as the University of Newcastle, CSIRO and the John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct, coupled with a vibrant entrepreneurial sector centred on renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, health technologies, defence and aerospace, as well as the creative industries, are new and growing opportunities. Newcastle's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the rise of more local economic networks, may offer further opportunities for transformation. The role of this Economic Development Strategy is to enact a plan for Newcastle's next chapter of its economic progression.

Our Global Commitment

The SDGs underpin our work

In September 2015, Australia was one of 193 countries to commit to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (the SDGs). The City of Newcastle has been proactive in the strategic implementation and action on the SDGs since this commitment. Central to this has been the implementation of the SDGs in our core Strategy documents.

The Economic Development Strategy will provide vision and delivery programs for the Newcastle economy over the next 10 years. Consequently, the global language of the SDGs has been applied, not just at a goal level but embedded as targets and indicators throughout this Strategy. The City of Newcastle has an essential role in educating and leading the achievement of the SDGs for the region. The core alignment and implementation has been outlined as follows.



The SDGs and the Economic Development Strategy:

SDG and targets	How it is addressed in the Economic Development Strategy
4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	SDG 4 Quality Education – Ensure inclusive and equitable high-quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. A skills-based labour market is one of the priorities of this Strategy. A number of programs will provide local residents with opportunities to gain new skills.
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. The vision of this Strategy is to create new opportunities for all. Every program is designed to be inclusive and to remove barriers to access.
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	SDG 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation. Targets 9.4 and 9.5, address upgrades to infrastructure, with a focus on sustainability and enhancing scientific research. The Innovation Economy and City-Shaping Initiatives (including advocacy and digital infrastructure) are priorities of this Strategy. City analytics incorporating scientific research is embedded throughout the Strategy.
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. All of the targets for this SDG directly relate to the reduction of waste and the growth of a circular economy. This Strategy identifies the economic development opportunity of the circular economy and proposes more work to be taken both by the City of Newcastle and across industry.
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development. This Strategy is centred around a collaborative approach to implementation. By virtue, it follows that our actions will require partnerships to achieve them.
13 CLIMATE ACTION 	SDG 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Green transition – investments must accelerate the decarbonisation of all aspects of our economy. This will lead to the development of green jobs and sustainable and inclusive growth The Strategy supports the detailed work already undertaken in the Climate Action Plan. The Strategy supports the transition of our existing skills base to green jobs and highlights the opportunity of a Renewable Energy Zone in Newcastle

Our Collaborative Approach

The City of Newcastle's Economic Development Strategy offers a transformative approach to economic development with a deliberate people-centred and place-led approach. Our Strategy seeks to build a skilled and innovative people supported by key city infrastructure and enhanced by a vibrant lifestyle. This section details the approach we have taken to identify priorities, establish delivery programs and propose actions.

The section begins by outlining the context of our Economic Development Strategy. Firstly, the Strategy's relationship with the City of Newcastle's Community Strategic Plan and other strategic work. Secondly, the regional context

including outlines of key State Government strategies and a map of the key actors in the local economic development ecosystem.

Following is a description of the New Local framework. New Local has been fundamental to our approach and provides context for a number of our proposed delivery programs.

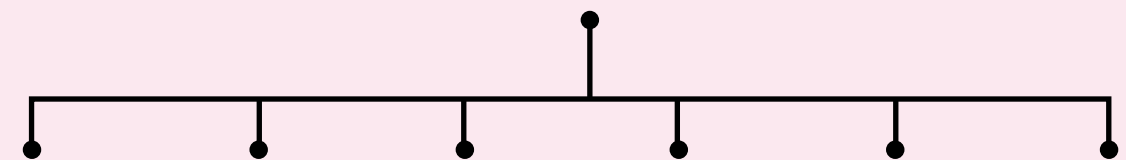
This section then details the challenges facing the Newcastle economy from a population, industry transition, climate emergency and COVID-19 viewpoint. The section concludes by summarising the extensive stakeholder and community engagement we have undertaken to develop this Strategy.



Community Strategic Plan
2018-2028



Economic Development Strategy



Newcastle After Dark
2018-2022



Events Plan
2016-2019



Destination Management Plan
2021-2025



Smart City Strategy
2017-2021



Local Social Strategy
2021-2025



Live Music Strategy
2016-2019

Regional Context

The Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 are the key regional economic development planning documents that impact the City of Newcastle. Published by the NSW Government in 2016 and 2018 respectively, these plans are intended to be the blueprint to deliver future economic and population growth in the region. The Hunter Regional Plan provides an overarching strategic framework for land use plans, development proposals and infrastructure funding decisions. The Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 aims to achieve the vision set by the Hunter Regional Plan but contains a more detailed action plan and has a tighter geographic focus on the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) and four neighbouring LGAs.

City of Newcastle's Economic Development Strategy aims to translate and align the strategic visions for the region into a local context, and to assert Newcastle as the vibrant metropolitan heart of Australia's leading regional economy. Both the Hunter Regional Plan and the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan identify Newcastle as a key economic hub for northern NSW, and an attractive lifestyle city with the following benefits:

A dynamic and entrepreneurial business culture, with a globally competitive economy and leadership in smart city technology, cleantech industries and renewable energy initiatives.

The vibrancy of a metropolitan lifestyle with green suburban community living, and easy access to beaches and bushland.

World-class infrastructure, including a deep-water port, international airport, university, the John Hunter Hospital Precinct and large-scale development plans across the region.

A culture of change, innovation and renewal.

There is a recurring narrative throughout the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 strongly advocating for regional collaboration across council boundaries and levels of government. As stated in the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan: "Metropolitan cities succeed and perform best when all tiers of government collaborate and work together with business, industry and community to deliver a shared vision for their city"¹². The City of Newcastle will seek to embrace the collaboration in all of our delivery programs. Our view is that LGA boundaries are irrelevant to economic development. Expanding economic opportunities in Newcastle benefits the other Lower Hunter Councils and vice versa.

The City of Newcastle also acknowledges key integrations with other NSW Government Strategies including the NSW Economic Blueprint 2040, Productivity Commission Green Paper and Hunter & Central Coast Enabling Adaptation report.

Economic Development Collaborators

Local Coordinating Partners	Local Small Business Support	State Government Partners
Regional NSW	Newcastle Airport	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Hunter Joint Organisation	Port of Newcastle	Hunter New England Health
Hunter Central Coast Development Corporation	Hunter Water	Health Infrastructure
Regional Development Australia Hunter	Local Innovation & Creative Networks	Transport for NSW
Committee for the Hunter	Hunter iF	Infrastructure NSW
Local Business/Industry Networks	Independent Creative Alliance Newcastle (ICAN)	NSW Treasury
Business Improvement Associations (BIAs)	I2N	Destination NSW
Hunter Business Chamber	Eighteen04	Create NSW
Local Business Chambers and Business Groups	Local Research/Education Partners	NSW Office of the Small Business Commissioner
HunterNet	The University of Newcastle	Federal Government Partners
Ai Group Hunter Region	TAFE NSW	Infrastructure Australia
Newcastle Tourism Industry Group	Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI)	Data & Analysis
Property Council of Australia Hunter Chapter	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIRO)	id Population Experts
Urban Development Institute of Australia	National Institute for Energy Research (NIER)	REMPAN
Local Infrastructure Authorities	National Partners	Spendmapp
Newcastle Airport	Gateway Cities Alliance	Australian Business Register
Port of Newcastle	International Partners	Australian Tourism Data Warehouse
Hunter Water	G20 Pioneer Cities	

Business Attraction Partnerships

In 2019, the NSW Government's Regional NSW established a Business Attraction Committee (BAC) to formulate the strategy and direction of collaborative business attraction activities in the Hunter Region. The Committee has also established an operational process for responding to incoming enquiries through a concierge service, managed by Regional NSW.

Local Government is represented on the Committee by the Hunter Joint Organisation. Council supports a cohesive approach to business attraction through a regional lens and in partnership with industry. Business development and attraction is best achieved with size and scale, which often extends beyond the LGA boundaries. The City of Newcastle are seeking to complement existing initiatives rather than replicate.

Many new business enquiries initially engage through local government. We will seek to support the BAC by referring all new business enquiries of size (>20 employees) to the BAC concierge service. Furthermore, the City of Newcastle proposes to support prospective businesses by:

Working collaboratively to identify potential commercial sites.

Provide confidence with our local leadership and investment in attracting skilled and talent workers to the city.

Instil confidence with the breadth of our support for local business people through training opportunities and regular communications.

Advocate on behalf of local business people for the enabling infrastructure required to multiply local opportunities.

Demonstrate the vibrancy of Newcastle through engaging presentations and a detailed local evidence base.



New Local

New Local is a series of ten principles, which provide a roadmap to restart, renew and reboot our local economy in a post COVID-19 and climate emergency world. New Local advocates for a people-centred and place-led approach to economic development, which builds resilient and regenerative communities, cities, towns and mainstreets.

The ten principles have been applied in the Newcastle context and provide the theoretical framework that underpins the programs of work in this Strategy. All of our delivery programs and actions have been aligned to at least one New Local principle

“The City of Newcastle has the opportunity to be a global leader in developing a compelling 21st century economic development vision and roadmap that puts people and planet first, unleashes creative entrepreneurship and becomes an enabler, facilitator and partner of social innovation and positive change”

- Gilbert Rochecouste, Global Placemaking thought leader and Michael Shuman, an Entrepreneur and leading visionary on Community Economics.



Place

Placemaking is the art of creating meaningful, inclusive and connected places. It is the collaborative process of making places that benefit all people, every day. Place is about equity, accessibility and fostering a sense of ownership and livability.



Regeneration

Regeneration is where we put back more into our ecological and social fabric than we take out. It addresses the whole system and strives to make it better and more resilient. Regeneration empowers local enterprises to be part of their place and feel pride in contributing to it, supporting them to think about what they can do to improve the local environment.



Connectivity

International connections – especially with people, culture, and knowledge – will allow you to take advantage of the best of what the world offers, without becoming dangerously dependent on it.



Ownership

Local ownership of business matters. A growing body of evidence shows that communities with higher levels of local ownership have more social equality, civic engagement and sustainability.



Reinvestment

Reinvestment means helping local residents', businesses, and governmental bodies redirecting their capital from global businesses to local ones. It means more local banking, more local securities, more local investment funds and more local superannuation options.



Diversification

While traditional economic development encourages the nurturing of a small number of world-class industries to achieve comparative advantages, the New Local encourages economic diversification, greater self-reliance and stronger reliance. Paradoxically, a community that is more self-reliant is often wealthier and has many more promising export sectors.



Equity

Social equity is about providing equitable access to basic needs and opportunities, readily and locally, irrespective of race, class and other dimensions of social identity.

Culture

Culturally rich places are shaped through freedom of expression, creative risk-taking and showcasing diverse voices. Strong, collective community values and cultural assets enhance a sense of place and local identity.



Innovation

Innovation involves continuously looking for ways to expand and improve existing businesses, and successfully launch new ones. It means providing entrepreneurs with the technology, assistance, space, mentors, networks and finance to succeed. Entrepreneurs come from all sectors of the population, such as the young, retirees, immigrants, people of colour, the chronically unemployed and people with a disability.



Democracy

Democracy is about power to the people, where empowered citizens directly participate in the decisions affecting their lives, communities and local ecologies. A new approach to resilience and economic development has a foundation of authentic engagement at its core, supported by powerful engagement and governance tools and models.

Our Challenges

This Strategy acknowledges and fronts up to the challenges facing the local Newcastle economy. These challenges have been informed by the CSIRO's global megatrend research, which identified significant shifts in environmental, economic and social conditions that will play out over the coming decades.

Our challenges have been disaggregated into four categories: population challenges, industry transition, a climate emergency and economic impacts exacerbated due to COVID-19.

Population Challenges

Moderate Population Growth:

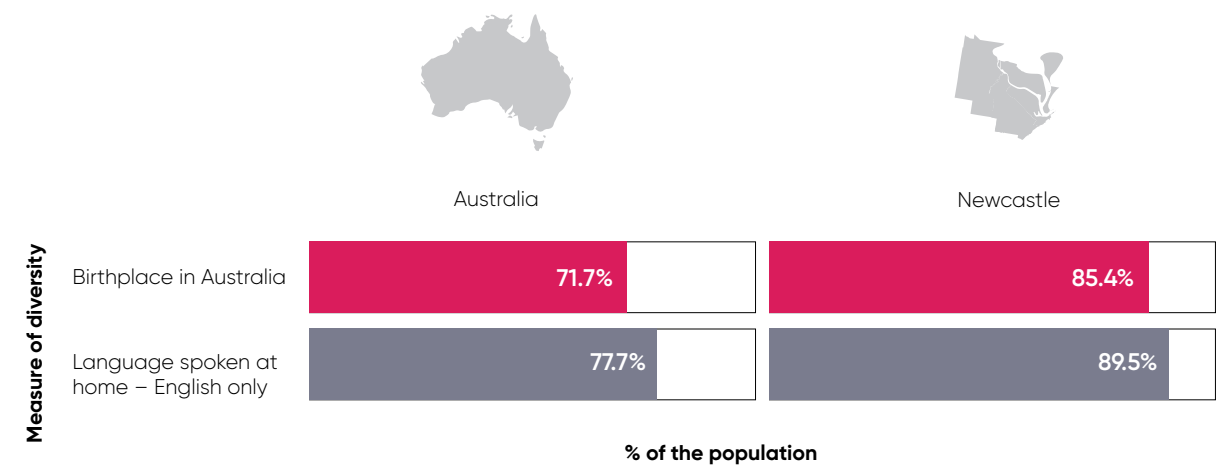
A past challenge for Newcastle has been our lagging population growth compared to Australia's other major population centres, which may contribute to slower economic diversification, output and opportunities. In the period 2019-20, Newcastle's population grew by 1.1%, compared to a capital city average growth rate of 1.4%. Newcastle's population grew slowly compared to similar regional centres like Geelong (2.3%), Adelaide (2.5%) and the Gold Coast (2.4%)¹³.

Local Brain Drain:

Related to the issue of lower-than-average population growth is the composition of who is leaving Newcastle, and at what stage of their lives. Net internal migration (which measures the movement of people within Australia) has remained negative for Newcastle, meaning more people are leaving the city to live elsewhere in Australia than are choosing to relocate here¹⁴. Regional population data suggests the population cohort most likely to move away from Newcastle is 15 to 24-year-old people¹⁵, which is the age group most likely to be engaging in post-school education and entering the workforce. This is a common trend for a university town, but also provides an opportunity for retaining and expanding the local skills base.

Lack of Diversity:

Compared to the rest of Australia's population, residents of Newcastle are more likely to have been born in Australia (85.4% versus 71.7%) and are more likely to only speak English at home rather than other languages (89.5% versus 77.7%)¹⁶. This may signify less exposure to diverse cultures and innovative practices, and fewer international connections¹⁷. Additionally, the Federal Treasury and other research¹⁸ have identified that migrant populations deliver an economic dividend to local economies, with migrants more likely to be employed, earning higher income and providing skills that supplement the needs of the local labour force. Collectively, migrant populations provide multiplying benefits to local communities and drive economic productivity¹⁹. Newcastle's lag in attracting migrant populations may therefore be a significant hindrance on the city's economic development.

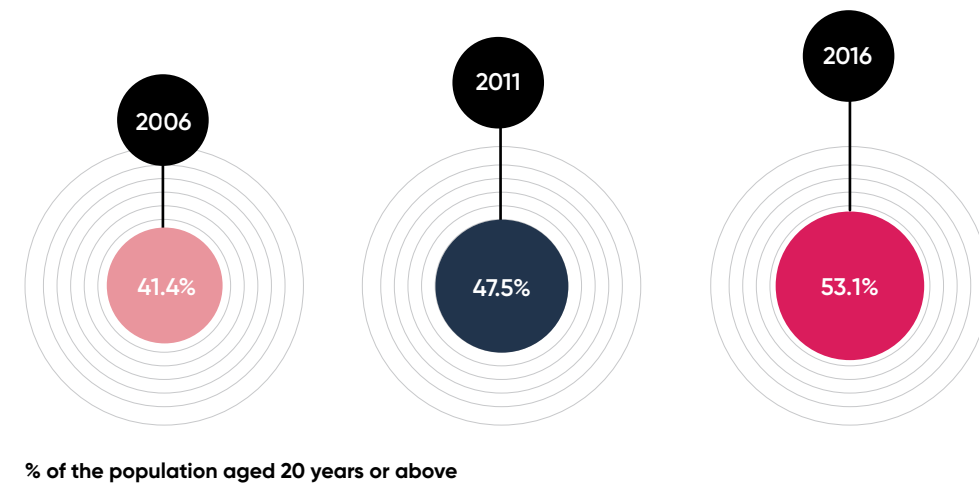


Low Education:

At the 2016 Census, just over half (53.1%) of Newcastle's population above the age of 20 years had attained a post-school qualification of Certificate III or above. The rate of the population with post-school qualifications increased by approximately 1.1% per year between 2011 and 2016, which is slightly above population growth²⁰. With nine out of ten future jobs estimated to require post-school qualifications²¹, there is likely to be a significant decline in demand for an unqualified labour force. This would have a substantial impact on the Newcastle economy and threaten to polarise employment opportunities and increase economic inequality into the future.

Educational attainment in Newcastle

Source: ABS 2017a; ABS 2012; ABS 2007.



²⁰ ABS 2017a; ABS 2012; ABS 2007.

²¹ Goldstein 2018; Heath 2020.

¹³ ABS 2021a

¹⁴ ABS 2021b.

¹⁵ ABS 2020d.

¹⁶ ABS 2017a.

¹⁷ International Organisation for Migration 2020: Chap 5.

¹⁸ Massey & Parr 2012.

¹⁹ The Treasury 2018: 1

Industry Transition

Sunset Industries:

The mining sector continues to play a significant role in our local economy, particularly coal that is extracted in the Upper Hunter region and exported through the Port of Newcastle. Until recently, about 95% of the Port of Newcastle's trade were coal exports. In 2015-16, it was estimated the direct and indirect economic impact of coal mining in the greater Newcastle and Hunter region was \$7.8 billion²². At the 2016 Census, approximately 1,200 people in Newcastle and 12,000 people in the region were employed directly in the mining sector²³. However, intermediate inputs into the mining sector such as advanced manufacturing, transport, warehousing and technical services have a larger economic impact²⁴, and coal industry advocates have claimed that there are 36,000 coal mining related jobs across the Newcastle and Hunter region²⁵.

The significance of coal mining to the local economy highlights Newcastle's exposure to volatility and long-term downturns in the industry. For the past decade, the absolute share of coal consumption for electricity, heating and industrial production has been declining, particularly in the United States, Europe and China²⁶. Between 2018 and 2020, global coal consumption is estimated to have decreased by seven per cent, and forecasts are for this trend to continue²⁷. Since 2012, there has been an overall decline in employment in the coal mining sector²⁸, which may further accelerate through increased automation in the industry.

Geopolitical Tensions:

Furthermore, many other important importers of Australian coal (including Japan, South Korea and the European Union) have adopted policy settings aimed at rapidly reducing carbon emissions. In December 2020, the government of China formally imposed import restrictions on Australian coal and other key sectors, bringing uncertainty to a previously

established coal export market worth almost \$14 billion annually. China has been the second-largest market for Australian coal, therefore this policy shift has had an immediate and significant impact on exports through the Port of Newcastle. Regarding future global demand for coal, the International Energy Agency states: "the medium-term outlook is highly uncertain... with regard to the evolution of Chinese import policies and developments in India's indigenous thermal coal production"²⁹. These factors underscore how geopolitical developments can have rapid and detrimental impacts on Newcastle's local economy if diversification is not pursued.

Climate Emergency Challenges

Climate Emergency Impacts:

The climate emergency has become the key social and economic challenge for the 21st century. We are already beginning to glimpse the impacts of a changing climate on our everyday lives. Globally, the last decade was the hottest ever recorded, and 2020 effectively tied with 2016 as the hottest years on record.

The likely effects of hotter and more extreme climate events include more frequent and widespread bushfires, flooding, extreme heat and increased risk of disease and pandemics – all with indeterminate impact on our economic and social fabric. The devastating bushfires throughout eastern Australia in 2019-20 are a case study of the economic, social and ecological costs of a climate emergency. 33 people lost their lives in the bushfires and smoke from the fires was linked to more than 445 deaths. Over 3,000 homes were destroyed and billions of dollars of buildings and infrastructure were damaged³⁰. Eighteen million hectares were burned during the bushfires and more than a billion animals died, with long-term ramifications for biodiversity and industries reliant on natural resources (such as tourism and agricultural production of milk, meat, wool and honey). If the severity and frequency of these types of events continues to increase, it will represent a costly and fundamental disruption to normal economic activity.

Economic Transition:

Environmental limits are placing constraints on local economic growth. Cities in particular are responsible for the majority of carbon emissions and need to be at the forefront of responding to the climate emergency through emissions reductions. Economic transition is not a cost-neutral process and will represent a disruptive force for the modus operandi of Newcastle's economy and its stakeholders. For example, in 2018-19 the majority (61%) of Newcastle's carbon emissions were from electricity generation, and private businesses were responsible for about 70% of electricity consumption³¹.

In order to affect lasting change and create new opportunities, collective action and commitment from businesses, as well as government and the community, will be required.

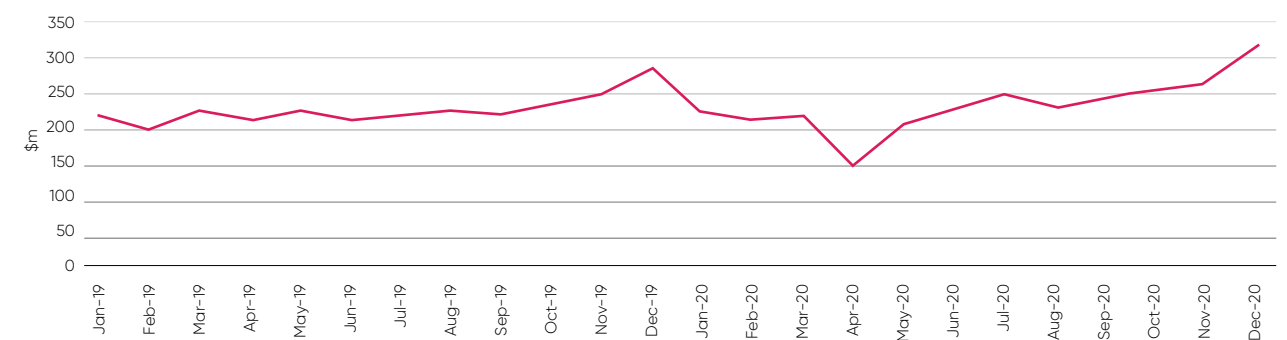
COVID-19 Pandemic Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented economic and social challenge for Australia. In the June 2020 quarter, the nation's GDP fell by seven per cent, the largest quarterly decrease on record³². This trend was mirrored in Newcastle with the official local unemployment rate peaking at 11%, compared to around only four per cent prior to the pandemic³³. Young people were even more severely impacted with unemployment climbing to almost 30% at the early peak of the pandemic³⁴.

During the first period of lockdown in April 2020, local economic activity fell by almost half compared to the peak Christmas trading period in December 2019³⁵. Many thousands of Novocastrians relied on Jobseeker income support, and an average of approximately 6,500 businesses per month applied for JobKeeper payments between April and September 2020³⁶. Although some industries recovered strongly towards the end of 2020, other sectors such as tourism and hospitality have been disproportionately impacted and are struggling to return to normal trading levels³⁷.

Alongside these challenges are new opportunities for Newcastle's economic development. Research has indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly accelerated the adoption of digitisation technologies in the workplace across the Asia-Pacific region³⁸. This technological shift is facilitating the uptake of more long-term Working from Home arrangements for workers in many industries, which in turn is encouraging a demographic drift away from congested capital cities to second cities and regional areas. There are indications that Sydneysiders are choosing to emigrate to regional NSW at significantly higher rates than prior to the pandemic³⁹, and the uptake of office space in the Sydney CBD in 2021 is predicted to fall by as much as 15 per cent⁴⁰. These trends represent an opportunity to attract more internal migration to Newcastle, with the working population enticed by lifestyle, cost of living considerations and competitive infrastructure.

Figure 1: Economic downturn during the COVID-19 pandemic: Total expenditure activity in Newcastle LGA, Jan 2019 - Dec 2020



Source: Spendmapp 2021

²² Port of Newcastle 2017: 6

²⁵ Port of Newcastle 2017: 6.

²⁸ Australian Industry and Skills Committee 2020.

²³ ABS 2017b; ABS 2017c.

²⁶ International Energy Agency (IEA) 2020a.

²⁹ IEA 2020b.

²⁴ MacroPlanDimasi 2017: 31.

²⁷ IEA 2020b.

³⁰ UNEP 2020

³¹ City of Newcastle 2020b: 21

³⁴ ABS 2020f; 2020g.

³⁶ The Treasury 2021. 1991

³⁹ Wright & Duke 2021.

³² ABS 2020e.

³⁵ Spendmapp 2021. See graph in draft form above.

³⁷ Spendmapp, op cit.

⁴⁰ Lenaghan 2021.

³³ ABS 2020f.

³⁸ LaBerge et al 2020.

Our Engagement

How we have engaged:

The preparation for the Economic Development Strategy began in early 2020. As a result of the global pandemic, we responded and changed our approach to engagement, with a greater focus on virtual forums. Across two months in late 2020, we engaged with our community and stakeholders through a community-wide survey and a range of face-to-face and virtual workshops. This included workshops with our Strategy & Innovation Committee of Council⁴¹, the City Taskforce⁴² and representatives from State Government agencies, and the business, innovation and community sectors. Our engagement was shaped by a Discussion Paper, which proposed a new people-centred approach to economic development with an inclusive focus of creating opportunities for all.

Our engagement included targeted conversations with population groups most impacted by the COVID-19 economic recession. In particular, we successfully held discussions with young people by partnering with TAFE NSW, HunterNet, the University of Newcastle and the Hunter Young Professionals. We also focused on engaging with people from non-English speaking backgrounds, talking to four cohorts of international (English as a second language) students from TAFE NSW.

A communication plan was activated throughout the public exhibition period to promote the opportunity for community members to provide feedback. Key economic development stakeholders, including everyone who had contributed to the initial engagement period for the Economic Development Strategy, were directly contacted.



400+
individuals were
directly and
indirectly engaged



187
community surveys
were completed.



A social media reach of
260,000



11
workshops with 200+
attendees representing over
30 organisations and groups.



1,500+
visits to the Have
Your Say webpage

Figures include both early engagement and public exhibition period

⁴¹ The Strategy and Innovation Advisory Committee consists of Councillors and key stakeholder & community representatives. The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice and guidance on the development of strategies, and identification of challenges and opportunities, in relation to activation of Newcastle as a destination leading in innovative technologies, smart infrastructure, and high value investment, and major events and tourism.

⁴² The City Taskforce, led by the City of Newcastle, was established to act as the local coordinating advisory committee to oversee the recovery phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City Taskforce was made up of 17 key city leaders from across manufacturing, small business, financial services, tourism, transport and logistics, arts and culture, workers, education and the community sector. The first meeting was in mid-April and the Taskforce concluded in December 2020.





Our Strategic Priorities

Skilled People Priority

Objective	What do you want to achieve?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 NewSkills: To facilitate opportunities for Newcastle residents and businesses to acquire new skills that drive innovation and employment. 1.2 Local business people: To support local business people to expand their existing operations in Newcastle. 1.3 Talent attraction: To attract talented domestic and international people to live and expand their business interests in Newcastle. 1.4 Inclusive Newcastle: To drive environmental, social and corporate governance practices amongst small and medium enterprises in Newcastle using economic incentives. 1.5 International networks: To establish new and deliberate international networks, which support the attraction of skilled migrants to Newcastle.
Community Benefit	What does success look like?	The growing of our local skills base, an increase in skilled migration to Newcastle and the embedding of inclusive practices in all actions of local business. Newcastle will effectively establish a skills-based labour market.
Community Indicator	How will our community change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of the Newcastle population has a post-school qualification by 2030, which represents two per cent year-on-year growth. • Newcastle's population grows at an average of two per cent per annum. • The number of active skilled migration visas in Newcastle increases. • International student numbers in Newcastle double by 2030 (Feb 2020 baseline).
Links to CSP		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 A welcoming community that cares and looks after each other. 6.1 A vibrant, diverse and resilient economy built on educational excellence and research. 6.2 A culture that supports and encourages innovation and creativity at all levels. 6.3 A thriving city that attracts people to live, work, invest and visit.
Links to New Local Framework		Connectivity, Diversification, Equity, Culture.
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		Social Infrastructure Strategy (forthcoming), Local Social Strategy, Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Our Newcastle economy is built on the talent, skills and ingenuity of our people. Thus, people are at the centre of local economic development, both as individuals and within enterprise. The Skilled People Priority is about enabling and expanding these human capabilities to strengthen existing and drive future opportunities in Newcastle. This will be delivered through partnerships with business, industry and local tertiary institutions. Importantly, Skilled People seeks to integrate marginal population groups into all of the delivery programs and recognise the important uplift they can provide for the local economy.

A people-centred approach to economic development builds in flexibility and promotes resilience to structural changes in the economy, such as those prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the long-term shift away from carbon-based energy. This Strategy is proposing key skills opportunities to respond and protect against existing challenges:

Localisation of industry supply chains:

How can we work on encouraging local industries and the local workforce to effectively deliver the goods and services required?

Energy industry transition:

How can we plan for a smooth transition away from extractive mining industries towards a growing renewable energy sector?

Capitalising on digitisation:

What opportunities are there for businesses to boost their online presence and leverage digital technologies to access new markets and create new products and services?

Promoting the knowledge economy:

How can we encourage local growth of industries whose competitive advantage is technical and scientific innovation?

The New Local framework emphasises the value of self-reliant, diversely-skilled people, empowered to engage in their own communities, who are proud of both their place and their culture. A people-centred, skills-based approach highlights the importance of putting local people at the centre of the economic development narrative.

In the long-term, our vision is to see Newcastle establish a local skills-based labour market⁴³ where job seekers, employers and educators focus on the skills required to do a job, rather than the years of experience. Government, industry and business would see widespread adoption of skills-based hiring and targeted training practices. Novocastrians would be known as a skilled people.

Case Study

Research identified that Newcastle had a significant shortage in bookable tourism product. The City of Newcastle partnered with a registered training organisation to provide 15 local businesses with access to professional mentors. These mentors provided advice on how to develop, promote and sell tourism products and experiences to a wider market. Since commencement the program has seen a number of new bookable tourism products be established in Newcastle. Targeted local government assistance, in partnership with industry, can address local market gaps.



53%
of Newcastle's population
have a post-school
qualification⁴⁴

Remote Tulsa was a one-year program that offered a \$10,000 grant and additional benefits to encourage remote workers in the US to move and work from Tulsa, Oklahoma. The program was highly successful with more than 10,000 applications, two billion digital impressions and 300 relocating workers. This talent attraction program is an example of a people-centred approach to economic development.



7,399
international students
enrolled with the University
of Newcastle in 2020.

Lean in Newy is an online platform where residents living in the Newcastle and surrounding areas sign up to be members and earn points by taking challenges like helping out in their neighbourhood, volunteering for charities or supporting local businesses. The program drives inclusive community practices and engages local businesses in driving opportunities across our city.



9/10
future jobs will require post-
school qualifications⁴⁵

⁴⁴ ABS 2017a.

⁴⁵ Goldstein 2018; Heath 2020.



Delivery Programs

NewSkills

Objective 1.1

There is a large and diverse range of organisations, both public and private, involved in the delivery of training and skills development. The Federal Government funds university education while the State Government delivers tertiary education through TAFE and support for a range of Registered Training Organisations. Traditionally, local government has not played a significant role. However, in a rapidly-changing world, where 9 out of 10 future jobs are projected to require post-school qualifications⁴⁶, local government can have an important role in facilitating and coordinating targeted local opportunities and addressing local skill shortages.

NewSkills will have four program focuses:

Research: Using novel local data sources to identify existing skill gaps in our population.

Promote: In collaboration with key providers across the city, promote the diverse range of learning and skills attainment opportunities in Newcastle. A comprehensive and local information, advice and guidance service is required, which services all age groups, including school children.

Funding: Where clear skill gaps have been identified, fund local training organisations to deliver targeted short courses, particularly for marginalised population groups.

Advocacy: Partner with State and Federal Government to maximise the local investment in training programs.

Local Business People

Objective 1.2

Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) comprise the large majority of jobs and activity in the Newcastle economy. The success of SMEs depends on the decisions and skills of thousands of local entrepreneurs across the city. Our role is to support these local businesses with the skills, knowledge and networks to grow and expand their local operations to the traded economy.

The Local Business People program will expand our traditional role as planning assessors to providing more value-add to our local business people. The program will include three focus areas:

Communication: By establishing regular communication channels, we will consistently listen and act on feedback about how we can support local enterprises to improve and expand existing operations.

Partnerships (with Business Improvement Associations): Continued investment and support for the BIAs across the city and suburban precincts.

Insights: Lead the development of new data analytics to provide easy-to-access insights on local economic activity and customer information.

⁴⁶ Goldstein 2018; Heath 2020.

Talent Attraction

Objective 1.3

Access to a large and skilled workforce is vital for national and global competitiveness. In a service-based economy, with constant innovation in transportation and communication technology, labour has become the most critical input for many organisations. Stakeholder engagement identified accessing and retaining labour in Newcastle as a significant barrier to jobs growth. This was reflected in the population challenges section, which highlights the lack of skills and diversity in the Newcastle population.

The Talent Attraction delivery program will seek to implement strategies aimed at encouraging more internal and external migration to our region, in particular people with skills who can contribute to the city's growth and development. The COVID-19 pandemic has afforded new opportunities for Newcastle's growth, due to the demographic drift away from large metropolitan centres to more liveable and attractive regional centres. These strategic objectives need to be balanced against other pressures, such as ecological sustainability and housing affordability.

The Talent Attraction delivery program will include two focuses, including:

Targeted campaigns, both domestically and internationally, to encourage people to consider Newcastle as an alternative location to live.

Digital Prospectus, which provides real-time data insights to provide people with confidence to move to Newcastle. This platform would be best delivered through regional collaboration.

Inclusive Newcastle

Objective 1.4

This Economic Development Strategy has been designed to drive programming to support marginal population groups in Newcastle. The premise of this approach is that the local economy will organically deliver for the majority of people, but Government at all levels has a role to play in intervening where the market fails. By ensuring that all of our residents have the ability to access employment opportunities, we will drive labour force growth and economic opportunities in the city.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) people, First Nations people and people with a disability are three minority populations in Newcastle. Focused research and engagements have been undertaken to enable new economic opportunities for these populations. This program will be delivered in partnership with the Local Social Strategy.

Common themes emerged:

Education of businesses through training and guidelines to improve workplaces understanding the value of each of CALD, First Nations and people with a disability joining their workforce.

Providing mentoring programs to link graduates with local businesses and jobs.

Celebrating diversity more broadly within the community.

The City of Newcastle leading by example by establishing employment targets, mentoring programs and workplace education programs.

Procurement prioritisation for businesses which support these communities.

Advocacy within the business community on how to change work practices to enable new opportunities for CALD, First Nations and people with a disability.

For all three population groups, targeted programs to enable skills, connect with potential employers and be supported by mentors would assist in overcoming the barriers to gaining skills and employment.

The Inclusive Newcastle program will include three key focuses:

Identifying and incentivising businesses and industries to improve their environmental, social and corporate governance practices.

Connecting businesses and potential employees through a range of forums that promote the diversity of Newcastle.

Developing an Inclusive Newcastle procurement approach for implementation by both City of Newcastle and businesses.

International Networks

Objective 1.5

COVID-19 has radically transformed international networks. While the movement of goods continues between countries, the movement of people has halted. This has a multitude of implications for the Newcastle economy through reductions in international students and visitors and the majority of international business transactions shifting online. While significant for many sectors and industries, it is important to note that Newcastle is less exposed than many other regions of Australia. Simultaneously, geopolitical tensions have increased with the imposing of import restrictions placed on Australian exports by the Chinese Government.

The International Networks delivery program will implement a range of strategies to increase international migrants choosing Newcastle as their destination. A larger and more diverse population will increase the local skills base, expand international networks and multiply opportunities into the future. The International Networks delivery program will facilitate international talent attraction campaigns and provide support for local business people to navigate the visa application process. This program will also explore direct engagement with international business, industry and government networks, particularly across Asia.

Innovative People Priority

Objective	What do you want to achieve?	<p>2.1 Innovation Ecosystem: To maintain and foster an adaptive, interconnected and localised innovation ecosystem of enabling actors and factors, that provide entrepreneurs with access to resources to create, scale and engage innovation.</p> <p>2.2 Living Lab: To create a Living Lab, a city-scale testbed for prototyping, trialling and validating innovation to support entrepreneurs in commercialising and scaling ventures.</p> <p>2.3 Inclusive Innovation: To facilitate and promote open communities and platforms of knowledge sharing, support and resources, that reach and nurture all kinds of entrepreneurs, enabling innovation in every sector of the Newcastle economy.</p> <p>2.4 Scaling Innovation: To accelerate and improve the incubation, scale and clustering of entrepreneurs and enterprise focused on commercialising innovation for global consumption.</p>
Community Benefit	What does success look like?	<p>We are a city that embraces and cultivates innovation. Business and industry are confident to experiment and collaborate to create new growth. Entrepreneurship is encouraged and the resources needed to create change are plentiful. Newcastle is a city where anyone can nurture an idea into a globally scalable business.</p>
Community Indicator	How will our community change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% increase in engagement at all innovation programs, events and meetups provided by the ecosystem throughout the city across a four-year horizon. 2021 baseline to be established. • 10% growth in the number of enterprise scaling innovation for national and global markets across a four-year horizon. 2021 baseline to be established. • Investment into innovative enterprise increases by 2% year-on-year. 2021 baseline to be established. • Local SME's engaging with the innovation ecosystem increases by 2% year-on-year. 2021 baseline to be established.
Links to CSP		6.2 A culture that supports and encourages innovation and creativity at all levels.
Links to New Local Framework		Innovation, Culture, Democracy, Equity, Connectivity.
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		Smart City Strategy, Library Strategy.



The benefits of innovation permeate throughout our community. Outputs solve challenges and introduce advantages that can improve well-being and make people and businesses more resilient. Economically, innovation produces a more globally competitive and productive local economy. Newcastle can attain these advantages through equipping people with entrepreneurial capability and access to the resources needed to create change.

Innovative people, also known as entrepreneurs, require resources external to themselves to achieve change and create impact⁴⁸. This priority concentrates on nurturing an accessible ecosystem of enabling external resources that accelerate, amplify and ease the implementation and commercialisation of novel ideas. Originating from anywhere, a novel idea can involve the invention, modification and adoption of change to make an impact, be it through a new product, service, process or improvement.

Enabling the right conditions for people to experiment and invest in change helps to diversify and differentiate our economy. Organisations and

enterprise with a higher degree of novelty are more resilient to disruption and typically more globally competitive⁴⁹. This Strategy endeavours to make this conducive environment more open and inclusive to embed these advantages in a more diverse portfolio of sectors and organisations.

Innovation is one of the ten key principles of the New Local framework. Innovation is a mindset, a process and a culture. We envisage an inclusive model of innovation wherein opportunity is shared equally. The Innovative People Priority is about increasing capacity to implement solutions and build upon existing strengths to generate new economic growth.

Our vision is to create a supportive ecosystem that provides a foundation for innovative people to create opportunity and encourages a culture of problem solving. By nurturing this innovation ecosystem, Newcastle will retain and attract entrepreneurial people that will help build a more resilient and diverse economy. Importantly we will create an enabling environment that helps anyone to scale their idea to create global impact.



⁴⁸ Feld and Hathaway 2020.

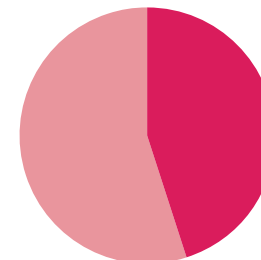
⁴⁹ Office of the Chief Economist 2017.

Case Study

I2N is an innovation hub that is driving business growth through innovation and entrepreneurship. Their programs have supported 71 businesses to scale and raise over \$6 million in funding. I2N is a 4,400 strong community of entrepreneurs.



approximately **\$50m** in private equity was invested into local innovation in 2020.



45% of Hunter businesses implemented innovation in 2018.

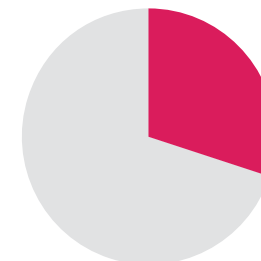
Pegasus is a local software-based company delivering solutions for big business such as Woolworths, BHP and Lendlease. Since 2013, Pegasus has experienced close to 25% year on year growth. More recently, Pegasus raised \$28 million from Silicon Valley tech investment firm Accel-KKR to take their offering to the US, UK, and Europe. Pegasus employs 120 staff, 100 of which work from their Newcastle HQ.

Incubator Eighteen04 provides cleantech and smart cities startups with access to collaborative co-working space, startup capital and experienced mentors. Resident startups have raised over \$8.46 million in funding and created over 60 new local jobs since 2015.



180 local actors and factors dedicated to supporting entrepreneurs innovate.

around **33%** of innovation ecosystem actors and factors are designed to help validate innovation.



SwitchDin develops technology for electricity utilities that makes distributed energy resources visible and controllable. The startup is at growth stage in Australia and has early traction in Europe. SwitchDin has created 27 jobs in Newcastle and raised \$7.3 million from Australian and international investors.

Delivery Programs

Innovation Ecosystem

Objective 2.1

Developing the Innovation Ecosystem ensures people have access to the resources needed to solve problems. The resources required to create change are complex and adaptive. Entrepreneurs need access to the seven capitals to commercialise innovation for scale. These are identified as human, financial, intellectual, physical, network, institutional and cultural capital⁵⁰. Multiple actors and factors play a role in providing these seven types of supportive capital.

The Innovation Ecosystem program is designed to support the maturing of the ecosystem by maintaining and fostering the seven capitals. This is achieved through focusing on four levers that can be leveraged through actions to increase support capital⁵¹:

Physical Lever: Tangible assets and infrastructure.

Information Lever: Connectivity and networking.

Social Lever: Governance and shared goals.

Culture Lever: Mindset and attitude.

Living Lab

Objective 2.2

The Living Lab is a framework that facilitates access to public infrastructure, communities and services to trial innovation. This program focuses on providing innovative people with a foundation from which to solve problems, to prototype and validate novel ideas for commercial application. Providing this platform will help entrepreneurs accelerate commercialisation creating faster pathways to market.

Inclusive Innovation

Objective 2.3

People are innovative in every type of business, organisation, industry and sector imaginable. However, many people may not understand they are being innovative or be aware of the knowledge and resources available to help them implement or grow an idea. The purpose of this program is to spread awareness of the ecosystem and the tools available to help make and accelerate change. Increasing understanding of innovation will help to diversify and build resilience in the local economy as more businesses, organisations and sectors become more attune to adaptation and grow novelty. Our aim is to ensure we are reaching and nurturing all kinds of entrepreneurs. This will include a particular focus to build the capacity of innovative Aboriginal owned and controlled enterprises. We want to make innovation accessible for all of Newcastle.

Scaling Innovation

Objective 2.4

Supporting and attracting entrepreneurs focused on delivering scalable innovation for international trade and global consumers, will help build a more resilient local economy through diversifying and increasing exports. We need to ensure that our city innovation ecosystem is supportive of and attractive to these types of entrepreneurs to retain and attract future industry and new enterprise.

We will support local entrepreneurs to create new economic opportunities through nurturing their ambition to scale local solutions and transform to navigate challenges to meet new market opportunities. Assisting startups, SMEs and corporate sectors to be global and investor-ready, will help more local business scale to create globally-resilient jobs. Our role is to help local entrepreneurs be aware of the resources needed and opportunities to trade in local and distant markets at scale.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.



City Shaping Priority



Mural artist: Fintan Magee (under the Big Picture Fest);
Image: Wiltliving Photography.

Objective	What do you want to achieve?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Planning and Development: To ensure urban development facilitates investment, enables local economic diversification and supports population growth. 2. Digital Infrastructure: To enable advanced digital technology and high-speed connectivity to support and attract innovative businesses and growth industries. 3. Local Capital and Investment: To increase access to innovative financial infrastructure and investment supporting local creativity and industry development. 4. Strategic Government Relations and Advocacy: To implement an approach to government relations and city advocacy based on local consensus, stage-based evidence and strategic investment. 5. Circular Economy: To support industry transformation leveraging economic benefits of transitions to zero-waste and net zero emissions. 6. City Analytics: To leverage research and data expertise providing a comprehensive local evidence base.
Community Benefit	What does success look like?	<p>Newcastle has fully emerged onto the world stage as a diverse local economy with strong global connections. High quality jobs across a wide range of growth sectors are locally available, and the Newcastle workforce is sufficiently skilled to meet these challenges. Urban development has provided employment and innovation precincts with specialisations leveraging existing competitive advantages and reflecting global opportunity.</p> <p>Success looks like strategic planning and advocacy securing significant investment, which continues Newcastle’s emergence as a premier Gateway City. Newcastle boasts a dynamic and sophisticated mixed-use CBD, and revitalisation is significantly progressed on Broadmeadow. Newcastle is known internationally for its diverse, advanced and competitive economy. Local SMEs are economically resilient and increasingly trade beyond the local economy. Newcastle exports both things and ideas.</p>
Community Indicator	How will our community change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing affordability and cost of living remain competitive. • New industry sectors are fostered through the development of innovation precincts. • Newcastle businesses enjoy access to future-ready digital networks. • Revitalisation of Broadmeadow including Hunter Park creates a second high-density population centre and lifestyle living precinct. • Local people invest in the local economy. • Newcastle industry is accruing the benefits of leading a national transition to zero waste and net zero emissions.
Links to CSP		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6.2 A vibrant, diverse and resilient economy built on educational excellence and research. 6.2 A culture that supports and encourages innovation and creativity at all levels. 6.3 A thriving city that attracts people to live, work, invest and visit.
Links to New Local Framework		Placemaking, Connectivity, Diversification, Reinvestment, Innovation.
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		Smart City Strategy, Waste Strategy (forthcoming), Sustainable Newcastle Strategy (forthcoming), Local Housing Strategy and Local Strategic Planning Statement.

Newcastle has emerged as Australia's leading post-industrial Gateway City. It is managing a transition from a heavy industrial past to a more diverse and innovative knowledge and services-led economy, yet retaining important ties to industrial capability, engineering and manufacturing that see it well-positioned to leverage growth sectors of the new economy⁵².

Continuation of this trajectory requires bold and fundamentally transformative city-shaping initiatives to be developed and supported. Newcastle's recent history is a tale of such transformative projects. These projects share certain characteristics: they demonstrate tight calibration to existing challenges, they typically occur over extended periods of time due to their scale and complexity, and they deliver significant economic value by supporting new growth opportunities.

The New Local framework reminds us not to lose sight of local community inputs and impacts of these

ambitious city-shaping initiatives. A key focus of this priority is diversification of the economy – both geographically and across industry sectors. These changes have real local impacts on opportunities and prospects. The creation of local places with international trade and industry connections links the Newcastle community into the global economy. Simultaneously, increasing a sense of local ownership, and leveraging it to drive ever greater reinvestment, is a proven input into higher economic resilience and more diverse growth.

The intent of the City Shaping Initiatives program is to accelerate the transformation of Newcastle towards increased economic diversification and improved amenity that stand as indicators of economic success and high quality of life. It is a series of high-value moves that position Newcastle as an emerging global city, enable business competitiveness, support opportunities for our citizens and increase the attractiveness of Newcastle as a place to live and invest.

⁵² Gateway Cities Alliance 2019.



Museum Park, Hunter Central Coast Development Corporation

Case Study

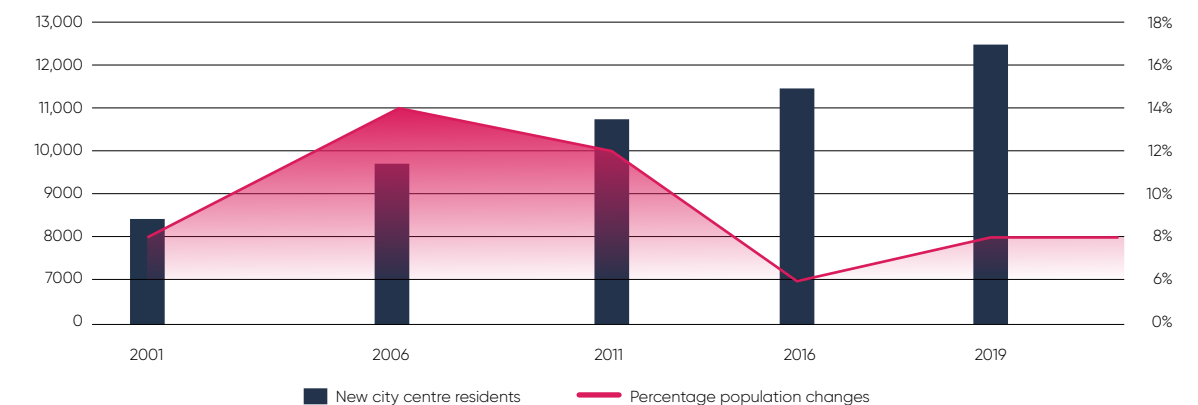
Light Rail

The installation of the Newcastle Light Rail was a huge public infrastructure project that had significant impact on local small business during the construction phase.

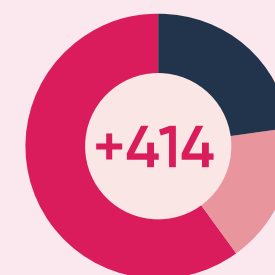
The project provided certainty to investors and unleashed a renewed sense of confidence in the future of the city that has translated into a sustained boom in commercial and residential development.

Light Rail has delivered unprecedented development investment into the city centre. The monthly average value of development assessments (DAs) lodged along Hunter Street in the 12 months prior to the announcement of the heavy rail line closing were approximately \$1.4 million. Since then, the average monthly value of DAs is \$14.1 million, resulting in an additional \$1.38 billion invested **into Hunter Street**.

New city centre residential population trend⁵³:



City centre population changes 2019-20⁵⁴:



Natural increase	43 10%
Net interal migration	244 59%
Net overseas migration	127 31%



\$13,211
Average expenditure from city centre resident in the local economy (2019-20)⁵⁵



5,000 additional city centre residents would equate to an additional **\$66m** local economic expenditure annually

⁵³ ABS 2020a. 1

⁵⁴ ABS 2020b.

⁵⁵ Spendmapp 2021.

Places of Economic Opportunities

A wide range of City Shaping Initiatives are underway across Newcastle. Collectively, they represent the most significant transformation of the economic foundations of the city in a century.

Innovation Arc Economic Catalyst Areas

The Innovation Arc is defined as the catalyst areas across the city, which provide opportunities for new enterprise to establish and scale. These catalyst areas are aligned to an industry and have often received significant government or private-sector investment.

Newcastle City Centre is the regional economic and cultural capital of Greater Newcastle, with about 80% of the region's office space and 30% of its developed industrial space⁵⁶. Significant development triggered by the State Government investment in urban revitalisation has encouraged over \$1.7 billion in new residential and commercial building developments since 2014 in the city centre⁵⁷. This precinct is home to civic and cultural facilities, and investment in infrastructure, public domain and next-generation technologies are driving the emergence of a sophisticated waterfront CBD with a focus on education, tourism, innovation and business.

Port of Newcastle has been the epicentre of economic activity in the Hunter region since the early 19th century. Port of Newcastle is the largest port on the Australian east coast with a deep-water shipping channel, capacity to double trade volumes, available portside land and berth-side connections to the heavy rail network. Port diversification to enable containerisation capacity, intermodal connection, energy resources and bulk goods import/export facilities represents \$4 billion in potential investment.

Newcastle Airport is a global transport hub that, prior to COVID-19, was used by more than 1.27 million

people annually. The Airport has received Federal Government funding for the expansion of the runway to code E status enabling international flights. This project is modelled to create 4,400 regional jobs and deliver \$12.7 billion in regional economic activity across a 20-year horizon. The airport is co-located with the RAAF Base Williamtown, home to the Wedgetail and F-35A Joint Strike Fighter programs. Employment lands surrounding the airport have been designated by the NSW State Government as a Special Activation Precinct with up to \$200 million in allocated funding. Astra Aerolab and Williamtown Aerospace Precinct are home to internationally significant firms in defence, aerospace, advanced manufacturing and digital services.

John Hunter Hospital and Innovation Precinct is the subject of State Government plans to renew the primary referral and teaching hospital for Northern NSW as a health technology precinct. An upgraded hospital will be co-located with university and industry-led innovation and technology facilities, including the Hunter Medical Research Institute, to spearhead the growth of the health services sector. The John Hunter Hospital and Innovation Precinct has been approved with \$780 million in state government funding for stage 1.

University of Newcastle (UoN) is a research-intensive university focused on improving the quality of life in our regions and across the globe. The university is currently ranked 197th in the world by the QS World University Rankings. Most notably, 27% of students at UoN come from low socio-economic backgrounds. UoN is currently developing an expanded City Campus at Honeysuckle on lands made available by the introduction of light rail and has received state significant planning approval for a \$200 million Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine (STEMM) hub for driving regional transformation through industry-engaged research and innovation at its unique bushland Callaghan campus.

Summerhill Waste Management Centre is a key asset in the delivery of waste management services to the City of Newcastle and broader region. City of Newcastle investment at Summerhill into Cell 9, the resource recovery centre, organics recycling facility, landfill gas-capture and onsite power generation, and a 5MW solar farm is transforming Summerhill as a resource recovery hub and green energy precinct. Summerhill forms the sixth site in the Newcastle Innovation Arc with the potential to drive new jobs creation in growth areas including circular economy, energy innovation, advanced manufacturing and reprocessing, and development of secondary material and by-product markets.

The development of Broadmeadow as a nationally significant sporting and entertainment precinct that also provides a mix of uses that facilitate growth and change in surrounding centres and residential areas. It is the next stage of Newcastle's city revitalisation. Broadmeadow is centrally located in the LGA, features existing sporting and entertainment infrastructure, which provide a significant role in community life. Major investment will see its transformation as Hunter Park: providing new facilities and public domains, increased density of housing around improved transportation networks, and the redevelopment of several edge sites including industrial re-use and remediated land.

Economic Catalyst Sites

Beresfield/Black Hill is a catalyst site located at the intersection of three local government areas in Greater Newcastle. The site straddles rail and road connections linking the economies of the Hunter with the global gateways of the port and airport. Beresfield/Black Hill represents potential as an integrated freight and logistics hub, with complementary manufacturing and light industrial activity with significant industrial land available for release enabling growth and expansion of industries.

Steel River Industrial Estate is prime waterfront industrial land adjacent to the Newcastle's Central Business District and with access to key arterial road and rail connections to Sydney, Brisbane and the New England Highway. Built on old BHP land, Steel River is home to traditional and advanced manufacturing, the CSIRO energy & resources facility, technology focused SMEs and two data centres.

Local Centres Upgrade Program

By virtue of its history as an amalgamation of eleven municipal councils in 1938, the Newcastle LGA is home to multiple thriving local commercial centres. They play a key role in providing for the retail, entertainment, recreational and social needs of the community, as well as local employment. The Local Centres Public Domain Program (LCPDP) is a City of Newcastle ten-year program of upgrades and infrastructure renewal works to enliven these centres, reflecting their role in the community and local economy and ensuring appropriate retail, commercial and public amenity within the micro-catchments of local neighbourhoods

⁵⁷ Remplan 2021.

⁵⁶ City of Newcastle 2021.



Delivery Programs

Strategic Planning and Development

Objective 3.1

Strategic Planning and Development is a driving force in the evolution of the local and regional economy. Planning is critical to fundamental economic factors such as determining the scale and mix of land uses for economic activity, the attraction, location and development of industry, housing density, affordability and cost of living, as well as the city's sustainable growth. City of Newcastle undertakes a wide range of planning and development assessment activities, which enable economic development in alignment with community aspirations⁵⁸, coordination and regional planning with State Government.

The Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan identifies a range of catalyst areas across the 'metro core' of Greater Newcastle that represent industry growth areas capable of underpinning a diverse and globally competitive economy. These catalyst areas include those sites identified as the Innovation Arc (see image on p8-9), retail, transport and logistics sites, and the next stage of Newcastle's revitalisation as Broadmeadow transforms into a world-class sporting and entertainment precinct, including transit-oriented development. As the world emerges from the pandemic, the value of ensuring diverse economic opportunity and self-reliance across the city is foregrounded.

The ongoing revitalisation of the city, the decentralisation of the local economy through strengthening local centres, strategic planning support to bring the precincts of the Innovation Arc and catalyst areas to fruition, and a robust and innovative approach to analytics and insight are the primary objectives of this program.

Program focuses include:

Strategic land use planning to support sustainable growth.

Support for a distributed local economy in commercial centres.

Enabling the Innovation Arc.

Digital Infrastructure

Objective 3.2

Increasingly, work is no longer anchored to place and high-speed digital connectivity forms an essential part of the attractiveness of a city emerging onto the global scale. There is growing international evidence of the value of city innovation districts for their capacity to drive the economy and enliven urban spaces⁵⁹. The intersection of digital infrastructure and internationally competitive business productivity and innovation is clear: Such places are attractive within a global competition for talent and capital⁶⁰.

Delivery of high-speed digital connectivity represents a transformative piece of infrastructure that will attract digitally-focused businesses, which drive economic growth and support major city centre investment into light rail and education precincts. Investment in smart city infrastructure is embedding next generation network technologies in the Newcastle city centre. This includes the fibre and wireless connectivity for city centre buildings, the physical and network infrastructure for an IoT-enabled city, future 5G deployments and digital and data services that enable accelerated technology adoption, faster business innovation and new opportunities for economic growth.

Program focuses include:

Deploy the City Digital Corridor.

Leverage next generation networks (IoT and 5G).

Expand the Living Lab Testbed.

⁵⁸ City of Newcastle 2018.

⁶¹ City of Newcastle 2020c

⁵⁹ Katz & Wagner 2014.

Local Capital and Investment

Objective 3.3

The realisation of opportunity and innovation through entrepreneurial action requires access to capital. Rarely does the person with the idea have direct access to the resources to bring it to fruition. Typically, people looking to start or expand a business seek investment and, on many occasions, turn to standard sources such as banks, venture capital and investors, who may not be locally based and therefore do not necessarily have the strength of the local economy, and the wellbeing of the local community, as priorities.

There is enormous economic potential in developing local sources of investment capital and resources to support local business get started and grow. When money stays local it is an investment in the future of a place, and its circulation delivers multiplier effects and added value in each transaction. This program seeks opportunities to improve the connection of SMEs to local finance through both increasing awareness of options, and the nurturing of more grassroots investors and investment vehicles.

Program focuses include:

Connect SMEs to local finance options.

Identify and mobilise grassroots local investors.

Build access to investment capital.

Strategic Government Relations Advocacy

Objective 3.4

A strategic and collaborative approach to advocacy for the city and region is crucial to ensuring that Newcastle is properly recognised in policy and funding decisions by State and Federal Governments. Advocacy memos created by the City Taskforce in response to the COVID-19 economic crisis provide a solid foundation from which to build. Advocacy was united across the city, detailed local stories of how we were contributing, and offered a partnership approach to enable change.

Our Delivery Program will focus on three key areas:

Strategic City Advocacy: We will embrace a new approach to advocacy for key policy recommendations and funding requests to State and Federal Governments. We will develop Advocacy Action Plans for key city-shaping initiatives, which acknowledges their complexity and addresses the challenges through incremental staging and evidence-based progression.

Regional Collaboration: Renewed support for regional collaboration initiatives. Regional collaboration is at the heart of the Greater Newcastle Metro Plan, and many challenges facing the city do not start and stop with local government area boundaries. Pressing regional challenges like transportation and environmental planning require collaboration across borders, and between sectors.

Gateway Cities Alliance: Strategic policy pressure alongside peer cities nationally through the Gateway Cities Alliance. The Alliance is seeking to influence key decision-makers on the strategic and economic value of investing in mid-tier cities or Gateway Cities (like Newcastle), particularly in a post COVID-19 world.

Circular Economy

Objective 3.5

A circular economy is underpinned by three main principles:

1. Design out waste and pollution
2. Keep products and materials in use; and
3. Regenerate natural systems

Adopting the circular economy principles will change the way we produce, assemble, sell and use products to minimise waste and to reduce our environmental impact. A circular economy values resources by keeping products and materials otherwise destined for landfill in use for as long as possible through repurposing. Maximising the use and value of

resources brings major economic, social and environmental benefits. It contributes to innovation, growth and job creation, while reducing our impact on the environment and helping to meet our objectives around carbon emission reduction. The circular economy also promotes innovation through new system designs which are no longer linear. Circular economy concepts provoke the idea of zero-waste possibilities and a regenerative system.

Circular economy represents an enormous industrial transformation on a global scale, and is a rich economic opportunity driving innovation, developing new services, technologies and products. The World Economic Forum estimates the global transition to a circular economy as delivering hundreds of dollars of value annually. Furthermore, CSIRO has identified the job opportunities of the circular economy with the recycling sector currently generating 9.2 jobs per 10,000 tonnes of waste, compared to only 2.8 jobs for the same amount of waste sent to landfill⁶². The National Circular Economy Roadmap found innovation is crucial to realising Australia's largest economic gains, which will come from designing new products and materials, including through advanced manufacturing, and in embracing new business models that will create domestic and export markets for waste streams.

City of Newcastle is developing a strategic framework for establishing and developing a circular economy across waste, environment and climate mitigation strategies. This program acknowledges the vast transformative and productive potential of the circular economy. These strategies will centre on the Summerhill precinct of the Innovation Arc and seek to drive broader industry transformation by monetising waste to create new industries and designing out waste in the initial system designs.

Program focuses include:

An action plan for enabling the Circular Economy.

Enabling Industry Transformation.

Developing Summerhill as an Innovation Precinct.

City Analytics

Objective 3.6

There is a vital need to ensure that strategy and investment is well-targeted, data-led and based on international best and next practice. The City Analytics Program will better inform policy decision-making and stimulate applied research into the economic and social dynamics of Newcastle. This will be achieved by bringing together data, information and analytical skills from government, academic and industry partners across the region, and by using big data analytics frameworks, including those enabled by the City's Internet of Things (IoT) network.

Through a partnerships model the City Analytics program will identify existing or emerging areas of knowledge gap and deliver research and data solutions. A particular focus on mixed methodologies exploring localised trends and dynamics will establish Newcastle as a site of knowledge generation and evidence-based action.

Program focuses include:

Developing best practice benchmarking and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Frameworks

Building collaborative partnerships with research institutions

Building digital, data and analysis capabilities to underpin local evidence

⁶¹ CSIRO 2021



Coral Lee, Cooks & Bakers
 Music People Episode 7.
 Photo: Renae Saxby

Vibrant City Priority

Objective	What do you want to achieve?	<p>4.1 City and Precinct Activation: To lead the activation of our business precincts with a range of events, promotions, beautifications and industry development opportunities.</p> <p>4.2 Newcastle After Dark: To lead and collaborate to enable a city night-time economy characterised by its creative, vibrant and safe nightlife and that contributes significantly to the cultural and economic revitalisation of Newcastle.</p> <p>4.3 Visitor Economy: To lead and collaborate to enable Newcastle to become a premier Australian visitor destination, showcasing a rich art, cultural and food scene, a vibrant night-time economy, and accessible nature-based and coastal experiences.</p> <p>4.4 City Events: To lead and collaborate on the attraction and development of signature events in Newcastle, including the growing of the business and conferencing events sector.</p> <p>4.5 Multiculturalism and Diversity: To celebrate the city's multiculturalism and diversity so that it becomes central to the city's identity.</p> <p>4.6 Creative Economy: To support industry development leveraging existing economic and social strengths.</p>
Community Benefit	What does success look like?	<p>Newcastle CBD and suburban precincts are locations where people choose to be. They are dynamic and activated places, which highlight the diversity of Newcastle's population, our cultural and creative economy. More than just consumption, it is about the creation of local creative and cultural content. Newcastle will be a city of loveable places, with a sense of surprise, delight and wonder. It will be locally distinctive and globally iconic.</p>
Community Indicator	How will our community change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of people employed in Newcastle's night-time economy increases by two per cent year-on-year. • The diversity of options in Newcastle's night-time economy continues to expand, particularly for multicultural communities. • Newcastle will establish a role and reputation as a destination with significant increases in the number of visitors. • The number of visitors to the city from outside the LGA to attend specific events increases by two percent year-on-year. 2021 baseline to be established. • The number of people employed in a creative business increases by two percent year-on-year. 2021 baseline to be established.
Links to CSP		<p>3.1 Public places that provide for diverse activity and strengthen our social connections.</p> <p>3.2 Culture, heritage and place are valued, shared and celebrated.</p> <p>3.3 Safe and activated places that are used by people day and night.</p> <p>4.1 A welcoming community that cares and looks after each other.</p> <p>6.1 A vibrant, diverse and resilient economy built on educational excellence and research.</p> <p>6.2 A culture that supports and encourages innovation and creativity at all levels.</p> <p>6.3 A thriving city that attracts people to live, work, invest and visit.</p>
Links to New Local Framework		<p>Placemaking Diversity</p>
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		<p>Newcastle After Dark Strategy, Destination Management Plan, Events Action Plan (forthcoming), Live Music Strategy.</p>

A vibrant city is an attractive city. It is a city where things are happening, day and night. It is a city where the community are empowered to be involved and actively shape their city. It is a city where multiculturalism, aboriginal culture and the arts are celebrated. It is a welcoming city, where people visit and feel part of the community. At its heart, a vibrant city is a place that you actively want to be, a city that you enjoy living, working and playing in and around. The lifestyle benefits of Newcastle are numerous from our beautiful and diverse natural assets – such as our world-class beaches and urban bushlands – to our accessibility, where a 30-minute city is not just an academic concept but a reality.

Currently, City of Newcastle plays an active role in nurturing the vibrant city at both a strategic and local scale through:

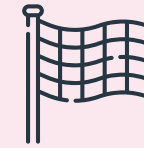
- Facilitating major events,
- Managing business support grants,
- Managing funding of smaller activations and events,
- Providing support and direction to the tourism sector,
- Managing the city's cultural and civic venues,
- Running a tourism information centre,
- Collaborating, advocating and actively promoting the city's night-time economy,
- Facilitating a renewed focus on live music and performance industries,
- Celebrating what makes our city a great place to live, work and play, protecting it and enhancing these factors into the future.

Within this context, this Strategy is focused on enhancing the sectors that drive city vibrancy through activation, performance, interaction and cultural consumption. These sectors were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic contractions but remain central to our vibrant city vision. Residents and visitors alike are delighted by a city that showcases local talent, nurtures creativity and performance, and provides for activated public spaces. Vibrancy and creativity are intrinsically linked, with actions to foster one also supporting the other. Taking a broader perspective, the value of having a vibrant city will attract and retain people who will engage with and grow the local economy.

Innovation ecosystem experts, Brad Feld and Ian Hathaway, state: *"Today's knowledge-economy workers, entrepreneurs, and startup employees want more than traditional attractors like affordable housing, access to transit and high-quality schools. They also desire plentiful cultural, social and natural amenities, and to be around other exciting and creative people,"*⁶³.

Newcastle is undoubtedly rich with natural amenities and the creative landscape to underpin a uniquely vibrant city. This program aims to accentuate and support industry sectors individually contributing billions of dollars annually to the local economy. Moreover, they provide the rich cultural life that provides the intangible attractiveness of a place and its people. The New Local framework identifies a diverse, connected and creative Newcastle as a special city with a dynamic future.

Case Study



Newcastle 500

A major sporting event in the annual calendar. It has been running in the city's east end since 2017. The Hunter Research Foundation Centre (HRFC) undertook an independent investigation into the economic and non-economic impact. The research identified that the benefits of the Newcastle 500 in 2017 included:

- \$30.1 million increase in local economic output.
- 83,000 visitors to the city.
- 344 media stories.
- Reaching a combined domestic audience of more than 14 million people.

The night time economy employs more than **12,000** novocastrians.



Visitor Economy Highlights 2019:



\$954m



4,920 jobs



total of **5.1m** visitors

Hometown Holiday

Visitor economy businesses throughout the city of Newcastle were severely impacted by COVID-19. The Hometown Holiday project aimed to incentivise local residents to visit Newcastle as tourists and to engage with our city as a tourism destination. A competition was run with 100 \$500 vouchers awarded to local residents. More than 3,500 entries were submitted with \$50,000 spent between December 2020 and February 2021 at 70 participating visitor economy businesses.

In 2018, a live music census was undertaken by City of Newcastle, the results were:



460 local gigs.



700 local artists.



80 local venues across the LGA.



Music People

COVID-19 hit the music industry particularly hard. All events were cancelled and most opportunities for informal performance were made impossible by public health orders. Musicians had limited options for alternative income sources or to share their art. Music People, a 12-episode live music program provided the perfect pivot to allow our local music scene to have an outlet, an audience and an income. Music people showcased Newcastle's diversity of musical talent using a city-wide live stream collaboration to reach a network of social media audiences. This innovative broadcast model gave our local industry a national audience when the pandemic limited touring opportunities. Additionally, the program offered over 140 musicians paid performance opportunities and ongoing employment positions for affiliated creative industries jobs. On average, over 6,000 viewers tuned in to each episode of the Music People program.

Delivery Programs

City Activation

Objective 4.1

City Activation is about a number of small acts adding up to a broader atmosphere of vibrancy. It is about empowering the community to actively shape and love their city. Activations can range from community events and markets to pop-up shops, from street art festivals to augmented reality walking trails. We want to embed vibrancy into all of our local centres, high streets and suburbs.

City of Newcastle has an important role in facilitating city activations primarily through the distribution of the Special Business Rate program in the city centre and four suburban precincts, as well as the range of City of Newcastle grants and sponsorships. Our vision is to enhance public spaces to become safe, welcoming and culturally rich environments.

Newcastle After Dark

Objective 4.2

The nightlife of a city has close links to its cultural and community life. The leisure and consumer patterns of the city at night have evolved over decades to meet this demand for spaces that facilitate public and civic life and allow cultural activity to flourish. Yet the night-time economy is equally a place of work and productivity, directly employing more than 12,000 Newcastle residents and accounting for 5.7% of the total Newcastle economy – \$1.6 billion in 2019⁶⁵. The Newcastle night-time economy is significant at a national and regional scale; presently it is the sixth-largest night-time economy in the country.

We recognise the importance of the night-time economy and developed a Newcastle After Dark Strategy in 2018 to guide this program of work. A well-planned city night-time economy has a central role to play in connecting city activation with the visitor economy and city events. The Newcastle After Dark Strategy includes six priority areas:

Strategic Alcohol Management.

Night-time economic development.

Night-time design.

Cultural participation and activation.

Regulation planning and licensing.

Research and evaluation.

Visitor Economy

Objective 4.3

Newcastle has experienced significant growth in visitation over the past ten years, attracting more than five million visitors a year. The visitor economy in Newcastle is estimated to be worth almost \$1 billion in total economic output each year and provides jobs for almost 5,000 people.

The City of Newcastle recognises the importance of tourism to the local economy and developed a Destination Management Plan (DMP) to guide this program of work. The DMP will help to ensure the growth and viability of the Newcastle visitor economy, enabling it to become resilient to external influences and changes in a dynamic and competitive market. The DMP includes seven priority areas of work:

Identity, awareness and placemaking.

Connectivity and capacity.

Nature, coastal and wellness.

Creativity, culture and heritage.

Nightlife, food, wine and ferments.

Events, festivals and conferencing.

Industry collaboration and product development.

City Events

Objective 4.4

Events provide opportunities for people to connect with other people, learn something new, see something amazing or just have fun. Events also showcase our city, develop our sense of place and identity and contribute to economic and community development. Importantly, events also play a major role in attracting visitors to our city and extending their stay.

We recognise the importance of events to the local economy and will be developing an Events Action Plan 2021–2024 to guide this program of work. The Events Action Plan will provide a holistic and strategic approach to the entire events lifecycle including principles and guidelines for identifying, attracting and promoting events in Newcastle. Most importantly, the Events Action Plan will develop a consistent framework for identifying and evaluating the economic output of events to the City. The Events Action Plan will also discuss best practice approach for the planning and management of open public space and major event infrastructure.

Multiculturalism and Diversity

Objective 4.5

A vibrant city is one that is welcoming and safe for all. Newcastle's ethnic, religious and cultural diversity is an integral part of our city's identity and is intrinsic to our city's vitality. Multiculturalism is in the interest of all residents and expresses our sense of fairness and inclusion. Migrants to Newcastle, including our most recent arrivals, have brought much-needed skills, labour and ideas to our city. They have given energy, ingenuity and enterprise that makes Newcastle what it is today. Research shows that migrant populations deliver an economic dividend and multiplying opportunities to local communities⁶⁶.

We want to celebrate the diversity and multiculturalism of our existing population and attract more diversity to our city. Our delivery program will seek to facilitate meaningful conversations and culturally focused events and activities.

Creative Economy

Objective 4.6

Newcastle is a creative city with an established history of dynamic makers across all the creative sectors. Our Creative Economy covers the full spectrum from music, performing arts, visual arts, architecture, fashion, advertising and design, publishing, radio, through to an established film industry. Within these sectors of the economy, there are considerable employment opportunities with clear social and financial benefits. The creative industries are conservatively estimated to contribute close to \$1 billion to the Hunter Region Gross Regional Product. Specifically, in the city of Newcastle, the creative industry, accounts for more than 2,500 jobs⁶⁷. Creative industries are connected to future urban growth and investment, city marketing and employment generation⁶⁸.

Our delivery program will have two distinct focuses to enable local infrastructure for the Creative Economy. Firstly, enhancing performance and exhibition infrastructure to showcase creativity. Venues such as the Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, Civic Theatre and Newcastle Museum are essential to supporting and educating the community on the value of our creative economy. These cultural institutions provide important markers of cultural value, allow us to tell and showcase our own stories, and drive significant economic value to the city. There is an opportunity to define a formal cultural precinct within the Newcastle CBD and provide a framework for planning to enable further growth.

Secondly is the need for infrastructure to support creative development. The primary cultural and civic institutions are only the most high-profile surface of a deeply embedded cultural infrastructure supporting the production, distribution and consumption of creative products and outputs. A creative manufacturing precinct has emerged in Clyde Street, Hamilton North. This precinct is located in a former industrial area and now contains 38 creative-manufacturing-social enterprise SMEs operating with a broad range of tenants across the creative sector. The value in this organic co-location of creative industries is the establishment of a vibrant, diverse culture resulting in synergistic partnerships, and collaborative projects with local, regional and international stakeholders.

Furthermore, this delivery program will encompass the existing deliverables from the Live Music Strategy. New opportunities to expand and grow the film industry have also been identified.

⁶⁵ Council of Capital City Lord Mayors 2019: 23–24.

⁶⁶ Massey & Parr 2012.

⁶⁸ Gibson, C et al 2017.

⁶⁷ McIntyre, P et al 2019: 12–15.



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ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

CCL 25/05/2021 – ADOPTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ITEM-42 Attachment B: EDS Action Plan 2021-22

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Ordinary Council Meeting

25 May 2021



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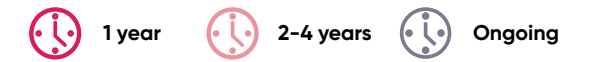
Appendix

Action Plan 2021-22



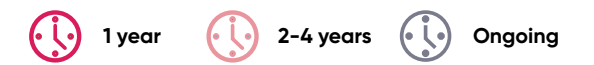
City of
Newcastle

Timeframe key



#	Delivery Program	Objective	Action	Output	Partners	Timeframe	CSP Theme	New Local	Measure of Success
1	NewSkills	1.1	Develop a Human Capital Audit for Newcastle, which identifies key skills gaps in growing industries and marginalised population groups.	Production of a strategic report based on a labour market skills audit.	Tertiary research institutions.		Smart and Innovative 6.1	Diversification	Report provides thought leadership for the city and is published in key regional communiques.
2	NewSkills	1.1	Directly fund and project manage training packages that address key skill gaps and target marginalised populations.	Fund and promote targeted training packages.	Tertiary institutions, Registered Training Organisations.		Smart and Innovative 6.1	Diversification	Each training package establishes a clear metric of success.
3	NewSkills	1.1	Develop an action plan to create a local skills-based labour market.	Production of a strategic action plan in partnership with key business and industry partners.	Strategy & Innovation Advisory Committee, Hunter Region Employment Facilitator, Training Services NSW.		Smart and Innovative 6.1	Diversification	The action plan identifies a staged approach to enabling a skills-based labour market, which can be considered by council and industry.
4	NewSkills	1.1	In collaboration with the university, TAFE and other tertiary institutions, promote the diverse range of training courses and skills development opportunities in Newcastle.	Coordinate a local marketing campaign that highlights skills gaps and labour market opportunities.	University of Newcastle, TAFE NSW, Tertiary training institutions.		Smart and Innovative 6.1	Diversification	Campaign reaches 20,000 people across the Newcastle LGA through a range of platforms.
5	Local Business People	1.2	Support the operation of the four Business Improvement Associations.	Regularly attend and actively contribute to BIA meetings. Ensure all BIAs have up-to-date Deliverables Plans.	Business leaders in the city centre and three suburban precincts.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Ownership	Attend a minimum of one BIA meeting per precinct per quarter. Host biannual BIA meeting with Lord Mayor and CEO. Respond to requests in a timely manner.
6	Local Business People	1.2	Establish a quarterly newsletter to local businesses.	Develop and maintain local business database. Coordinate production of newsletters focused on informing businesses of economic development issues in the city.	BIAs, Business Hunter.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Ownership	Newsletter receives an average opening rate of 15%. Evaluation indicates newsletter provides value-add to businesses.
7	Local Business People	1.2	Local business advocate	A one-front door approach for local small business operators to Council regarding economic development matters.	Local business owners and operators		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Place	Metric of success built into the biannual survey of local businesses.
8	Local Business People	1.2	Bi-annual survey to local businesses.	Conduct and publish regular surveys of local businesses.	Local business owners and operators.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Ownership	100+ responses are received from local business owners.
9	Local Business People	1.2	Develop a City Business Intelligence Platform that provides economic and customer insights.	Develop / maintain a digital platform populated with data analytics that provide strategic information to SMEs.	BIAs, local business owners and operators, Transport for NSW, Keolis Downer.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Place	Award-winning innovation platform that is regarded as a leader in the field for local government. Specific measures to be identified in project scoping phase.
10	Talent attraction	1.3	Lead a New Move campaign to attract innovative, highly-skilled, influential and community-minded creative and entrepreneurial professionals to move to Newcastle	Coordinate engagement campaign aimed at attracting skilled entrepreneurs to Newcastle and raising the profile of Newcastle's economic development opportunities.	Hunter iF, ICAN, key local business leaders, local real estate agents, tourism operators.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Marketing content receives 100,000+ impressions and 50+ applications are received for New Move.
11	Talent attraction	1.3	In partnership with key stakeholders, develop a Digital Prospectus for the city/region.	Develop and maintain a digital platform aimed at raising the profile of Newcastle's economic development opportunities. To be delivered through regional collaboration.	Regional NSW, HCCDC, local tourism providers.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Platform integrates 15+ data sources in real time. Platform receives 250+ impressions per month on average.
12	Talent attraction	1.3	Provide data analytics and marketing/promotion support to the Study Newcastle platform.	Study Newcastle web platform accesses data and insights from City of Newcastle's Digital Prospectus project to effectively promote Newcastle to prospective students across the world.	University of Newcastle, TAFE NSW.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Measure of success to be developed in partnership with the University of Newcastle.
13	Inclusive Newcastle	1.4	Remodel Lean in Newy to drive environmental, social and corporate governance practices throughout the city. Both citizens and businesses are rewarded for delivering inclusive practices.	Lean in Newy provides a digital toolkit for residents and businesses to implement.	GreenBe.		Inclusive Community 4.1	Regeneration	Lean in Newy sees 2,000 ESG actions completed annually.
14	Inclusive Newcastle	1.4	Develop an Inclusive Newcastle Procurement Charter for implementation by both council and industry as part of the Lord Mayor's Collaborative Group for the Sustainable Development Goals.	Information guide.	Strategy & Innovation Adv Committee of Council.		Inclusive Community 4.1	Regeneration	City of Newcastle endorses the Inclusive Newcastle Procurement Charter. Ten industry/business partners also endorse the Inclusive Newcastle Procurement Charter.

Timeframe key



#	Delivery Program	Objective	Action	Output	Partners	Timeframe	CSP Theme	New Local	Measure of Success
15	International Networks	1.5	Pilot a local concierge service to support local businesses accessing skilled migration visas.	An individual whom businesses can receive tailored support from to assist in their visa applications.	BIAs, Business Hunter, local business owners and operators.		Inclusive Community 4.1	Connectivity	Ten local businesses are supported to bring on 1+ skilled international migrants.
16	International Networks	1.5	Develop a strategic plan for Newcastle's engagement with international networks aligned with industry connections and government-to-government relationships (including Sister City partnerships).	Produce a report outlining an engagement plan for international networks incorporating industry, business and tourism, with a clear remit for local government identified. Report to be developed in partnership with key stakeholders across the city.	Port of Newcastle, Newcastle Airport, University of Newcastle, HunterNet.		Inclusive Community 4.1	Connectivity	Report is considered by council and endorses a strategic approach.
17	Innovation Ecosystem	2.1	Develop an online, virtual ecosystem tool for accessing, auditing and promoting ecosystem actors and factors.	Launch of NewiHub, a virtual innovation hub for connecting talent, opportunity and resources.	Local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups, incubators, co-working spaces, investors and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	NewiHub is a community of over 300 members.
18	Innovation Ecosystem	2.1	Work with local entrepreneurs to design an entrepreneur's program that supports peer-to-peer mentoring, learning, connection and collaboration.	Engage scaleup founders to co-design a Scale Lab, which is a peer-to-peer mentoring and support program where entrepreneurs can share challenges and find solutions in a private and confidential environment.	HunterIF, local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	Scale Lab is a cohort of 20 entrepreneurs from scaling local ventures.
19	Innovation Ecosystem	2.1	Support the innovation community to develop a set of principles and values to create a central ethos to guide how entrepreneurs, actors and supporters engage the innovation ecosystem.	Coordinate an IQ Summit to engage and collaborate with ecosystem stakeholders to co-create an innovation ecosystem charter.	HunterIF, University of Newcastle, local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Democracy	50 stakeholders sign the innovation ecosystem charter.
20	Innovation Ecosystem	2.1	Initiate a Chief Entrepreneur program to strengthen community awareness, appreciation and uptake of entrepreneurship and innovation through showcasing, connecting and championing local businesses, entrepreneurial talent, the innovation support industry and the impact they have on the Newcastle economy.	Appoint a Chief Entrepreneur and engage them to lead an advocacy and attraction campaign to entice investment and support for the innovation ecosystem. The Chief Entrepreneur will advocate for entrepreneurs and the innovation support industry. The Newcastle Chief Entrepreneur program will further support the delivery of a program to grow future ecosystem leaders. This program will help champion local entrepreneurs through publishing a '40 under 40' list of Newcastle's most inspiring local innovators.	Strategy & Innovation Committee of Council members, HunterIF, local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Culture	The Chief Entrepreneur facilitates five high-level engagements supports 10 future leaders and publishes a '40 under 40' list.
21	Living Lab	2.2	Develop a commercialisation and pilot program for entrepreneurs and business to prototype, pilot and evaluate innovation.	Deliver sector-specific accelerator programs, starting with Smart City. An accelerator is an innovation program that provides time-limited support, comprised of workshops, mentoring and investment, to a competitively selected cohort of startups (business).	Incubators and accelerators.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	Support seven startups through the accelerator program and pilot four solutions.
22	Living Lab	2.2	Support the formation of innovation through delivering an ideation program that helps emerging entrepreneurs to find commercial opportunities and solve city and community challenges.	Provide an ideation program, which is a time-limited support program that helps entrepreneurs through the formation phase of the startup journey helping them discover ideas for innovation and commercialisation.	Local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	10 emerging entrepreneurs participate in the ideation program.
23	Living Lab	2.2	Deliver an open innovation challenge that invites entrepreneurs at all levels to develop innovative commercial solutions to scalable urban challenges.	Launch an open innovation challenge inviting students, researchers, individuals, startups and established organisations and businesses to pitch solutions to solve identified city challenges.	City of Melbourne, local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	Pilot three solutions from the challenge.

Timeframe key



#	Delivery Program	Objective	Action	Output	Partners	Timeframe	CSP Theme	New Local	Measure of Success
24	Living Lab	2.2	Build an online tool that identifies urban challenges and enables entrepreneurs and business to discover commercial opportunities.	Produce a web platform that outlines the Living Lab framework, engagement opportunities and city challenges.	Living Lab partners and community.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	Post five challenges annually and facilitate more than 100 engagements with business, organisations and entrepreneurs.
25	Living Lab	2.2	Attract future and new industries to Newcastle through co-creating an engagement framework for collaboration.	Implement a Living Lab framework that invites partners such as entrepreneurs, businesses and organisations to utilise the lab for validating solutions to city and community challenges.	Living Lab partners.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	Work with 30 partners to validate innovation using the Living Lab.
26	Inclusive Innovation	2.3	Build an online learning portal that provides entrepreneurs with a toolbox for developing innovative business, talent and skills.	Launch a community lab website that provides everyone with the tools to learn, understand and engage in innovation through virtual 'How-to Guides'.	Local entrepreneurs, HunterIF, University of Newcastle.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Innovation	Fifty users access the community lab.
27	Inclusive Innovation	2.3	Deliver and support a continuous series of events that create engagement around the activity of entrepreneurship and increases understanding of innovation across the community.	Deliver four quarterly IQ events and support the Hunter Innovation Festival.	HunterIF.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Culture	Deliver four quarterly events and an event at the Hunter Innovation Festival.
28	Inclusive Innovation	2.3	Implement a youth innovation program to encourage and raise awareness of entrepreneurship and innovation as a future career pathway.	Provide an enterprise skill development program for high school students.	Local entrepreneurs, University of Newcastle.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Culture	Engage 20 young people in entrepreneurship.
29	Inclusive Innovation	2.3	Encourage small business, SMEs, corporate and community sectors to pursue innovation-led growth through one-day intensive deep dives into innovation.	Four quarterly one-day conferences on implementing, engaging and scaling innovation.	BIAs, Business Hunter.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Diversification	Fifty entrepreneurs attend each quarterly conference.
30	Inclusive Innovation	2.3	Increase participation in entrepreneurship and access to the innovation ecosystem by cultivating and embracing diversity through implementing inclusive programming designed for specific communities.	Deliver an entrepreneurial capability building and enterprise skill development program for female, indigenous, disabled and LGBTQI+ entrepreneurs.	Incubators and accelerators.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Equity	Deliver four cohorts and support 60 entrepreneurs.
31	Scaling Innovation	2.4	Cultivate the clustering of innovative entrepreneurs, startups and scaleups in Newcastle through providing a Talent and Scaleup Landing Pad that enables entrepreneurs and enterprise to trial the benefits of our city and relocate more easily.	Open a Talent and Scaleup Landing Pad. A Landing Pad is a shared workspace that supports immigrating scaleups and skilled professionals to re-locate in Newcastle. The Landing Pad delivers this support through providing flexible office solutions, connection, advice and community. A Landing Pad exists within an established or planned shared workspace as a separate or integrated space.	Co-working spaces.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Connectivity	Thirty entrepreneurs and highly skilled professionals utilise the Talent and Scaleup Landing Pad annually. Landing Pad supports the relocation of 15 entrepreneurs and three businesses.
32	Scaling Innovation	2.4	Advocate for the development of a scaleup hub that supports the attraction and retention of globally scalable business.	Produce advocacy piece and prospectus for partners interested in developing a scaleup hub in Newcastle.	HunterIF, University of Newcastle, local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Connectivity	Meet with five potential partners.
33	Scaling Innovation	2.4	Showcase local innovative businesses, organisations, startups and scaleups to global investors through virtual demo days.	Produce a virtual demo day with local entrepreneurs. A demo day is an event where entrepreneurs pitch their business to investors. A virtual demo day would involve recording pitches and streaming them into global innovation hubs.	HunterIF, University of Newcastle, local entrepreneurs, startups, scaleups and SMEs.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Connectivity	Three businesses find investment or connections that help grow their business.

Timeframe key



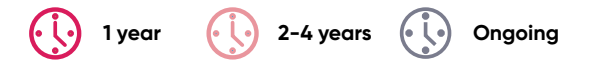
#	Delivery Program	Objective	Action	Output	Partners	Timeframe	CSP Theme	New Local	Measure of Success
34	Scaling Innovation	2.4	Produce global market and investor readiness programs that help business build capability, improve readiness and create connection pathways to new markets, customers and investors to scale innovation in key industry sectors.	As part of the Scale Lab, deliver a global market and investor readiness program, which is a time-limited support program comprised of workshops, mentoring and demonstration opportunities. This program is targeted at SMEs with product and services that have the potential to be exported globally.	Incubators and accelerators		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Connectivity	Support 10 SMEs to be investor and export ready.
35	Scaling Innovation	2.4	Help market-ready businesses, organisations, startups and scaleups connect with new customers and investors by providing access to global and national Landing Pads.	Provide selected local SMEs with access to a 90-day residency in an international co-working space and/or access to hot desking in national co-working spaces in other states and territories.	Co-working spaces.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Connectivity	Help 10 entrepreneurs enter and connect into new markets.
36	Scaling Innovation	2.4	Initiate a Lord Mayor's Global Entrepreneur program that highlights and celebrates local early-stage entrepreneurs creating globally scalable business.	A grants program that provides five entrepreneurs with \$10,000 to fund activities that support scaling such as visiting a foreign market, participating in an innovation program or marketing.	Strategy & Innovation Committee of Council members.		Smart and Innovative 6.2	Culture	The five grant recipients report new growth in their business.
37	Strategic Planning and Development	3.1	Create a City Analytics Program to ensure applied research into the economic and social dynamics of Newcastle and City of Newcastle strategic programs are based on international best practice and local evidence.	Partnerships with research institutions deliver insight into strategic action for the city.	Universities.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Independent research is commissioned on a minimum of two city themes per year. Newcastle is Australia's most researched city.
38	Strategic Planning and Development	3.1	Investigate and implement approaches to incentivising commercial development in appropriate locations such as the west end of the city centre.	Partnership with Strategic Planning to consider how infrastructure contributions could be used to incentivise commercial development.	City of Newcastle Urban Planning.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	Increased commercial floor space provided within the B3 Commercial Zone
39	Strategic Planning and Development	3.1	Undertake the land use and infrastructure planning for the Catalyst Areas and Innovation Precincts.	Participation in Catalyst Site Steering Group meetings.	HCCDC, Regional NSW, Business Attraction Committee		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	Completed land use and infrastructure plans in collaboration with the catalyst site steering group.
40	Strategic Planning and Development	3.1	In partnership with the Business Attraction Committee, provide a City of Newcastle specific concierge service to businesses looking to establish in Newcastle.	Meet with prospective businesses to provide them with confidence of the local workforce, land availability and investment pipeline in Newcastle.	Business Attraction Committee.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	Meet with one prospective business per month. Communication channel with Planning Assessment team is clear and transparent.
41	Strategic Planning and Development	3.1	Develop an approach to local centre economic analysis to align with local strategic land-use planning and local centre character statements.	Local character statements prepared for local centres include economic analysis and opportunities.	City of Newcastle Urban Planning.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Placemaking	A methodology for undertaking local centre economic analysis aligning with local strategic land-use planning is developed.
42	Strategic Planning and Development	3.1	Develop an economic analysis package for each Local Centre to support the continued LCPDP.	Local Centres Economic Analysis developed and published in line with LCPDP schedule.	TBC		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Placemaking	Local centres economic analysis published in line with LCPDP. Business activity in each local is measured pre- and post- upgrade.
43	Strategic Planning and Development	3.1	Identify and communicate the types of businesses we expect to grow and expand across each precinct of the Innovation Arc to demonstrate alignment with the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan.	Industry Catalyst sites are promoted through the Digital Prospectus.	HCCDC, Regional NSW, Business Attraction Committee.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	Detailed content on each catalyst area and innovation precinct is published in 2022 and updated annually.
44	Digital Infrastructure	3.2	Adopt 'dig once' policy for future proofing the city centre for fibre connectivity.	A Dig Once policy developed and presented to council.	G20 Smart Cities Alliance, World Economic Forum.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Council adopts policy in 2022.

Timeframe key



#	Delivery Program	Objective	Action	Output	Partners	Timeframe	CSP Theme	New Local	Measure of Success
45	Digital Infrastructure	3.2	Leverage smart city fibre network to provide fibre or wireless high-speed digital connectivity for businesses in the city centre.	Businesses connected to high-speed digital connections.	Telecommunications Partners, Data Centre Providers.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation Diversification	Newcastle city centre businesses enjoy cost-effective and high-speed connectivity.
46	Digital Infrastructure	3.2	Develop an inclusive broadband policy for ensuring equitable access to highspeed internet across the LGA.	A broadband network connection policy developed and presented to Council	Community Sector Organisations.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation Equity	Council adopts policy in 2023 ensuring low Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas communities can access broadband internet.
47	Digital Infrastructure	3.2	Provide pilot-scale access to the IoT network for dcity partners and entrepreneurs	Pilot access model developed and promote	Living Lab partners.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Two Newcastle organisations per year leverage City of Newcastle network to pilot IoT applications.
48	Digital Infrastructure	3.2	Develop standards for 5G small cell deployment into urban centre streetscapes	Streetscape 5G standards developed and presented to Council	Department Planning, Industry & Environment, Smart Cities Council.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Council adopts standards for small cell integration adopted in 2022.
49	Digital Infrastructure	3.2	Identify new physical testbed locations appropriate for different sector needs	Sector development plan for Living Lab	TBC		6Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Industry sectors can access and leverage living lab innovation partners and prototyping facilities.
50	Local Investment and Capital	3.3	Develop a detailed Action Plan about how the City of Newcastle will stimulate local investment.	Action Plan is delivered in partnership with key stakeholders across the city and in collaboration with national and state securities bodies.	New Local, Local Building Societies.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation Ownership	Action Plan researched and developed in 2023.
51	Strategic Advocacy	3.4	Develop a strategic approach to the preparation of Advocacy Action Plans.	Advocacy Action Plans methodology developed with research and industry partners.	Local tertiary institutions, State and Federal Government partners, Gateway Cities Alliance.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	Advocacy Action Plan methodology developed and implemented.
52	Strategic Advocacy	3.4	Develop and implement an Advocacy Action Plan for Hunter Park.	Four-year advocacy plan including annual stages developed and implemented for Hunter Park.	Venues NSW, Infrastructure Australia.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	To be outlined in Advocacy Action Plan
53	Strategic Advocacy	3.4	Develop and implement an Advocacy Action Plan for the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor.	Four-year Advocacy Action Plan including annual stages developed and implemented for the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor.	Transport for NSW, Infrastructure Australia.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	To be outlined in Advocacy Action Plan
54	Strategic Advocacy	3.4	Business case development to support Advocacy Action Plans.	Development of business cases for submission to Infrastructure NSW and Infrastructure Australia.	Strategy and Innovation Committee, Infrastructure NSW, Infrastructure Australia.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	One business case developed each year to support Advocacy Action Plans.
55	Circular Economy	3.5	Support regional initiatives seeking to map and publish material flows.	Material flows analysis published.	Hunter JO, Hunter Circular.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Diversification	Material flows analysis is publicly available
56	Circular Economy	3.5	Circular Economy to be included as a priority theme in the Living Lab and promote innovation and technology testbed opportunities.	Circular Economy developed and promoted as a Living Lab theme.	Hunter JO, Hunter Circular, Living Lab partners.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Two living lab projects/year are developed in the CE theme
57	Circular Economy	3.5	Prioritise the reuse of material flows and local manufacturing in procurement.	Updates to procurement policy developed.	City of Newcastle Procurement.		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Amended procurement policy adopted in 2022
58	Circular Economy	3.5	Develop a comprehensive policy, regulatory and strategic framework for CE.	Circular Economy Action Plan developed.	TBC		Smart and Innovative 6.3	Innovation	Circular Economy Action Plan is endorsed by Council in 2022

Timeframe key



#	Delivery Program	Objective	Action	Output	Partners	Timeframe	CSP Theme	New Local	Measure of Success
59	City Activation	4.1	Lead the delivery of Special Business Rate Program to the city centre and four suburban precincts.	\$1.2+ million in Special Business Rate service agreements are distributed annually.	BIAs.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	Receiving 30+ applications for the city centre and 10+ applications for each of the suburban precincts.
60	City Activation	4.1	Collaborate with the Business Improvement Associations.	BIAs have one point of contact at City of Newcastle.	BIAs.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	City of Newcastle representative attends a minimum of one BIA meeting for each precinct per quarter. Host a biannual BIA event with the Lord Mayor and CEO.
61	Newcastle After Dark	4.2	Encourage increased shopfront and building illumination to improve street presence and lighting.	Empower shop owners to value night-time safety.	BIAs.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	Deliver three lighting improvement projects per annum.
62	Newcastle After Dark	4.2	Develop how-to guides for activations, events and live music related projects.	Deliver practical how to guides based on the knowledge gaps in the sector.	Industry experts.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	Deliver three practical and interactive guides per annum.
63	Newcastle After Dark	4.2	Collaboratively facilitate grants to incentivise live music during key city events.	Run three grants programs per year.	Event organisers, venues and artists/ performers.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	Execution of the three grants to result in live music and performance across the city.
64	Multiculturalism and Inclusivity	4.5	Establish a program of small scale activations that celebrate multicultural diversity and build capacity of the communities to run events.	Community-run events that celebrate the city's diverse communities.	Hunter multicultural communities.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	Three multicultural events funded and facilitated.
65	Creative Economy	4.6	Support the creation of a Strategic Business Case for the development of a Cultural Precinct in the CBD.	Strategic Business Case, which is presented to council for consideration.	Consultants, Performance venues.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	To be developed in partnership with the consultants.
66	Creative Economy	4.6	Support the growth of the creative-manufacturing-social enterprise in the city.	Promote the creative infrastructure located at Clyde Street, Hamilton North.	Creative sector.		3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking, Diversity	To be developed in partnership with City of Newcastle Urban Planning Team.

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CCL 25/05/2021 – ADOPTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ITEM-42 Attachment C: EDS Public Exhibition Engagement Report

Ordinary Council Meeting

25 May 2021



DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

Economic Development Strategy
Public Exhibition Engagement Report
May 2021

1 Background

In developing the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) for public exhibition, extensive stakeholder and expert engagement was undertaken. Through a community-wide survey and 11 workshops, over 400 people were engaged up front, and their feedback incorporated into the initial draft EDS.

Engagement included workshops with City of Newcastle's (CN) Strategy and Innovation Advisory Committee, City Taskforce and representatives from the business, innovation and community sectors.

Engagement also included targeted conversations with groups acutely impacted by the economic and social disruption as a result of COVID-19. In particular, discussions with young people were conducted in partnership with TAFE NSW, Hunternet, University of Newcastle and the Hunter Young Professionals. Engagement also focused on engaging with people from non-English speaking backgrounds, talking to four cohorts of English as a Second Language students from TAFE NSW.

Significant community and stakeholder engagement formed the initial drafting of the Economic Development Strategy.

2 Engagement and promotion

A communication plan was activated throughout the public exhibition period to promote the opportunity for community members to provide feedback.

Key communication activities are summarised below:

- Dedicated Have Your Say page with online submission form – eight submissions. Another submission was received directly via email, as well as a range of informal submissions.
- Have Your Say webpage – 635 views with an average of 5:53 mins on page.
- Have Your Say email newsletter (two) distributed to (2,500+ subscribers) on 25 February 2021 and 26 March 2021. Total of 45 click throughs to the document.
- Overall social reach via LinkedIn and Facebook was 15,238 people (saw the post) with 160 click throughs to the Have Your Say webpage.
- Showcase tile on CN's home webpage 25 February to 21 March – 60 visits, 385 views.
- Media release distributed on 23 February 2021.
- Facebook Group Have Your Say posts (three) on 1 March, 24 March and 9 April 2021.
- Hunter Young Professionals Facebook post on 18 March 2021.
- Internal communications – staff NovoNews newsletter (1) distributed to (900+ subscribers) on 3 March 2021.

Activities were supported with direct messaging to key economic development stakeholders, including stakeholders that had contributed during the initial engagement period.

3 Submissions

Eight external submissions were received over the public exhibition period and are outlined below. Overall, submissions supported the EDS with comments mostly requesting further emphasis on programs / actions included; reflecting a strong community-focused engagement prior to public exhibition.

Table 1 – Summary of feedback and CN response

No.	Feedback Summary	CN Response to Feedback
1	1.1 Overall – the views of children, young people and young adults should be better reflected in this strategy.	<i>Engagement included dedicated sessions with three different cohorts of young people in Newcastle. Further engagement regarding the economic vision for the city will be incorporated into the upcoming Newcastle 2040 engagement program.</i>
	1.2 Skilled People Priority – more analysis on the reasons why young adults leave to inform how we can retain talent, and more analysis of why older young people do not return to inform how we can encourage them to return.	<i>A new City Analytics program has been added to the City Shaping Priority, which recognises the importance of research and data in informing future Council programming. The current New Move program and associated evaluation (being completed by the University of Newcastle), will answer some of the questions raised.</i>
	1.3 City Shaping Priority – support for small business, and guidance on how to take and manage risk.	<i>Incorporated into NewSkills Delivery Program and associated actions.</i>
	1.4 Vibrant City Priority – in addition to a lack of cultural diversity, there is also a lack of sexual and gender diversity. The NSW 24-hour economy strategy action to have a night-time neon grid could be adopted in Newcastle.	<i>Noted. The Economic Development team will seek a meeting with the new 24-Hour Economy Commissioner and explore synergies between the Strategy being implemented in Sydney and the opportunities for Newcastle.</i>
2	2.1 City Shaping Priority – higher main road speeds, more public transport and building a CycleSafe Network will reduce congestion.	<i>Noted. Feedback will be passed through to Transport and Urban Planning teams within the City of Newcastle.</i>
	2.2 Vibrant City Priority – higher density cities provide greater returns for residents.	
3	3.1 Overall – the Strategy is sound and backed by a detailed evidence base.	<i>Noted.</i>
	3.2 Skilled People Priority – need to define marginalised community and work with relevant community organisations to inform the gap analysis, barriers to training and training packages.	<i>Language has been updated in both the proposed delivery program and specific actions to define marginalised communities and emphasise the importance of local partnerships to deliver the program.</i>

No.	Feedback Summary	CN Response to Feedback
	3.3 Skilled People Priority – the attraction of talent and skilled migration will be associated with higher incomes and place increased demand on scarce housing. Strategy needs a clearer link between economic development and the shortfall in social and affordable housing.	<i>Strategy has been updated to reflect the tension between economic development and affordable housing. This tension has been further exacerbated even since the EDS went on public exhibition in February.</i>
	3.4 Innovative People Priority – need a direct reference and action to build the capacity of innovative Aboriginal owned and controlled enterprises.	<i>A direct reference in the Strategy and a specific action regarding innovative Aboriginal owned and controlled enterprises has been added.</i>
	3.5 City Shaping Priority – proposal to explore the existing and potential research strengths of UON (such as waste reduction and regeneration) with CN’s objectives around the circular economy.	<i>Noted. This proposal will be further explored in the implementation of Action 3.5 “Develop a comprehensive policy, regulatory and strategic framework for CE”.</i>
4	4.1 Overall – the Strategy is well thought out, comprehensive and contains measurable targets / outcomes.	<i>Noted.</i>
	4.2 Vibrant City – the main hurdle to activating the CBD is the complex and expensive planning and licensing framework. Proposal to create a special vibrant city planning advocate within Council to support the preparation and fast tracking of development applications.	<i>A new action under the ‘Local Business People’ Delivery program has been added entitled “Local Business Advocate”. The functioning of this role will have broader reach than the night time economy, but will provide a one-front door approach for local small business operators to Council requirements.</i>
5	5.1 Overall – strong support for a well thought out and all encompassing strategy.	<i>Noted.</i>
	5.2 Skilled People Priority – comprehensive and will benefit the community as a whole.	<i>Noted.</i>
	5.3 Innovative People Priority – well thought out.	<i>Noted.</i>
	5.4 City Shaping Priority – the push for 5G is great, but more CCTV is required in the city. I don’t feel 100% safe walking around the city as a young female. An emphasis on safety will enhance economic opportunities.	<i>Feedback has been provided to the Corporate Strategy team for consideration with Newcastle 2040 plan. Safety improvements will require a whole of Council response, including with a technology-enabled smart city.</i>
	5.5 Vibrant City Priority – support for all elements. Believes that the majority of people are supportive of a thriving night time economy.	<i>Noted.</i>

No.	Feedback Summary	CN Response to Feedback
6	6.1 Overall – the report is a useful guide to future productive directions for Newcastle. Glaring omission is that significant parts of Newcastle CBD and surrounds will be flooded by 2090. Need the immediate forming of a working group to plan for the economic, social and land-use impacted.	<i>Feedback has been provided to the City of Newcastle’s Emergency Management Officer and Resilience NSW representatives for further consideration.</i>
7	7.1 Overall – very promising and excited to be in Newcastle.	<i>Noted</i>
	7.2 Vibrant City Priority – West End, Civic and East End need to be defined as Entertainment Precincts.	<i>The Newcastle After Dark Strategy already defines a range of precincts across the city. Furthermore, the City of Newcastle is currently investigating a Civic Cultural Precinct proposal.</i>
8	8.1 Overall – one of the poorest quality documents I have ever sited on economic growth, no substance and anti-business. The policy says nothing about a uniform transport strategy, arresting the city’s crumbling infrastructure or parking in the CBD. No measures in place to address business’ devastation by major events or lack of CBD access. Notes that the BIAs are controlled by unsuitable Council personnel.	<i>Transport, maintenance of existing city infrastructure and parking are all outside of the remit of the Economic Development Strategy and covered by other strategic documents within Council. Detailed and substantive alternatives were sought from the individual to expand the Local Business People delivery program to address the challenges identified. No alternative actions have been provided at the time of publication.</i>
9	9.1 Overall – support the four priority areas chosen to drive economic development in Newcastle.	<i>Noted</i>
	9.2 Overall – New ‘Change and Resilience’ priority to cover the opportunities and challenges presented by the transition to a carbon neutral city by 2040. Priority would incorporate Circular Economy and SDG 13 would be added to the EDS. Climate Change is the biggest economic issue and opportunity over the next decade.	<i>The City of Newcastle recognises the importance of ‘Change and Resilience’ and is developing a new Strategy entitled “Sustainable Newcastle” to deliver a suite of actions. This will be referred to in the updated EDS. SDG13 has been incorporated into the updated EDS.</i>
	9.3 Vibrant City Priority – expand the focus to establish a network of liveable and sustainable suburban centres. Furthermore, a Vibrant City also depends on the attractions of the City’s natural environment and the need to protect and expand them.	<i>Feedback has more direct alignment with the overarching Community Strategic Plan. Suburban precincts have been strongly acknowledged in the City Shaping Priority. The recently adopted Cycling Strategy also discusses further plans for local bike paths. Language has been updated in the Vibrant City priority to recognise the importance of suburban centres. The Destination Management Plan already includes the natural environment as one of its key pillars.</i>

No.	Feedback Summary	CN Response to Feedback
	<p>9.4 City-Shaping Priority Airport Hub – Williamtown should not be included as a Strategic Hub for the city’s economic future due to the air travel’s reliance on fossil fuels and organisations devoted to the development of weapons.</p>	<p><i>Williamtown has been included as a Catalyst Area in the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan and Special Action Precinct by the State Government – this has been reflected in the EDS. The precinct provides opportunities for skills that can transition across many industries including advanced manufacturing.</i></p>
	<p>9.5 City Shaping Priority Hunter Park Precinct – has the potential to be an important economic and social asset for the city. Council should have planning and development control over this precinct.</p>	<p><i>The City of Newcastle successfully submitted an application for the precinct to be added to Infrastructure Australia’s Priority List. Hunter Central Coast Development Corporation is the planning and development lead for the precinct. The City of Newcastle is represented on the working group.</i></p>
	<p>9.6 City Shaping Priority Black Hill – Beresfield Hub – should be included as a strategic hub in the EDS. It’s future role, especially in freight movement to and from a diversified port is critical.</p>	<p><i>Black Hill – Beresfield is noted in the EDS.</i></p>

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CCL 25/05/2021 – ADOPTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ITEM-42 **Attachment D:** Economic Development Strategy Engagement Report (prior to Public Exhibition Period)

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Ordinary Council Meeting

25 May 2021



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Economic Development Strategy

Engagement report

December 2020



Image courtesy: Hunter Medical Research Institute

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Executive summary

This report provides the findings from stakeholder and community engagement in relation to the City of Newcastle's (CN) next 10-year Economic Development Strategy (EDS). As part of the development of new EDS, CN's Strategy & Innovation team in partnership with CN's Community Engagement team implemented an engagement program supported by an Economic Discussion Paper (EDP). The engagement was carried out to provoke discussion and critical consideration around a suite of proposed economic development programs under four proposed pillars:

- Pillar One: Enabling Skills - "The future of work is people"
- Pillar Two: Enabling Innovation - "The foundation to create your own opportunities"
- Pillar Three: City-Shaping Initiatives - "The support and infrastructure to facilitate success"
- Pillar Four: Vibrant City - "An activated and supportive city for all".

The engagement activities were delivered between 3 November and 7 December 2020. Engagement comprised of a mixed-methods approach including a workshops series, presentations, and an online survey. Approximately 400 individuals were directly and indirectly engaged. A total of 187 surveys were completed and 10 workshops / interviews.

The key objective of the engagement was to gain insights into how participants regarded the four draft pillars and associated program statements and how might CN improve opportunities for participants across a range of topics such as enabling new skills development, connectivity and partnerships.

The findings will inform the development of the new EDS and help refine action-orientated strategies. The engagement findings will accompany an externally commissioned series of workshops and interviews undertaken by planning consultancy, City Plan. It is intended that the EDS will be presented to Council in February 2021.

Key themes emerging from the engagement program included **support for the proposed pillars and the associated program statements**. At the City Taskforces workshop, feedback also reflected **strong endorsement of the EDS vision**. Support was highest overall for programs that encourage or enable City activation, a digital corridor, and an innovation ecosystem. Support was lower in comparison for programs around international networking, the gateway cities alliance, and city analytics.

In relation to new skills, talent attraction and inclusion, participants indicated a diverse range of views. What was evident was CN's need to balance growth and attraction through supporting existing and local operations along with attracting new skills and talents, as well as positioning the City and promoting liveability attributes.

Other themes to emerge were ensuring the EDS is clear in purpose, written in accessible language, and has actions and evaluation measures. CN's role as an advocate and ideas around how taking a coordination role, facilitating incentives and supporting pathways and entry into employment, and the transition to more sustainable pursuits through innovation or green actions, also emerged from the comments.

Overall, the engagement activities evidenced a strong interest from a wide range of community and stakeholders who demonstrated an interest towards economic success for Newcastle's future.

Please go beyond tired old economic development strategies - this place and its people deserve so much more!

1. Background

The City of Newcastle's (CN) last Economic Development Strategy (EDS) was developed in 2015 and had a four-year horizon, with the strategy ending in 2019. The next EDS provides a ten-year strategy to envision a future for the Newcastle economy.

With Newcastle, the economic hub of the Hunter Region, CN's next EDS intends to identify a range of implementation programs following robust stakeholder and community consultation.

The new EDS also intends to be radically different from previous versions with a distinct people-centred approach. Underpinning the development of a new EDS a draft vision was developed, 'Create new economic opportunities for all in the 2020s', supported by four pillars:

- Pillar One: Enabling Skills - "The future of work is people"
- Pillar Two: Enabling Innovation - "The foundation to create your own opportunities"
- Pillar Three: City-Shaping Initiatives - "The support and infrastructure to facilitate success"
- Pillar Four: Vibrant City - "An activated and supportive city for all".

To support early engagement during what was largely a discovery phase and to assist drafting the writing of a new EDS, an Economic Development Discussion Paper (DP) was developed to accompany the engagement program that was undertaken by both CN and the external consultants (City Plan). City Plan undertook four targeted workshops and four phone stakeholder interviews.

Engagement activities took place from 3 November to 7 December 2020. During this engagement period a wide range of stakeholder and general community feedback was encouraged, with a focus towards younger and more diverse groups within the population. The engagement was supported through targeted communications and promotion across a variety of channels.







2. Engagement objectives

The engagement program aimed to generate interest in the development of the EDS and capture a wide range of critical reflections, ideas and opinions on how people could be at the centre of a new EDS and action plan. Key objectives included:

- Stimulate a wide range of conversations through facilitating discussions around how Newcastle might provide opportunities for all through economic development supported by a Discussion Paper outlining draft four Strategic Pillars
- Implement a survey to test the draft pillars and actions as outlined in the DP
- Implement a facilitated workshops program engaging with hard to reach groups such as students, CALD groups and younger Newcastle professionals seeking to understand where CN could improve opportunities for participants across a range of topics e.g. new skills
- Build upon relations fostered during the global pandemic with key stakeholder groups such as the University of Newcastle and City Taskforce and CN's \$5.5 million Community and Economic Resilience Package
- Encourage local businesses, industry groups and community members to test and identify actions we can take to improve opportunities in Newcastle
- Implement an engaging and accessible external and internal communications campaign with targeted social media to maximise public involvement that will occur through to Public Exhibition in 2021.

3. Communication and promotion

Throughout the engagement period a communications campaign was implemented to raise awareness of the new EDS and promote the opportunity for provide feedback. Key communications activities are summarised on the following page, and key pieces of communications collateral are included in Appendix VII.

Channel	Description	Reach
 Have Your Say webpage	A dedicated project webpage was created on CN's Have Your Say landing page. The page housed the 1-page Discussion Paper Summary, 20-page Discussion Paper and link to the CN survey.	880 + visits
 Social media	The EDS engagement was promoted via a mix of unpaid and sponsored social media on CN's Facebook page and Have Your Say Facebook Group. The project was also promoted via LinkedIn. The posts intended to raise awareness and encourage people to have their say.	246,000+ reach
 Advertising	Print advertising in Newcastle Herald and Newcastle Weekly, and digital advertising on Hunter Headline and Hunter Hunter and on screens at Wallsend and Newcastle Libraries	n/a
 Newsletters	E-newsletter articles were distributed to a selection of distribution lists including CN's community panel (Newcastle Voice), interagency newsletters, Lean In Newy, Hunter Hunter, and Hunter Business Chamber.	8 distributed to 10,000+
 External and Internal workshops + interviews	<p>CN staff from the Project and Community Engagement teams participated in a range of workshops in the lead up to and during the engagement program.</p> <p>External City Plan (consultant led) workshops: Business Community + Community/NFP sectors virtual workshops on 24 November, Tighes Hill TAFE (face-to-face) + (virtual) 25 November. Interviews x4 with apprentices and Hunternet staff.</p> <p>External workshops: University of Newcastle, CIFAL (6 October); University of Newcastle, Community Development and Social Innovation subject (20 October), CEO Connect (17 September); and NSW Department of Planning and Industry (DPIE) on 30 November, Hunter Young Professionals on 27 November and BIA's on 9 December.</p> <p>Internal CN led workshops: City Taskforce (6 & 9 November), Strategy & Innovation Committee (18 November), Major Events & Corporate Affairs (MECA) and Urban Planning on 30 November.</p>	12 sessions with 200+ attendees / interviews (approx.) representing over 30 organisations and groups.
 City Taskforce and Committees	<p>A briefing was held on 6 November with the City Taskforce with 18 attendees outlining the proposed pillars and actions presented in the DP.</p> <p>A briefing was also held on 18 November with the Strategy and Innovation Committee with 7 attendees outlining the proposed pillars and actions presented in the DP.</p>	25 attendees
 Media coverage	A media release was issued on 3 November 2020	n/a

4. Engagement activities

A range of approaches and activities were carried out to encourage awareness and participation. These activities included digital methods to accommodate evolving COVID-19 restrictions. The range of engagement activities included:

Submissions

- Submissions were received during the engagement period by email, phone and in person

Digital tools

- A 20-page Discussion Paper (DP), 1-page Discussion Paper Summary (DPS) on CN's dedicated 'Have Your Say' engagement platform and COVID-19 response timeline
- 10-minute survey seeking feedback and asking for new ideas
- Mentimeter – interactive real-time feedback App to capture participant feedback at workshops

Meetings

- City Taskforce Action Team (6 November & 9 December 2020)
- Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation (30 November 2020)

Presentations

- Pre-engagement with University of Newcastle's CIFAL UN Institute for Training and Research (6 October 2020)
- Pre-engagement with University of Newcastle's Community Development and Social Innovation subject (20 October 2020)
- Hunter Young Professionals (27 November 2020)

Workshops and interviews

- Business Community members led by City Plan (24 November 2020)
- Community Services led by City Plan (24 November 2020)
- Tighes Hill TAFE Students led by City Plan (25 November 2020)
- Tighes Hill TAFE Teachers and Operations Staff led by City Plan (25 November 2020)
- Three workshops with CN staff across service units (30 November 2020)
- Interviews (x4) – Hunternet led by City Plan (December 2020)

Direct communication with key stakeholders, including:

- Pre-engagement briefings with CEO/Hunter First Connect on 17 September; and CN's City Taskforce Innovation Economy Roundtable (24 September 2020)
- Letters and emails to a variety of identified key stakeholders (November 2020)
- Presentation to CN's Strategy & Innovation Committee (18 November 2020)
- Presentation at BIA's (2 December 2020)

- Email notification to CN's Climate Action Plan workshop attendees (60+) encouraging survey participation
- Discussions with neighbouring University of Newcastle, neighbouring Councils, State Government departments and several large organisations.

5. Overview of key findings

Submissions

Overall, the themes that emerged included a perspective that CN has a role to play in advocacy, regional collaboration and that the city's positioning and its association to the region needed to be addressed.

Other emerging themes ranged from topics like free education, support for a container terminal at the Port, increasing the job seeker rate along with reversing the trend towards workforce casualisation.

In relation to city activation, events were highlighted with one submission suggested there could be an increase the number of festivals, events and markets to increase local employment amongst a range of other suggestions around having a variety of events, events spread across the LGA and reintroducing the "Renew" business/pop-up shops model.

Inclusivity and international migration/students also emerged as an area of interest in relation to population growth, students, women and people from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) along with think about how the pillars could be associated to stakeholders groups e.g. small business, teenagers etc and the touch points. Comments were also made that related to sustainability (climate change in particular), the longer-term impacts from a transition away from coal and business sustainability. Promoting tourism also emerged as a topic with suggestions for more types of product offerings that are both CN and non-CN owned. How will CN decide on what is a priority area and what will success look like were also asked.

Workshops

Hunter Young Professionals; Business Improvement Associations; Strategy and Innovation Committee and City Taskforce

There were several themes that emerged from workshop participants when asked to discuss their individual views around the proposed programs including any perceived challenges and opportunities. The BIA's suggested strategic planning topics, asking that the EDS consider small and big business, local employment, that the Strategy be future focussed, clear in purpose and have achievable short-term and longer-term goals.

Hunter Young Professionals (HYP) suggested many ideas and observations along with stating they recognised the challenges in this policy area. Not dissimilar to the BIA they saw a challenge with timing and the relation to election cycles. Connectivity within the city-shaping context emerged as a theme with comments around the need for direct links to key locations/catalyst areas across the LGA such as the airport, John Hunter Hospital and Broadmeadow. Also, similar to the BIA's an interest in working with local talent, promoting local innovation and talent (for career development and as an attractor also for new talent) and assisting with creating opportunities for young people. Smart city initiatives across themes like internet speed, innovation hubs within the context of

meeting potential new employment and development opportunities. CN's relations with business and stakeholders along with support for small business (also mentioned by the BIA session) was mentioned as an opportunity for improvement along with its procurement and thinking about incentives.

The engagement with the City Taskforce, and the Strategy and Innovation Committee presented several discussion points around the idea of enabling skills and engaging with markets. They suggested adequate funding, clearly identifying skills and training needs (e.g. internships, creative skills) – particularly for youth and to be mindful of taking a coordinated approach with existing stakeholders who already operate in these areas. Strategic engagement emerged in relation to the idea of enabling innovation programs and suggestions that what is currently missing are: references to advanced manufacturing; community engagement with the concept of innovation; fostering connections and links across sectors, undertaking market gap analysis and consideration for a transition towards clean energy. The idea of partnerships also emerged within the area of city-shaping programs. There's a perception that what is lacking is a coordinated and unified approach in the region and across LGA boundaries and involvement in larger scale infrastructure, connections across regional events, city deals and partnerships and like the HYP mentioned cross-sector collaboration. The idea of a clearly defined city value proposition, measurability, how does CN link to core goals and positioning also emerged as topics of interest along with mapping global trends against local actors. Again, inclusivity was a highlighted with a desire for the city to be accepting and welcoming.

As a combined result the **most preferred program** across these workshops was '*City Activation – facilitation of the Special Business Rate program and Grants / Sponsorship*' (mean score 4.4) followed by the '*City Digital Corridor – a program to enable high-speed data connectivity for capacity, competitiveness and investment in the city*' (mean score 4.3).

The **least favoured** were '*International networking – investment in Sister City partnerships, International Chambers of Commerce and other key international links*' (mean score 2.8) and '*City of Newcastle Policy Statements - using local evidence and research, develop clear and comprehensive policy asks of key employment sectors across Newcastle*' (mean score 3.5).

At the City Taskforces workshop a supplementary question was asked: "Do you support City of Newcastle's vision for the Economic Development Strategy?". The mean response was 4.4 from a scale of 1 to 5 (n=15 participants) indicating strong endorsement of the EDS vision. At the Strategy and Innovation Committee meeting (18 November) the same question was asked and the mean response was 3.4 (n=9 participants).

CN Staff

Staff workshops took place on 30 November and 1 December 2020 with over 25 participants online. Findings from both all staff and targeted staff workshops also had similar discussion points to the external workshops reflecting that the DP contributed to successfully framing the engagement. Reflecting on CN's role e.g. facilitator, advocate; challenges in working with State government and general interest in how the EDS goals would be supported by resourcing, budget and how does CN foster connections and position Newcastle where all regarded as important aspects to address in the EDS.

CN's position and responsibility was also discussed and some points were made around the EDS having a stronger message and position around its goals, association to the Newcastle metro plan

and be strengthened under the City Shaping pillar. It was also suggested a stronger connection be outlined to CN's new Destination Management Plan (DMP) and to highlight and outline Newcastle events.

City promotion, communications and tourism also emerged as topics of interest with several actions proposed along with the perspective that promotion crosses over areas ranging from destination marketing to benefitting the night time economy with cross benefits for residents, youth, students and those looking to move to area. The theme of connectivity also appeared in the discussion – improving connectivity to Sydney and to other universities (apart from University of Newcastle).

A comment was also made that current discussion seemed city (and smart city) centric, how will CN support unskilled labour forces and lower socio-economic areas in Newcastle. CN's role in skills shortages, graduate placements and gaining an awareness around skills shortages (as well as opportunities for Aboriginals) were mentioned. In one targeted workshop it was suggested aligning economic development with the catalyst areas (e.g. Broadmeadow) would help expand the city. Renewable energy and transition also mentioned, and that CN has a role to take in the transition. Otherwise, the intention to focus on people was commended and referenced was made to existing data that could assist the development of the EDS (e.g. LEP and Housing studies).

At the general all staff workshop participants were asked to rank each of the proposed programs in order of preference using Mentimeter, with one being the least preferred and five being the most preferred. The most highly rated program proposal was the 'Government Relations Advocacy Action Plans – step-by-step goals to ensure a robust and evidence-based proposal supplements key funding asks' (mean score 4.8). In contrast the external workshops (HYP, BIA & City Taskforce combined mean score for this proposed action area was 4.0).

University of Newcastle

The University of Newcastle workshops covered a series of questions including how CN can help make Newcastle a city of opportunity and what role can CN take. While the workshops took place before the formal engagement period and release of the DP, the consultation provided valuable insights especially from a diverse range of students as their countries of origin ranged from Vietnam, Russia, Papua New Guinea, Nepal, India, Saudi Arabia, USA, Korea, Canada, Cambodia to Ghana. The first workshop was through CIFAL Newcastle on 6 October to students studying Community Development through Social Innovation. This workshop was conducted online and had 10 participants in attendance. The second workshop was to the students studying Sustainable Development and the UN 2030 Development agenda. This workshop was conducted in person and had 13 students in attendance and 5 online.

Education, equality, employment, inclusion/access and health were viewed by some of the key factors towards providing opportunity. Using Mentimeter, participants were asked to comment on what they saw as the top three priorities for achieving economic growth in the next 12-months.

Suggestions were made that more engagement was required such as open forums, good leadership, networking events and more local and international conferences. It was also suggested that community and academic engagement and publicising economic developments and progress would be beneficial along with stronger public – private partnerships.

In relation to CN's role, discussion points emerged around the need to achieve actions from the Operational Plan, a call for greater involvement with small business and creating platforms for

business to business interaction. In response to employment and skills, providing support (organisation or other) for creative and innovative events, support for job seekers and promoting the benefits of creating employment opportunities were suggested as areas for focus.

Survey

Recognising the challenges that arose due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey findings generally reflected an optimistic view that Newcastle provides opportunities for residents, students and business. Lifestyle benefits was the strongest attribute that presented, followed by the perception that there is a growing sector of new and innovative businesses being encouraged in Newcastle and investment in new industries.

The challenges outside of COVID that were identified were concern for an increase in the cost of living, retaining skilled and educated young people and professionals and support for small business recovery. In addition to liveability / quality of life was regarded as a competitive advantage for the city. There was also sense of confidence that employment and innovation opportunities would increase between the next 2 to 10 years.

The four pillars and associated program statements were regarded as beneficial though there was feedback that the language be more simple (plain English) and the benefits of programs could be more clearly explained, as well as CN setting some assessment criteria around their prioritisation.

Innovation, inclusivity and being welcoming, considerations for more sustainable business, and recognition of local considerations such as the transition to a cleaner and more circular economy emerged from the survey. It was also clear that advocacy, coordination and “take action” is expected by respondents in relation to supporting business, international attraction (skills, education and migration) but that there’s a desire that this doesn’t result in negative impacts for established local business or individuals.

6. Detailed findings

Submissions

A total of 8 individual submissions were received by CN during the engagement period.

Submission methods for the purposes of this report include email submissions, telephone conversations and in person conversations including discussions with University of Newcastle senior academic staff and a range of Newcastle businesses and staff.

Across the engagement several key themes emerged that can assist in validating the draft programs and providing insights for consideration in progressing the development of the new EDS. The table presenting the submissions is located: Appendix I.

.... a key part of the City, or anyone, being a pioneer is getting others to follow. Doing something different, no matter how innovative it is, only gets you brownie points if others recognise it as being advanced. So, part of the City’s strategy is to get recognition nationally and internationally for areas where the City is providing leadership. That recognition then needs to attract certain types of migrants and investment.

Submissions by theme

Advocacy/prioritisation

- It was suggested that CN has a role to play due to its perceived strong voice in advocating for changes in fields beyond the current control of local government; suggested areas being – free education (preschool to tertiary and returning funding to TAFE sector as this has been detrimental to training standards and skills development in Newcastle)
- Outline for stakeholders the growing collaboration among local govts in the lower Hunter and through evidence demonstrate regional collaboration
- Advocate for a container terminal at the Port of Newcastle to increase jobs at the Port and for the Hunter region
- Waste management observed as an area requiring of attention
- Suggested that the Defence sector is a large and presents opportunity and asked what strategies CN has in this area
- Questioned how CN decides what to prioritise, that expertise is appropriate at times and what's the decision-making criteria and measures of success
- Advocate to increase the job seeker rate to reduce poverty and increase capability for individuals to seek employment
- Reverse a perceived trend towards workforce casualisation
- Providing network connection into start-up/scaleup for “Work Integrated Learning”.

Activation

- Increase the number of festivals, events and markets to boost local employment
- International multicultural events so international students can see their culture
- Host outdoor cinema events over summer in parks across
- Explore increasing cultural events by looking at new venue options and having more than one cultural precinct in the city
- Return initiative e.g. Renew Newcastle so local businesses use empty shop fronts with free rent to both test out business idea and activate shopping areas / pop up shops
- CN to support businesses to bring products to the market.

Inclusivity

- Opinion that job creation favours “white males” and this is masked in employment figures
- Agreement that the DP points out that women, NESB people, people living with disability and others experiencing social disadvantage “have been disproportionately impacted
- Engage with women's groups, multicultural groups, migrant groups, and first nations groups to discuss barriers to employment and any start-up or employment ideas to start to addressing employment inequalities
- Consider South American and Indonesian students as potential focuses / International students as pathways / “market insiders for globalisation and export strategy”
- Consider international migration and the role of international students
- Interest in CN setting up cooperatives, perceived as resulting in creating secure jobs for local community members and having economic benefits
- Suggested that CN has an opportunity to look at addressing workforce casualisation.

Promotion/tourism

- Do more to promote local businesses and events in our city / “currently it seems that CN’s promotional material is mostly for events being held in council owned spaces”
- Opportunity for different types of tours as part of local tourism e.g. cycle-based tours of our city, canoe tours in the harbour and walking wildlife tours
- Seek international and national recognition to serve as an attractor
- CN’s (& tourism bodies) to take an active role “promoting and celebrating all things that happen in our city: exhibitions, gigs, markets, pop up shops, restaurants, upcycled goods- everything we have to offer”.

Sustainability

- Acknowledge 'changing international markets' and stated needs for 'economic diversification'
- Recognition that economic development and climate change are linked and “needs to be everyone’s focus”
- Suggested that Newcastle has an opportunity to explore businesses that focus on sustainability
- Prioritise types of businesses and innovative ideas that address climate change/crisis.

Workshops (face-to-face and online)

A series of internal and external workshops (in addition to four led by City Plan) took place during the engagement program to test CN’s proposed programs and better understand how CN could make an impact in creating a city with opportunities for all, whilst acknowledging the global pandemic /COVID-19 impacts.



Image: Hunter Young Professionals workshop

CN led workshops: Strategy and Innovation Committee; City Taskforce; and Hunter Young Professionals (HYP) and Business Improvement Association (BIA)

Four workshops took place during the engagement period with external participants to capture feedback. A total of 57 individuals participated from the Strategy and Innovation Committee; City Taskforce, Hunter Young Professionals (HYP) and Business Improvement Associations (BIA's).

Using the Mentimeter software, workshop participants were asked to rate each of the proposed programs from a scale of 1 to 5.

As a combined result the **most preferred program** across these workshops was 'City Activation – facilitation of the Special Business Rate program and Grants / Sponsorship' (mean score 4.4) followed by the 'City Digital Corridor – a program to enable high-speed data connectivity for capacity, competitiveness and investment in the city' (mean score 4.3).

The **least favoured** were 'International networking – investment in Sister City partnerships, International Chambers of Commerce and other key international links' (mean score 2.8) and 'City of Newcastle Policy Statements - using local evidence and research, develop clear and comprehensive policy asks of key employment sectors across Newcastle' (mean score 3.5).

The following four graphs illustrate the combined mean scores. Appendices II to VI present the individual cohorts' sentiments by individual workshop and proposed programs.

Enabling Skills Program

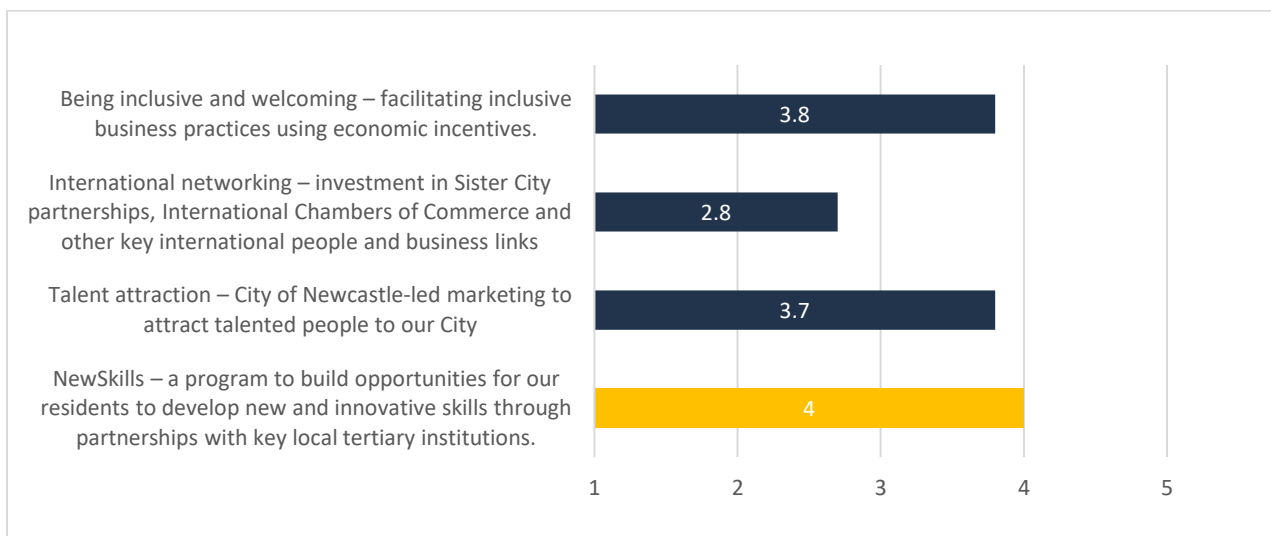


Figure 1 - Enabling Skills Program Graph - mean scores

Enabling Innovation Program

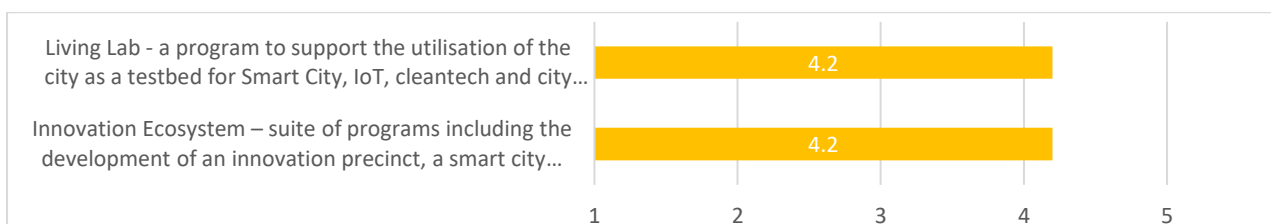


Figure 2 - Enabling Innovation Program - mean scores

City Shaping Initiatives

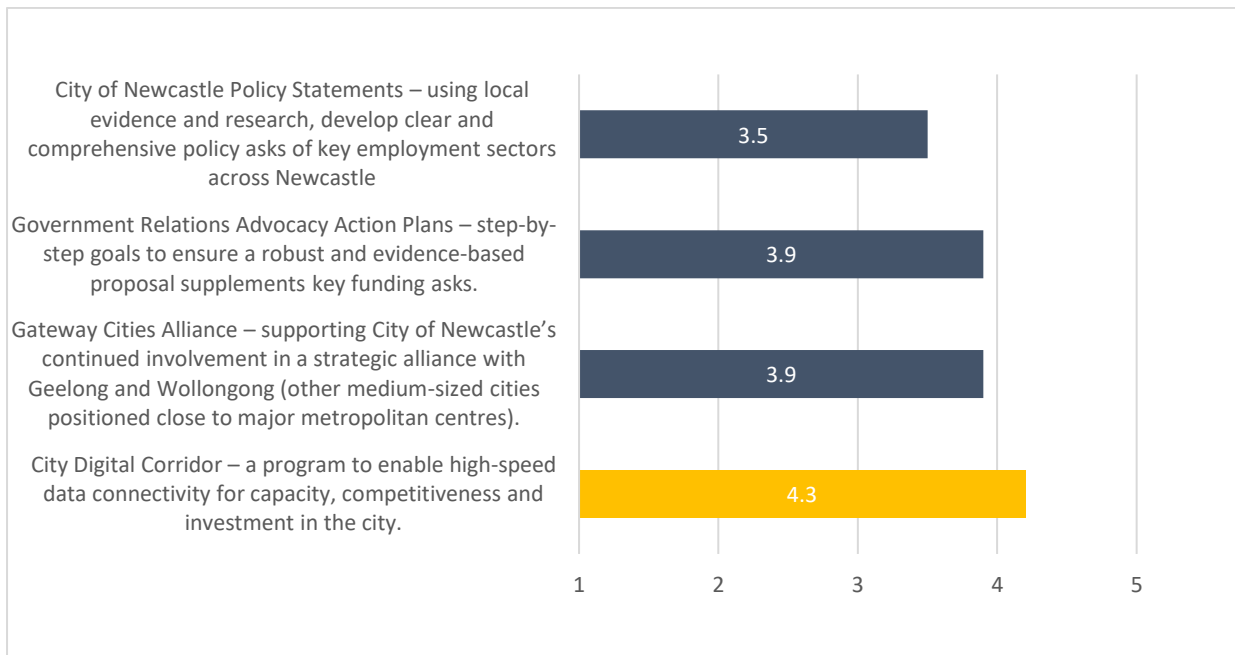


Figure 3 - City Shaping Initiatives - mean scores

Vibrant City Program

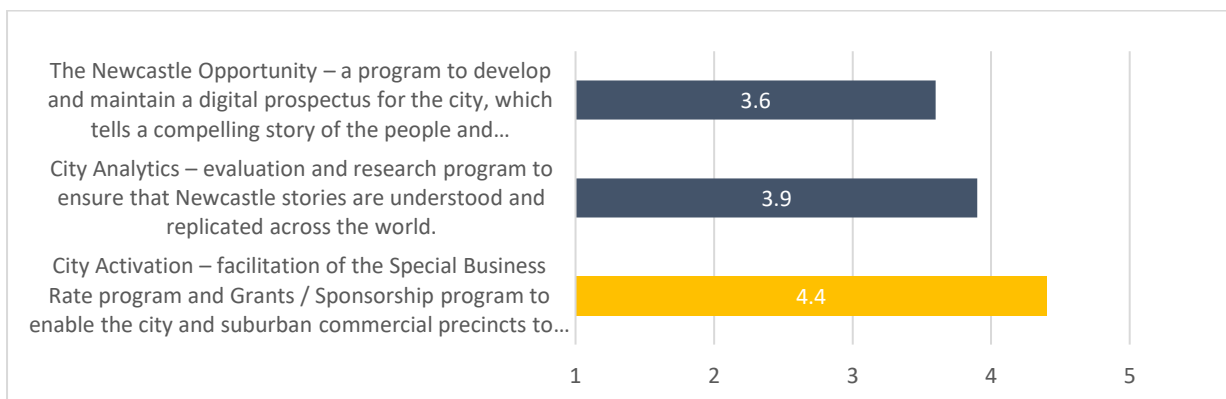


Figure 4 - Vibrant City program - mean scores

Round-table discussions – Hunter Young Professionals (HYP)

As part of the engagement with attendees at the HYP event, participants were divided into five tables for workshop activities and had discussions around the four key strategic areas following a presentation from the Deputy Lord Mayor.

What skills are required to drive job opportunities in Newcastle?

- Resilience (baseline foundation) / grit / agility – key skills
- Pathways other than university
- Contacts, people skills, personality / soft skills

- Mental health / setting up proactive mental health and measuring gross national happiness and comparing that to Newcastle / “Happiest city in Australia”
- Not just about changing skills but changing culture around skills.

What is CN’s role in enabling local skill acquisition and development?

- Enable the community to help themselves
- An internet (city) profile
- Building connection and networking opportunities / promoting connection opportunities and leveraging non-local connections
- Engagement and advice with secondary and tertiary education / high school mentoring programs
- Collaborate with university/business to create programs/university career development programs
- CN to identify and communicate key markets and skills shortages
- Driving skills through education opportunities and make them visible and easy to access / identifying key skill-sets
- Public awareness led by CN
- Incentives for businesses to use graduates
- Help keep white collar entry-level jobs
- Engage apprentices - CN to lead by example
- Enabling volunteering opportunities for young people to get involved with local business to gain skills and experience
- Facilitate small business
- Facilitate big business to move here
- Private investment needed to facilitate opportunities.
- Supporting use of local procurement channels / develop a business guide to key procurement (and representation demographics).

How can CN assist in attracting and retaining a talented and skilled workforce from outside the Newcastle area? Who should be the primary targets of an attraction campaign and how could they be reached?

- Incentivise - overseas hiring / new or existing business to have their HQ in Newcastle / using local talent / small business
- Scholarships to shape people’s skills / traineeships
- Leveraging people to move from other States
- Pushing for circular economy
- Grow awareness of opportunities and let people know we are a hub for business and innovation – not just trades
- Make sure there’s jobs here
- Support new infrastructure e.g. light rail
- Support culture shift from blue collar to white collar
- Support employment of international/sponsored workers with in-demand skills and raise awareness of visa sponsorship processes and advice
- Have entry level jobs in white collar areas to prevent leaving

- Support work integrated learning to help retain workers
- Support up-skilling of small business (including on-line sales utilisation)
- Education throughout the whole community of the “New Opportunity”
- Change the perception of Newcastle away from blue collar
- Promote - diverse new industries (Health, Education) / lifestyle and livability
- Greater engagement from larger companies
- Incubators and start-ups.

What infrastructure project and technology developments should CN be encouraging as a priority?
What actions can the City take?

- Internet quality, access and data hubs
- Virtual and physical meeting points for connection and collaboration to create new opportunities / collaboration platforms
- Co-working spaces focused on supporting development of start-ups / offering mentoring and resources
- Make innovation and local technology more visible and the enablers that help entrepreneurs e.g. to understand why things happen like Smart City
- Marketing and funding innovation tanks / encouraging and finding start-ups
- Integrating a job board in the Lean in Newy app (for locals)
- Funding and marketing to support local businesses
- Promoting local initiatives – through website or “the app”
- Light rail extension
- Transport needs to be more accessible and affordable
- Improve bicycle infrastructure / parking
- Connectivity with sports precinct at Broadmeadow
- Better entertainment Centre to attract large artists
- Collaboration with heavy industry to utilise infrastructure e.g. cruise terminal (to create opportunities).

What actions can CN take to build the case for Federal / State Government investment in Newcastle?

- City Centre to Newcastle airport (connection)
- Light Rail extension
- Highlighting Newcastle as a leader in R&D and innovation
- Need to attract (young people) / need to attract national sports, music and arts events
- Support virtual and physical platforms for collaboration
- Circular-economy, innovative edge and tech-carbon footprint
- Decentralisation.

Pillar and programming gaps; challenges and opportunities

There were several themes that emerged from workshop participants when asked using Mentimeter to discuss their individual views around the proposed programs including any perceived challenges and opportunities.

The **BIA's** key discussion points focussed on:

- Being constructive, positive and building for the future as opposed to focussing on the past
- Consider connections between small and big businesses / connectivity between stakeholders and to hire locally
- CN identifying “easy wins” for immediate action along with more longer-term goals
- Being mindful of taking a “practical approach”
- Proposed programs be explained and made clearer in the EDS
- People / resources to carry out the proposed programs.

Again, from Mentimeter, the **HYP** key ideas were around an interest in:

- Engagement with local talent
- Direct engagement by council and promote and encourage industry to partake given the incentives surrounding engagement
- Engage with local business to improve efficiency and cut red tape / work on council's direct relationship with business' as a stakeholder rather than being in opposition
- Information sharing with the community and with students
- Awareness within the community of the programs on offer
- Visibility of initiatives and projects to locals and the world
- Promoting local tourism within Australia to gain exposure for Newcastle to attract people to move to the city
- Transforming the global image from a steel /coal city / Circular economy
- Engagement and sustainable behaviour change support (up skill programs)
- Programs having stronger focus on providing opportunities to younger people who are keen to learn new skills
- Promotion of diverse and inclusive workplaces and engagement from talent acquisition teams
- Incentivise big business to relocate to Newcastle and decentralise from Sydney to boost job opportunities and local economy
- Greater focus on the After Dark strategy and bringing more people into the city centre (focus on transport).
- Awareness of the big picture future plans for the city and where values and skills are expected to be placed
- Smart city technologies / high speed internet / local innovation hubs / improving access to internet (a critical resource) / providing public access to internet facilities.
- A focus on local procurement initiatives and supporting business in utilising available channels
- Centralised place for opportunities for both businesses and people facilitated by CN and key local organisations and businesses
- Highlight more ground roots organisations focused on community growth
- Push for locals supporting locals

- Align with the SDGs / highlight organisations working to solve the SDGs by 2030 and show how awesome Newcastle businesses are.

In response to being asked if anything was anything missing the HYP attendees suggested gaps around transport / connectivity:

- Direct rail links to the airport
- Light rail access to the 3 key elements to a city infrastructure, retail and infrastructure
- Direct link to Broadmeadow International stadium
- Direct link to John Hunter Hospital
- Direct link to International Airport

They also suggested a few challenges:

- Reliance on State and federal government / the restrictions of local government financing / the perceived short-term pre-election cycles
- Community awareness of the EDS programs
- Internet accessibility and quality
- Ongoing / unfinished construction in the CBD
- Lack of local control over big infrastructure decisions.

Worksheets were also used at the HYP workshop – see Appendix V.

The **Strategy and Innovation Committee's** key discussion in addition to rating the proposed pillars and programs, centred around what might be missing from the four pillars. In regards to **Enabling Skills**, the suggestions were there being a need to have a mechanism to engage with the market, identify skills – current, lacking and emerging; how could CN amplify the programs through partnerships and at a regional level along with map local stakeholders and skills pathways. In response to **Enabling Innovation programs**, a focus on both scale-ups and start-ups was suggested along with a need to be aware and understand both the local and wider ecosystem, partners (their roles and responsibilities). **City Shaping programs** had comments around both challenges and what might be missing in the plan such as, the LGA being too car dominated, lack of parking in the city, position the city centre as a “regional CBD” and “collective recognition” of the city as important. The final proposed pillar, **Vibrant City programs** resulted in a discussion around issues around having a unified vision, strong view around the need for walkability, having a place that is comfortable for visitors and the need for retaining and improving individual character in places and neighborhoods. A suggestion was made to also think beyond the CBD and factor policing after dark.

The **City Taskforce's** key discussion points centred around what was missing from the four pillars. General EDS feedback suggested the need for Selling the EDS vision / “the why”. That it was important for CN to avoid duplication of existing programs and improve the time frame from 2020s and call it future jobs not economic opportunities along with provide adequate funding.

In response to program specific comments, the below is provides a range of examples:

Enabling Skills Program.

- Ability to have scaleable, lettable space
- Ability to easily find sector networking groups
- Advanced “Manufacturing International Returners”
- A clear identification of which skills to target / what skills would most help youth employment
- Outlining what skills do people nearing the end of their career have to offer
- The right jobs at the end of any skills training program
- Youth recruitment and internship programs in key organisations (“how many are there?”)
- Lots of players in this space, definite value in coordinated role
- Creative skills.

Enabling Innovation Programs:

- Advanced manufacturing specifically
- Competition (attraction and funding) from other cities and regions
- Get the entire general community to understand and engage with "innovation"
- As a living lab getting more runs on the board
- Work out of home hubs
- Ability to interlink different sector cohorts
- Strong engagement with mining communities and businesses to encourage skills development and transition to clean energy.

City Shaping Programs:

- Genuine partnership with surrounding cities and regions e.g. Lake Mac
- A unified approach/avoiding duplication / leveraging existing investment
- City shaping infrastructure is also programs on community and local infra incl cycling, walking, amenity etc all within council remit. Not just major projects.
- Build fibre or wireless backbone and make it affordable
- Business / industry agreement and support
- City Deal
- Regional partnerships
- Positioning the city as the hub to the larger regional transition
- Newcastle is a regional capital and has a wider impact beyond its LGA boundary
- Providing opportunities for different sectors to collaborate to deliver on the goals
- Leveraging the invaluable city-university-community helix
- Value propositions with greater awareness of need of other regions - density, decentralisation, regional scale.

Vibrant City Programs:

- Diversity
- Retail space vacancies in the city centre
- Purpose-built real estate sites
- Tolerance of all and welcoming it
- Creating connections to regional events / connected events across the region
- International standard event
- Diversity also of events - aimed at a range of age groups including those we want to attract.

Devil is in the detail - many of these programs would be high value if what is on offer is thoughtfully prepared/co-created and done not for profit. Also return on international connections could be quite high for investment

In addition, both the Strategy and Innovation Committee, and at the City Taskforce workshop a supplementary question was asked: “Do you support City of Newcastle’s vision for the Economic Development Strategy?”. The mean response from the taskforce was 4.4 from a scale of 1 to 5 (n=15 participants) indicating broad support for the vision and the response from the Strategy and Innovation Committee was 3.4 mean score (n=9 participants) presenting a slightly lower level of support.

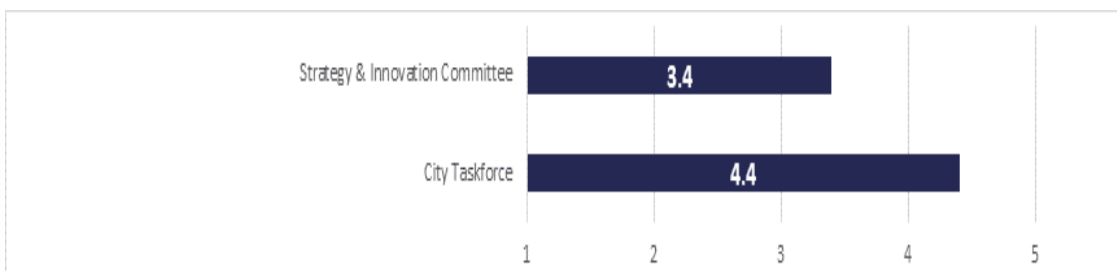


Figure 5 - Support for CN's EDS vision - mean score

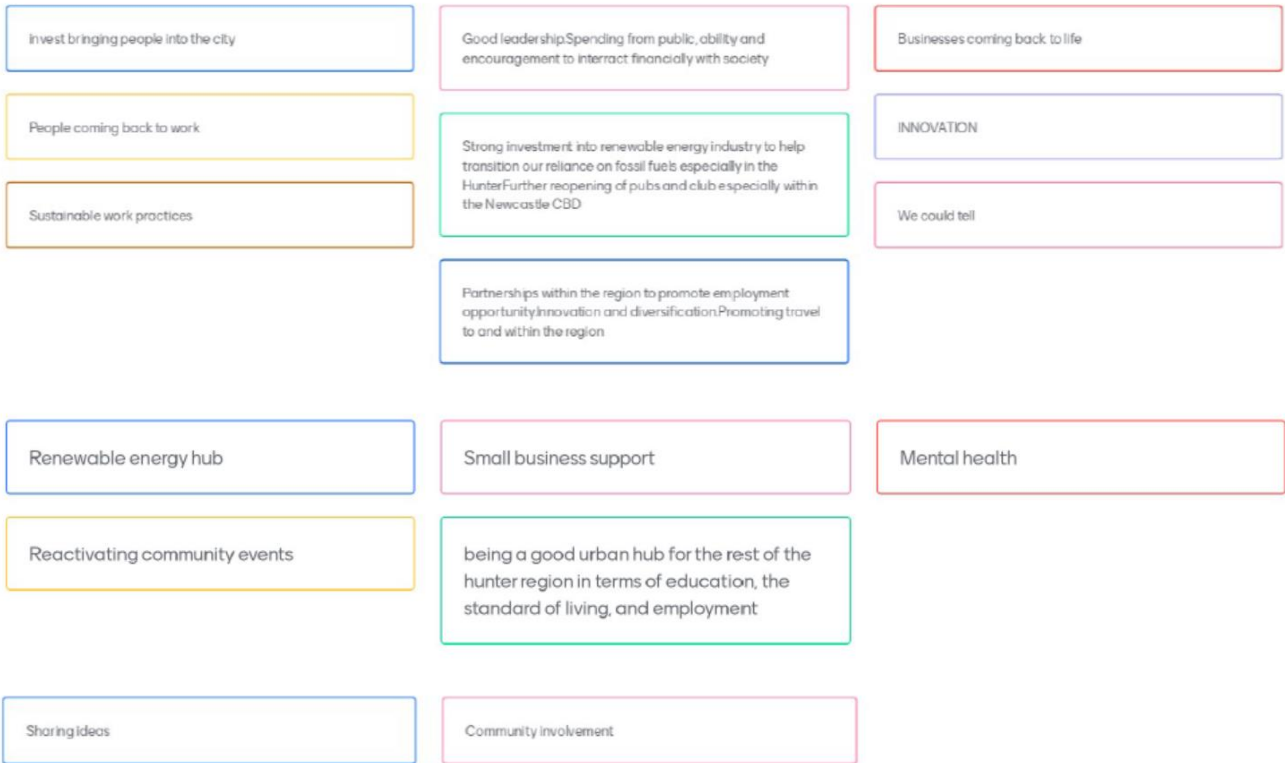
University of Newcastle workshops

Two workshops took place with the University of Newcastle with Australian and International students, with over 25 participants. Education, equality, employment, inclusion and access and health were viewed as some of the key factors in providing future opportunities.

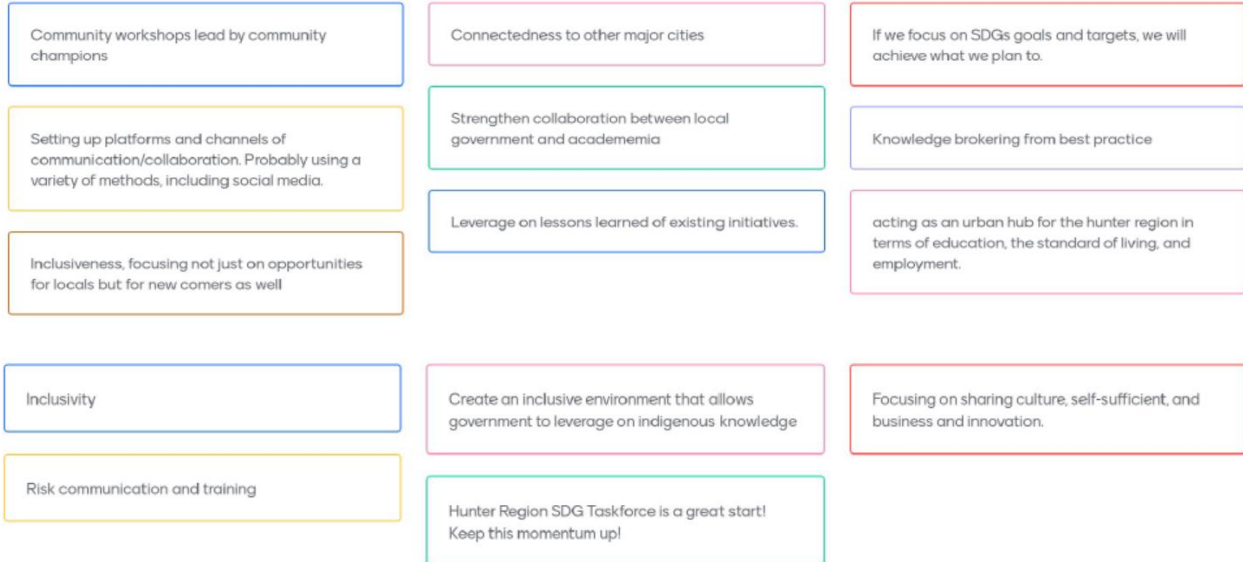
Using Mentimeter participants were asked to comment on what they saw as the top three priorities for achieving economic growth in the next 12-months.

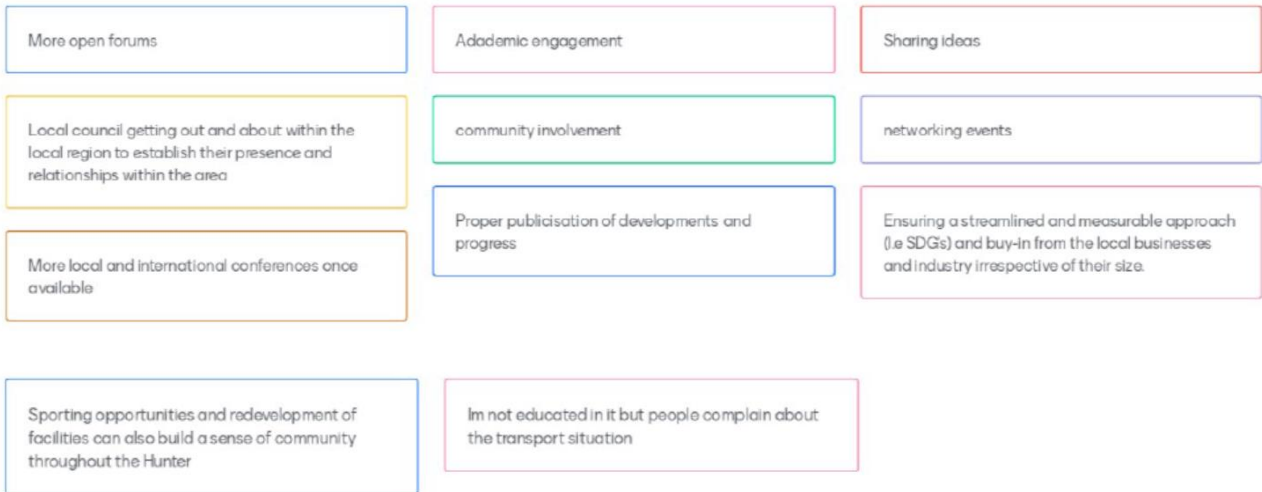
Top three priorities for economic growth/recovery





What is CN's role in enabling economic opportunities? How do we get there?





How can CN help businesses succeed?



See Appendices VII for the full workshop findings.

Internal workshops: CN staff

CN staff also had the opportunity to participate and give feedback on the EDS programs. Two targeted (service unit) and one general (all staff) focus group sessions took place.

Proposed Programs - level of importance

At the general all staff workshop participants (n=19) were asked to rank each of the proposed programs in order of preference using Mentimeter, with one being the least preferred and five being the most preferred.

The least rated program statement was under the pillar: Enabling Skills - "The future of work is people" as the proposed program statement '*Being inclusive and welcoming – facilitating inclusive business practices using economic incentives*' received a mean score 2.4 in contrast to when the statement was ranked in the community wide survey with a mean score of 3.9 (see Figure 22)

'*Talent attraction*' also from the first pillar achieved a strong mean score with 4.3 by CN staff.



Figure 6 - Support for Enabling Skills Program Graph - mean scores (staff)

Under the second EDS Pillar: Enabling Innovation - "The foundation to create your own opportunities", staff rated both program statements as illustrated below quite highly (4.1 mean scores).

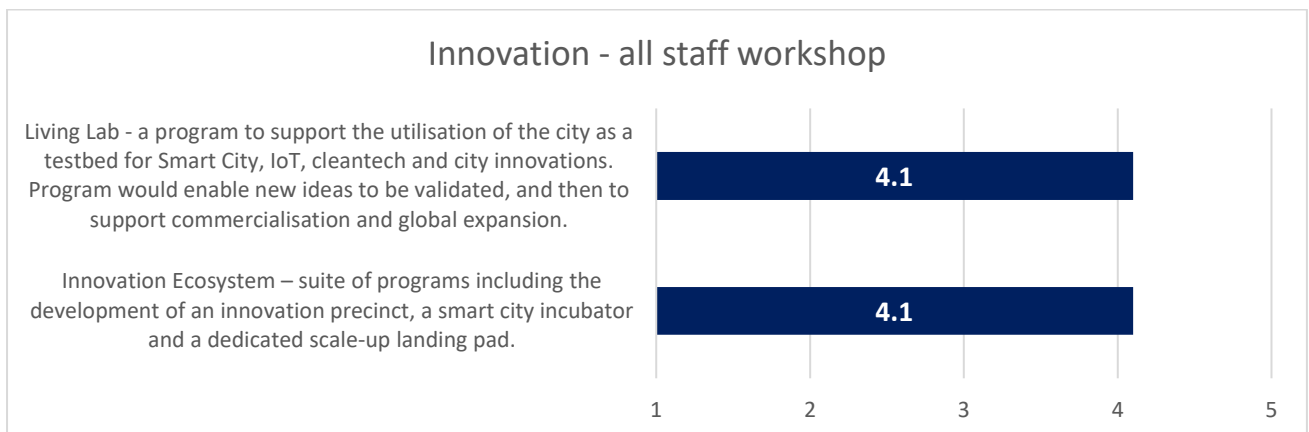


Figure 7 - Enabling Innovation Program - mean scores (staff)

In regard to City Shaping, the most highly rated program proposal was the 'Government Relations Advocacy Action Plans – step-by-step goals to ensure a robust and evidence-based proposal supplements key funding asks' (mean score 4.8), as shown below in Figure 8.

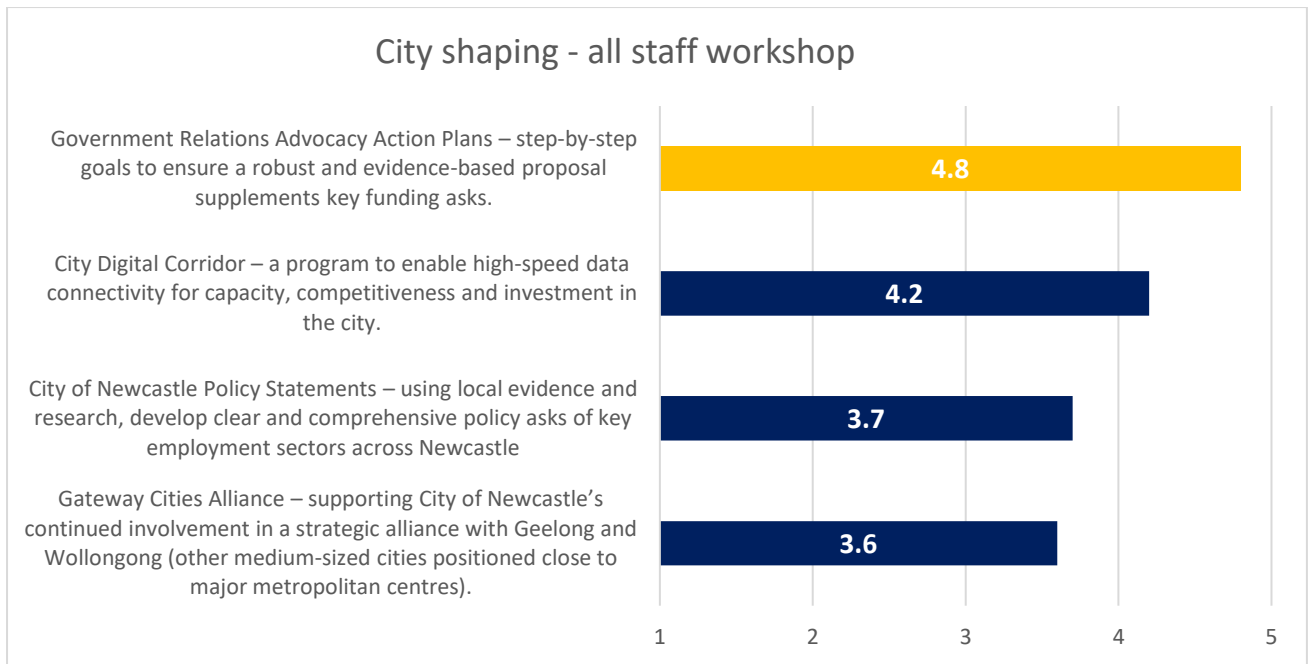


Figure 8 - City Shaping Initiatives - mean scores (staff)

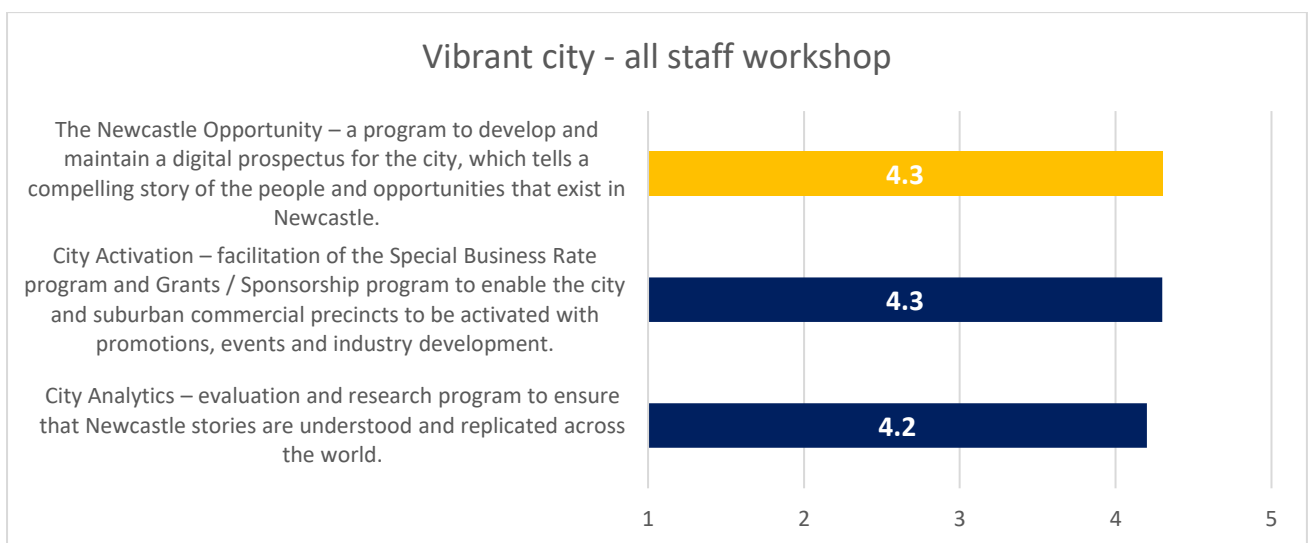


Figure 9 - Vibrant City program - mean scores (staff)

CN staff were also asked during the workshop to provide their views on the proposed programs and if they considered anything missing.

A range of discussion points, observations and questions emerged to can help refine the draft EDS. Staff suggested CN’s challenge is to market Newcastle appropriately and target the right people and businesses. It was suggested that CN’s challenge is around gaining the 'ear' of state government so the city can be promoted as city to large business enterprises. Following on from this seeking clarity on regional vs metropolitan status - not just for government funding but as a driver for people to move here was also mentioned. A question was also asked, 'How do we (CN) support the unskilled labour force?'

Recommendations:

- Don't be Newcastle centric, work on basis of greater Newcastle and take the lead
- Don't be totally focussed on University and take a whole of economy view / require better connections to other universities - not just the University of Newcastle
- Recognise that CN's role in many of these things is advocacy and as a facilitator
- It's very city centre focussed / what about the Western Corridor and lower socio-economic geographic areas of Newcastle?
- CN need to provide data to demonstrate benefits to bottom line and non-monetary values
- Dedicated resources and budgets to adequately communicate the current programs to increase awareness and engagement (are required)
- Improve connectivity to Sydney - Speed rail. (State Govt engagement)

Tourism and attraction appeared as a theme from the staff engagement observations that:

- The vibrant city is viewed as very important for keeping youth in the Newcastle
- Interest in growing tourism product and marketing
- Welcome information, businesses and families / information to assist with attracting and then re-establishing in a new city is required
- Attracting industries / business linking to other activities such as tourism and events to promote outside of the city
- Strong evidence to support importance and attractiveness of Newcastle
- CN need to show support for increased tourism e.g. attract visitors to support existing food/night-time economy and provide more services and activities for residents.

Internal workshops: Targeted staff

At the two service-unit workshops a more in-depth focus group style discussion approach was undertaken with the intention to maximise the opportunity for a more in-depth discussion. Therefore, Mentimeter wasn't used.

Below reflects a summary of the discussion by the four EDS pillars from two targeted staff workshops (n= 8 participants).

Pillar one – Enabling Skills

- Suggested the EDS acknowledge that events in Newcastle also have a role in job creation and look to see if there's local skills shortages
- Consider partnering with UON to facilitate graduate placements and cadetships in tourism space (e.g. hotel work placements)
- Recommendation that economy and jobs need to line up with catalyst areas like Broadmeadow to expand the city
- Suggested CN look at Aboriginal opportunities within the context of skills development
- Queried what's CN's role in this area (skills) in the longer term.

Pillar two – Enabling Innovation

- Suggestion that case studies of entrepreneurs / feature them in marketing / gather evidence
- A comment that the EDS innovation focus is good

- Renewable energy opportunities – we are also “part of that game”/ suggesting that CN has a role in this transition.

Pillar three – City-Shaping Initiatives

- Recognise that the cruise sector isn't a CN responsibility (it's regional)
- City Shaping regarded as “milder” than expected with the DP e.g. the Port and Williamstown are considered city shaping
- View that the metro plan linkage needs to be reflected more strongly in the EDS
- Suggestion that the catalyst areas sit under the City Shaping pillar
- Asked to see some measured / nuanced responses at a local level” / “set in place”, “make a statement of value” under City Shaping
- Business and investment should be “hardwired” into CN.

Pillar four – Vibrant City

- Suggestion that the EDS outline a clearer connection to CN's new Destination Management Plan (DMP) and promote clearly that events are an important economic driver for the City
- Proposed that the economic value of events should be calculated / assign a fiscal value
- Asked the EDS highlight key or even more targeted events
- Consider partnering with University of Newcastle (UON) to more effectively target international visitors
- Views that CN is primed for accessibility market/ specific events (people with a disability)
- Asked if there's a space issue/not enough spaces for larger-scale events
- Consider the Digital Prospectus showing different parts of the city have different roles / illustrate that each catalyst area has a role to play
- Perception that the film industry isn't covered in the EDS.

General feedback/observations

- View the EDS makes a great shift in focus to people and people attraction
- There's “fantastic data” available e.g. urban planning's LEP studies and Housing Study – look to hook those into the growing city
- Comment that the EDS's DP is a bit smart city heavy with less of a development focus
- Interest in seeing social benefits outlined/considered in the EDS e.g. affordable housing for essential workers / see a land use masterplan that highlights social benefit
- Question around what the purpose/how will the EDS be positioned and applied; and should the EDS be a second-tier plan? / positioned as a “bold plan” / a roadmap
- Consideration that CN track and view our liveability / a city with a “good economy and vice versa”.

Survey

A total of 187 surveys were completed during the engagement period between Tuesday 3 November and Monday 7 December 2020.

There was a total of 12 demographic questions and 13 quantitative questions. An additional 2 open-ended 'other' fields were incorporated within the survey to allow the respondents to expand upon specific questions.

The survey was promoted through social, digital and traditional media channels and was available to all community members via CN's website. The promotional channels and overall reach are outlined in Appendix III: Communications and Promotion. Members of the City's community panel (Newcastle Voice) were also sent a direct email invitation to take part in the survey.

The survey questions can be found in Appendix VIII: Survey Script.

Snapshot findings

Negative impacts to individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Travel uncertainty (49%)
- Mental health / emotional stress caused by uncertainty (49%)
- Isolation from family (46%).

Negative impacts to business/organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Poor sales / reduction in customers (42%)
- Supply chain delays (42%)
- Mental health / emotional stress caused by uncertainty (42%).

Top 3 challenges (sector/business/organisation level) were the following:

- Cost of living (38%)
- Retraining skilled and educated young people/professionals (33%)
- Small business recovery (32%).

Top 3 three opportunities for achieving new economic opportunities like new jobs, new investments and promoting innovation in Newcastle responses were the following:

- Lifestyle benefits of living in Newcastle (43%)
- Growing sector of new and innovative businesses being encouraged to establish in Newcastle (32%)
- Investment in new industries (29%).

Newcastle's competitive advantage

In terms of what Newcastle offers people looking to move, live or invest here, the perceived lifestyle in Newcastle was the standout with 89% response. This was followed by quality of life (75%) and then proximity to Sydney and other capital cities via the airport to a lesser extent at 53%.

Confidence levels - 2yrs and 10-years level towards new economic opportunities being created in Newcastle

On average there is confidence that jobs, investment and innovation will provide future economic opportunities. The strongest increase in confidence over the next 2 to 10 years was towards innovation with an increase from 2.4 to 3.3 mean score.

Levels of support towards proposed EDS pillars and program statements

All fourteen program statements received a mean score indicating support that was over 2.5.

Pillar One: Enabling Skills - "The future of work is people"

- Most supported was New skills – a program to build opportunities for our residents to develop new and innovative skills (mean score 4.0)
- Least supported was International networking - Investment in Sister City partnerships, International Chambers of Commerce and other key international links (mean score 2.8)

Pillar Two: Enabling Innovation - "The foundation to create your own opportunities"

- Most supported was Living Lab – a program Development of an innovation precinct, a smart city incubator and a scale-up landing pad (mean score 3.6)
- Least supported was Innovation Ecosystem – suite of programs including the development of an innovation precinct, a smart city incubator and a dedicated scale-up landing pad (mean score 3.5)

Pillar Three: City-Shaping Initiatives - "The support and infrastructure to facilitate success"

- Most supported was City Digital Corridor – a program to enable high-speed data connectivity for capacity, competitiveness and investment in the city (mean score 4.0)
- Least supported was Gateway Cities Alliance – supporting City of Newcastle's continued involvement in a strategic alliance with Geelong and Wollongong (other medium-sized cities positioned close to major metropolitan centres (mean score 3.1)

Pillar Four: Vibrant City - "An activated and supportive city for all".

- Most supported was City Activation – facilitation of the Special Business Rate program and Grants / Sponsorship program to enable the city and suburban commercial precincts to be activated with promotions, events and industry development (mean score 3.9)
- Least supported was City Analytics – evaluation and research program to ensure that Newcastle stories are understood and replicated across the world (mean score 3.2)

Respondent profile

The survey was completed by 187 people from across the local government area (LGA). Most respondents participated in the survey as individuals (96%), followed by 4% responding as/ or on behalf of an organisation.

The demographics captured show most respondents identified as female (51%), followed by male (44%) and then 3% preferring not to say and 1% who preferred to self-describe.

More than two thirds of all survey respondents were aged 25 – 54yrs, followed by respondents who are 55 or older (24%) then 11% aged 18 – 24yrs.

A total of 12% indicated having lived experience of a disability. Two percent identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Please refer to Appendix X for further information on the respondent profile.

Business and type of employment

The survey sought to understand what types of individuals participated in the survey, with the majority (88%) indicating working for a small business followed by 6% selecting large business to medium business.

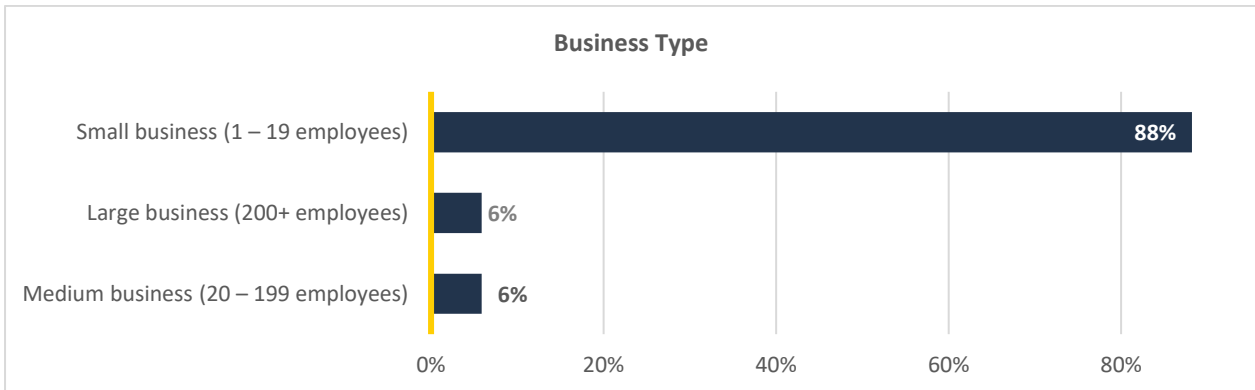


Figure 10 - Respondent business size

The survey presented 18 standard ABS categories for type of organisation and nine were elected by survey respondents.

As illustrated on the next page the four main groups that respondents selected were:

- Government agency (39%)
- Medium business (18%)
- Large business (16%)
- Small business (13%).

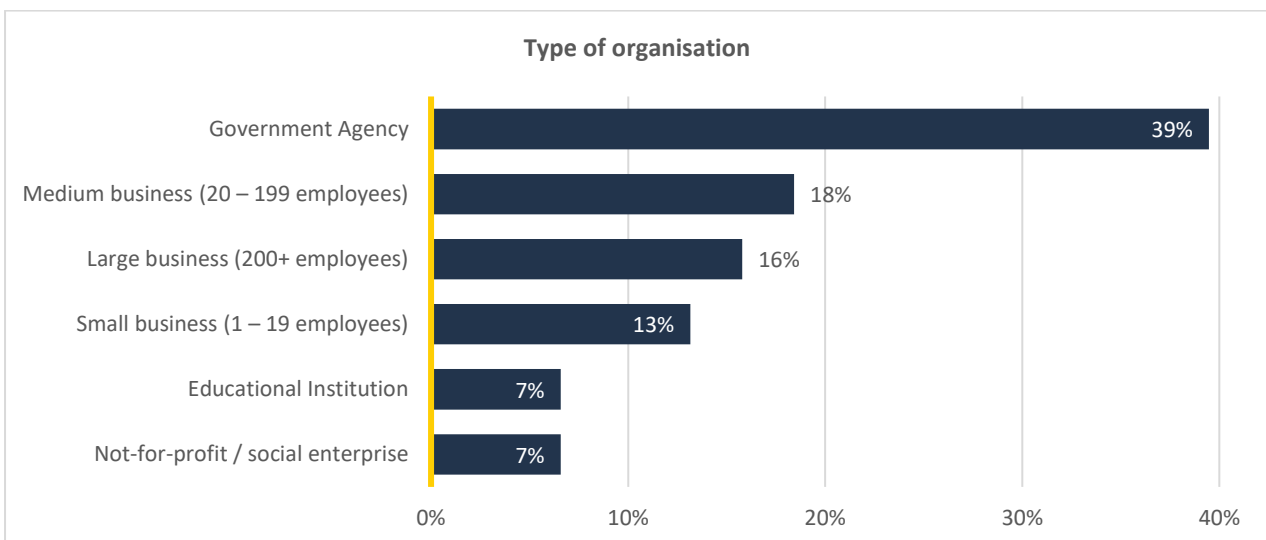


Figure 11 - Type of organisation

Survey respondents were also asked to indicate the sector their organisation operates in.

The two main areas that respondents selected were:

- *Construction; Information media and telecommunications; and Professional, scientific and technical services (18%)*
- *Arts and recreation services and ‘Other’ (18%).*

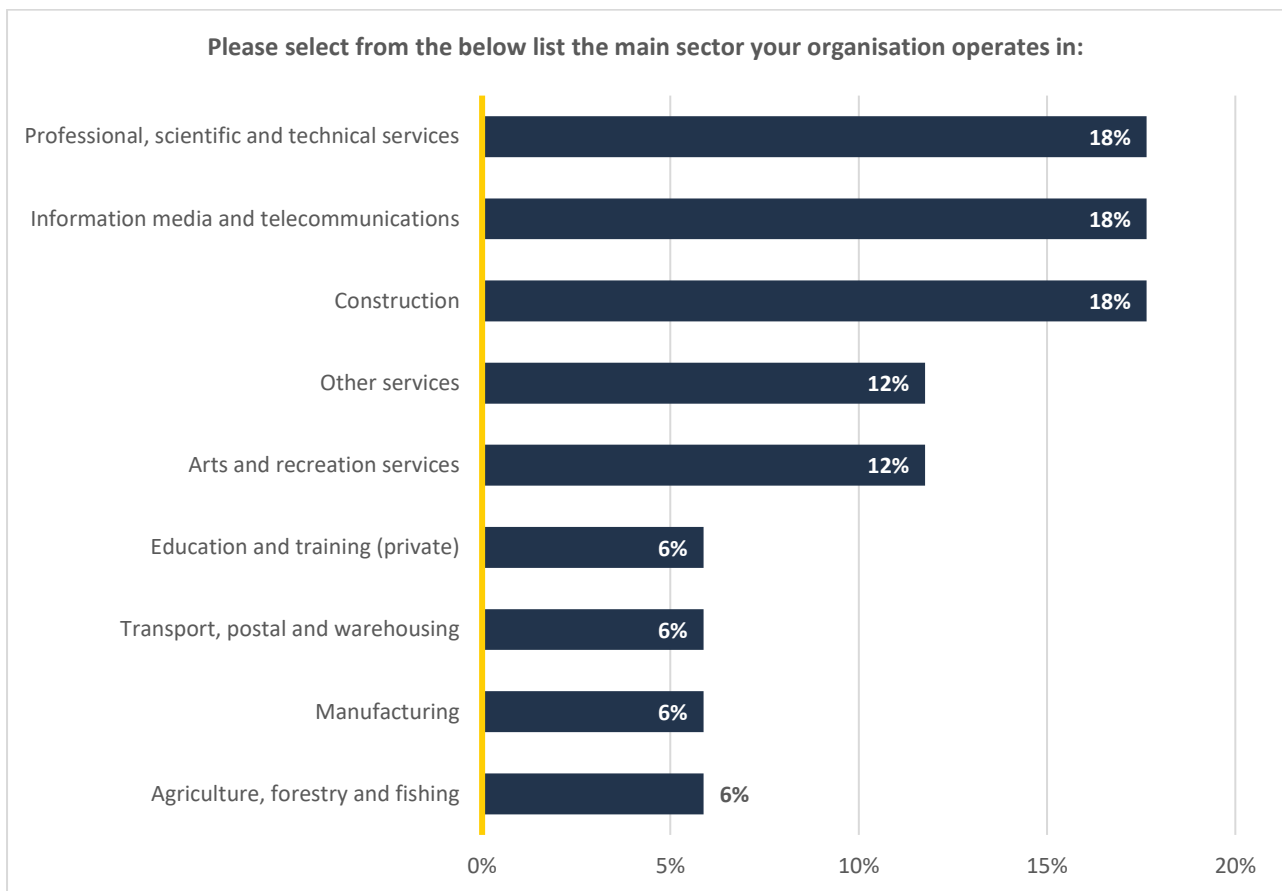


Figure 12 - Organisations sector

Impacts to individual and business sectors

To recognise that for many 2020 was a challenging year, respondents were asked to indicate what they regarded as negative impacts and experiences that they had experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Gaining insight into respondent's current feelings can also be taken into consideration when then reviewing their responses to the proposed programs under the four EDS pillars.

Negative impacts – to individuals

In response to the multiple-choice question: *Firstly, what have been the main negative impacts (if any) of the COVID-19 pandemic to you and your family?* The four most common selected responses were as follows:

- Travel uncertainty (49%)
- Mental health / emotional stress caused by uncertainty (49%)
- Isolation from family (46%)
- Decreased physical health due to reduced activity and exercise (35%)
- 7% indicated they had experienced no change.

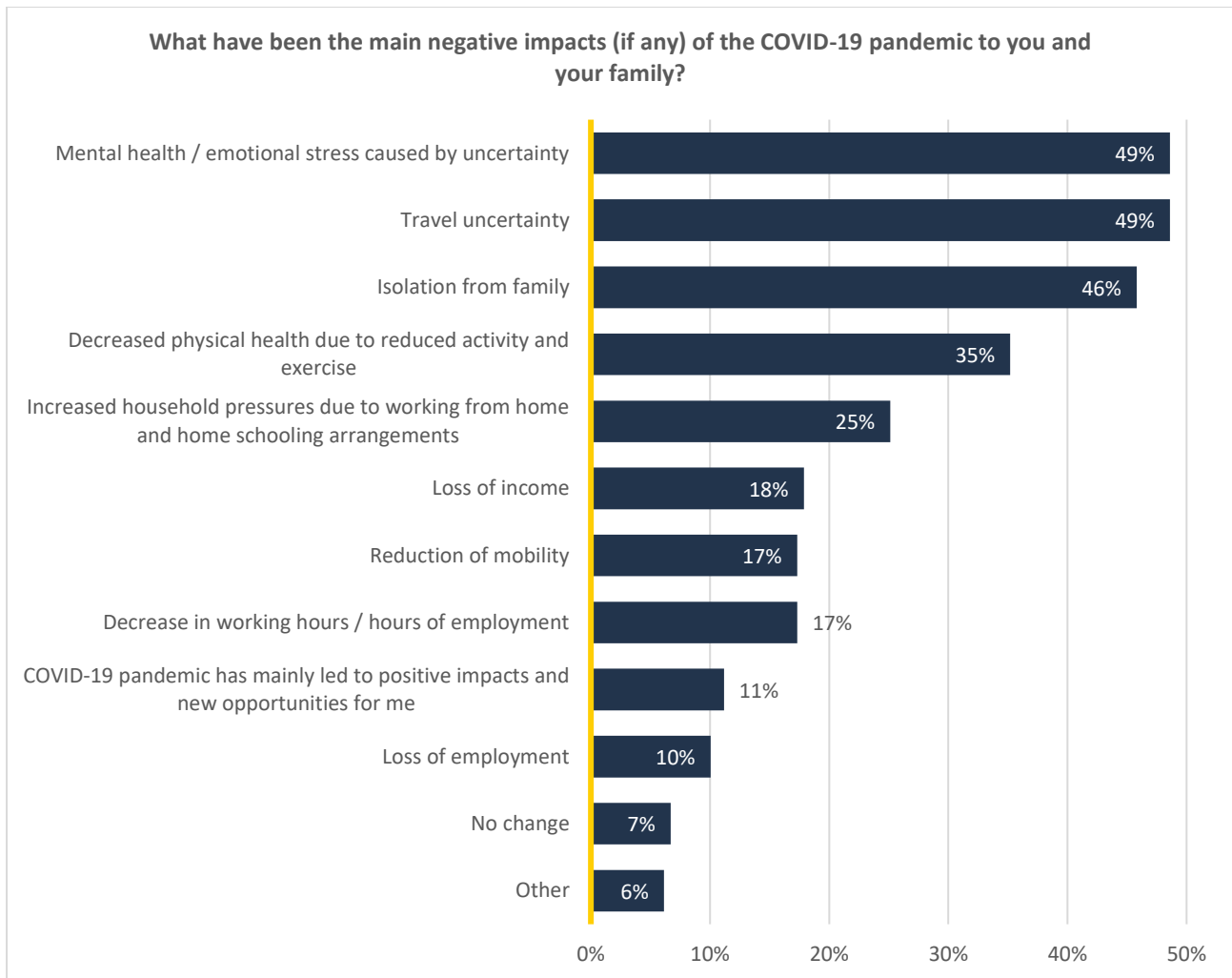


Figure 13 - Main negative impacts (if any) to you and your family from COVID-19

In total 11 'Other' open-ended comments were provided. The comments can be found in Appendix XI: Survey verbatim comments.

Negative impacts – sector level

In response to the multiple-choice question: *Firstly, what have been the main negative impacts (if any) of the COVID-19 pandemic to your sector / business?* The three most common selected responses were as follows:

- Poor sales / reduction in customers (42%)
- Supply chain delays (42%)
- Mental health / emotional stress caused by uncertainty (42%).

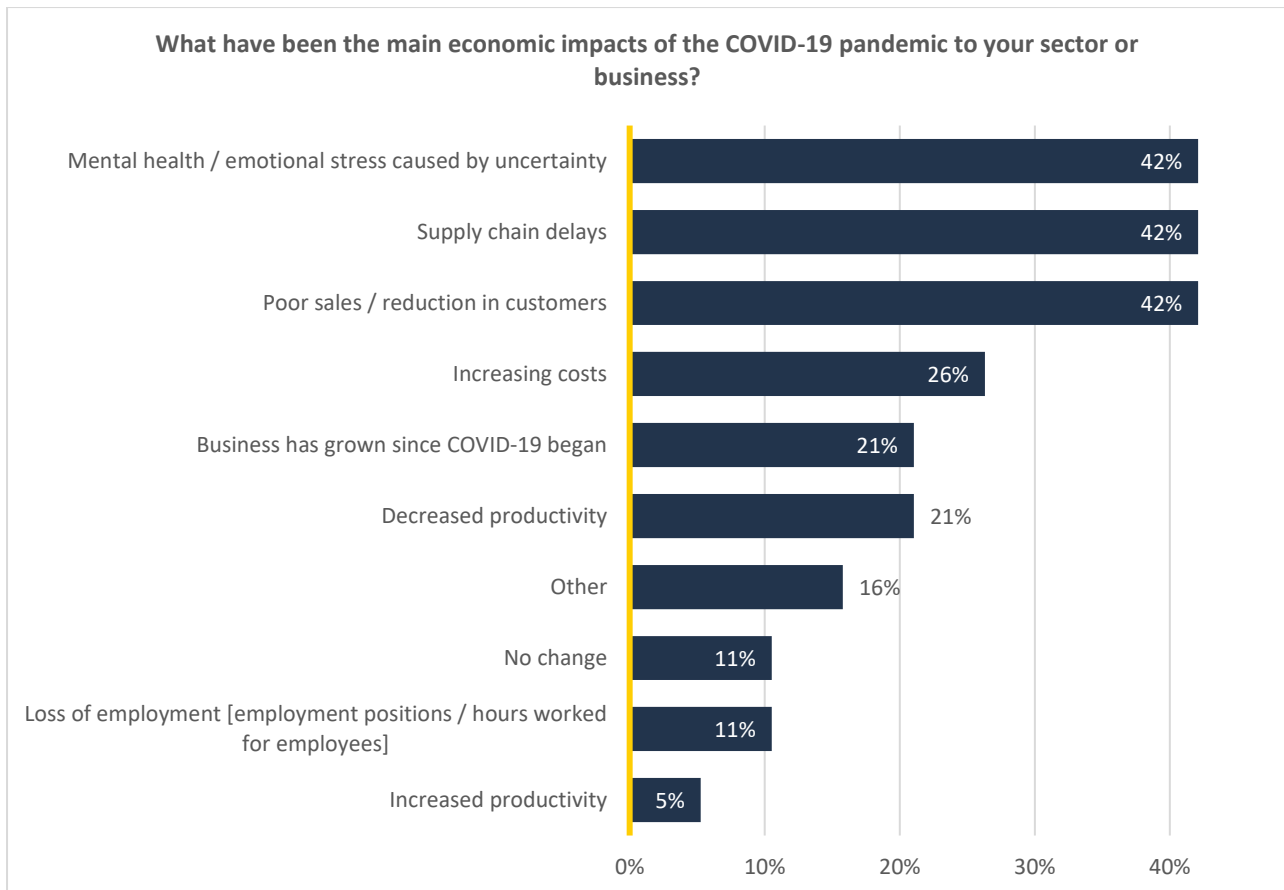


Figure 14 - Main economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to your sector or business

In total only 3 'Other' open-ended comments were provided. The comments can be found in Appendix XII: Survey verbatim comments.

Top 3 challenges

Survey respondents were asked to indicate what they saw as the top three challenges for achieving new economic opportunities in a list of areas such as new jobs, new investments and promoting innovation in Newcastle.

These top responses were the following:

- Cost of living (38%)
- Retraining skilled and educated young people/professionals (33%)
- Small business recovery (32%).

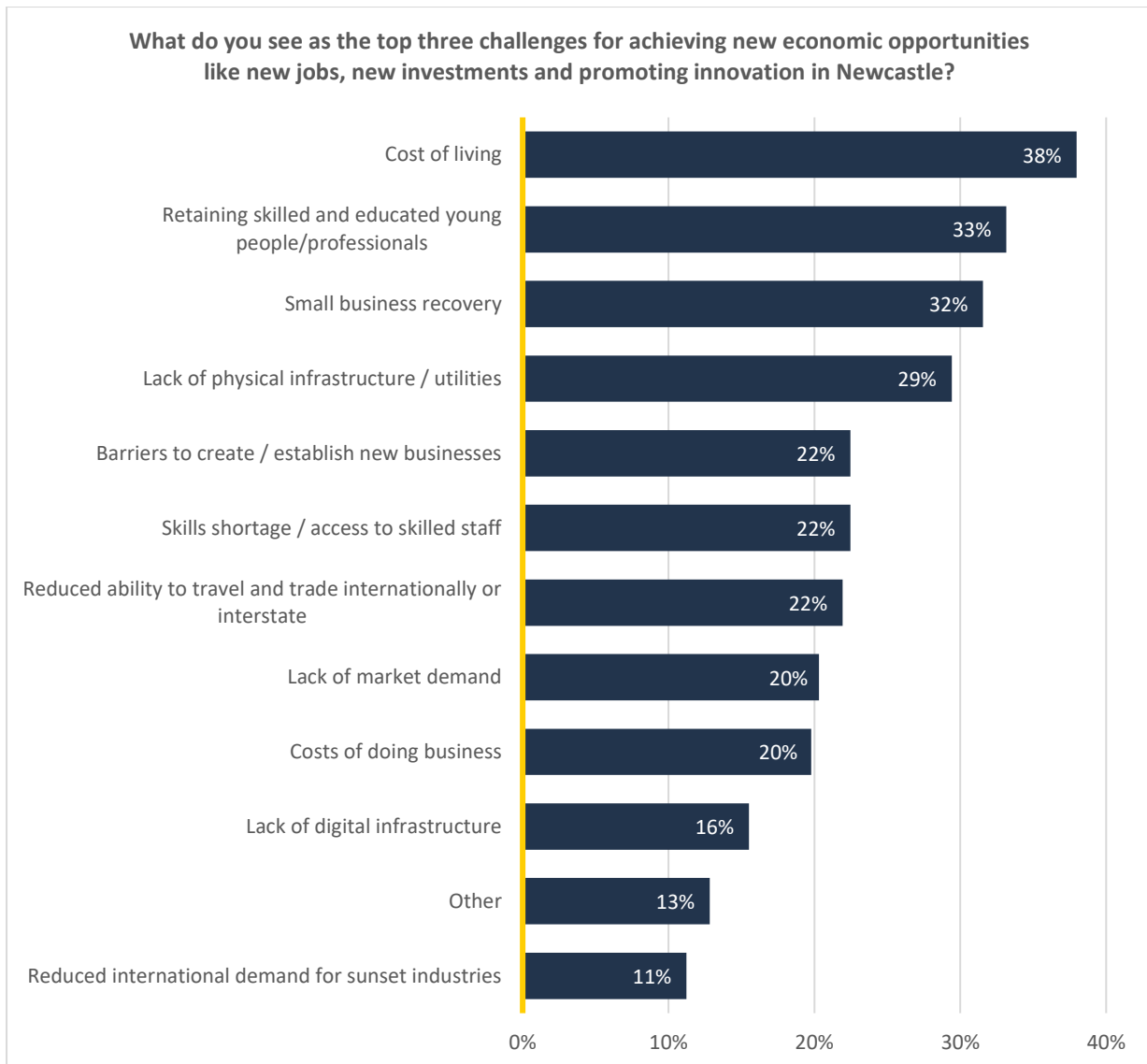


Figure 15 - Top three challenges for achieving new economic opportunities

In total 24 'Other' open-ended comments were provided. The comments can be found in Appendix XIII: Survey verbatim comments.

Top 3 opportunities

Survey respondents were asked to indicate what they saw as the top three opportunities for achieving new economic opportunities like new jobs, new investments and promoting innovation in Newcastle.

These top responses were the following:

- Lifestyle benefits of living in Newcastle (43%)
- Growing sector of new and innovative businesses being encouraged to establish in Newcastle (32%)
- Investment in new industries (29%).

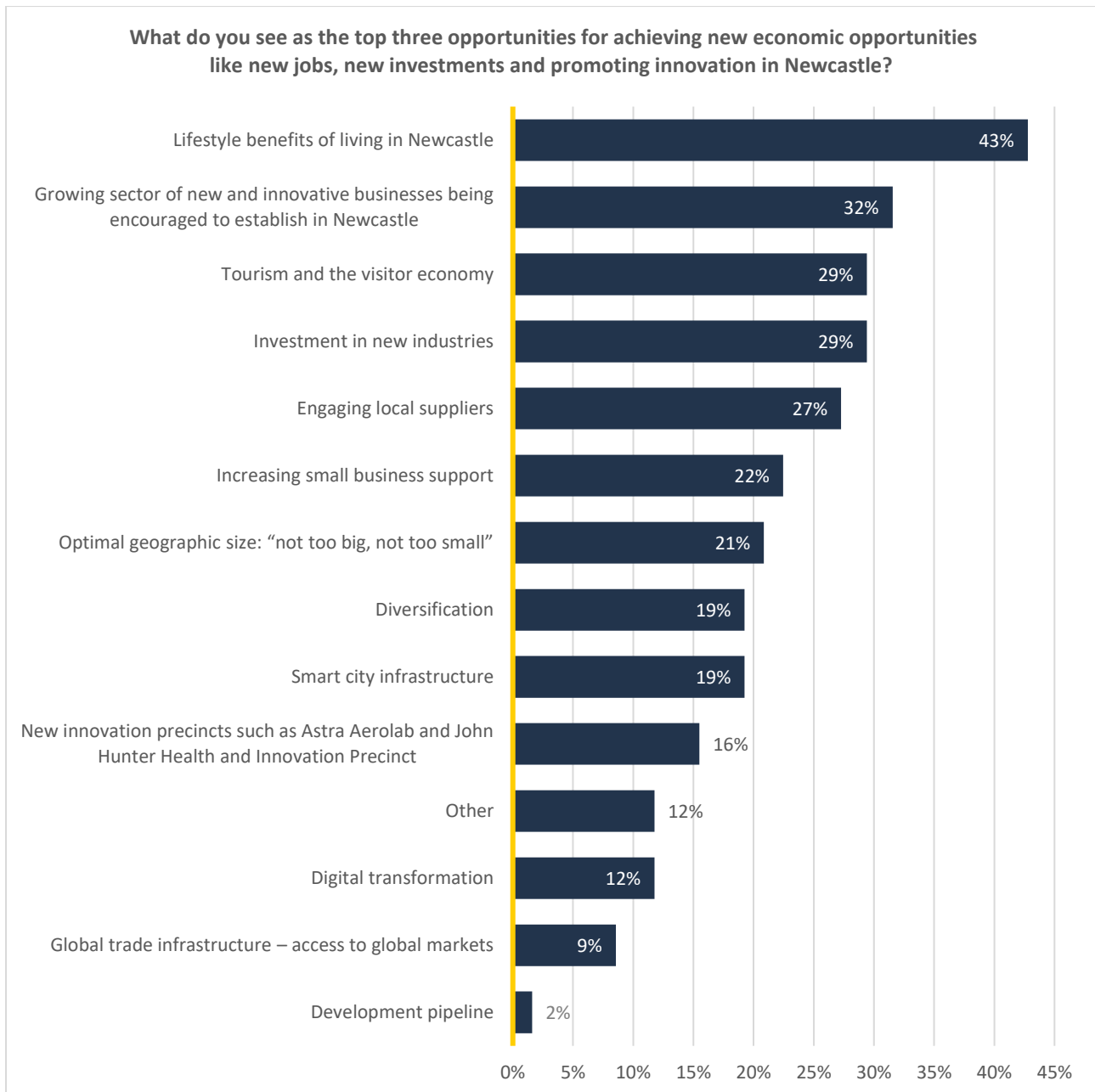


Figure 16 - Top three opportunities for achieving new economic opportunities

Proposed four key program pillars perceived usefulness

The following proposals were rated under each pillar from 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all useful, and 5 being extremely useful.

Survey respondents (like the workshop participants) were asked to rank each of the proposed programs in order of preference, with one being the least preferred and five being the most preferred as shown in Figures 22, 23, 25 and 25.

The most supported was *New Skills – a program to build opportunities for our residents to develop new and innovative skills through partnerships with key local tertiary institutions* and *City Digital Corridor – a program to enable high-speed data connectivity for capacity, competitiveness and*

investment in the city both with mean scores 4.0. *International networking* was the least supported program (mean score 2.8).

Across the fourteen proposed program statements no single statement had a mean score less than 2.5. The following four graphs illustrate the level of support as mean scores.

Pillar one: Skilled work force

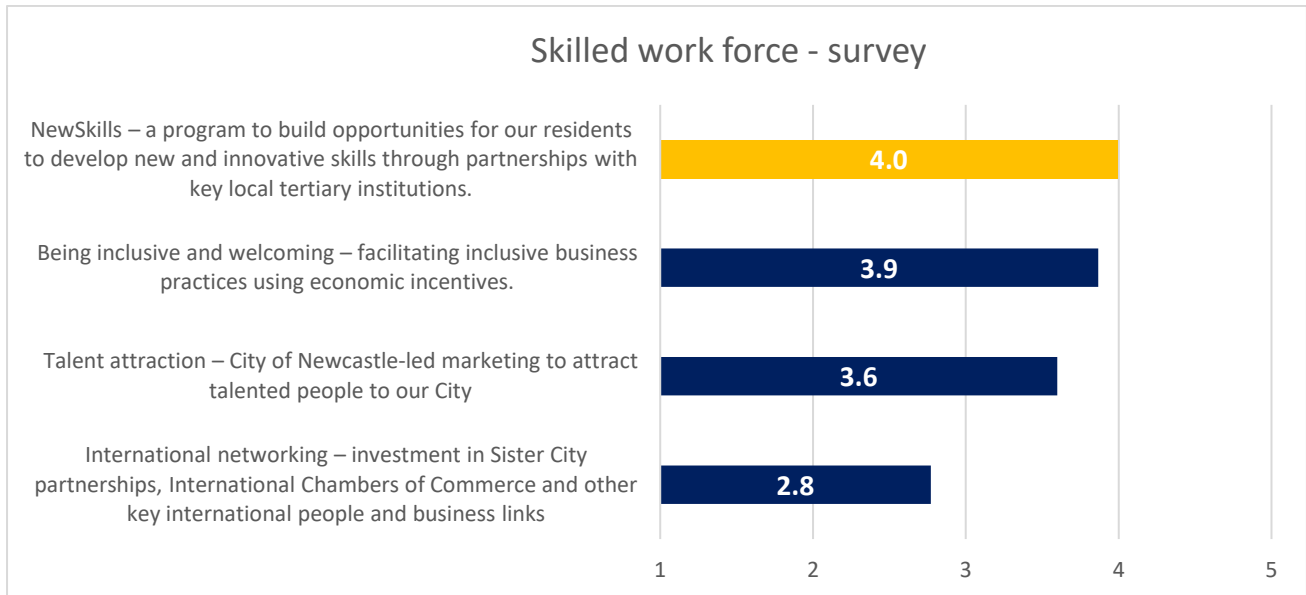


Figure 17 - Enabling Skills Program Graph – survey mean scores

Pillar two: Innovation

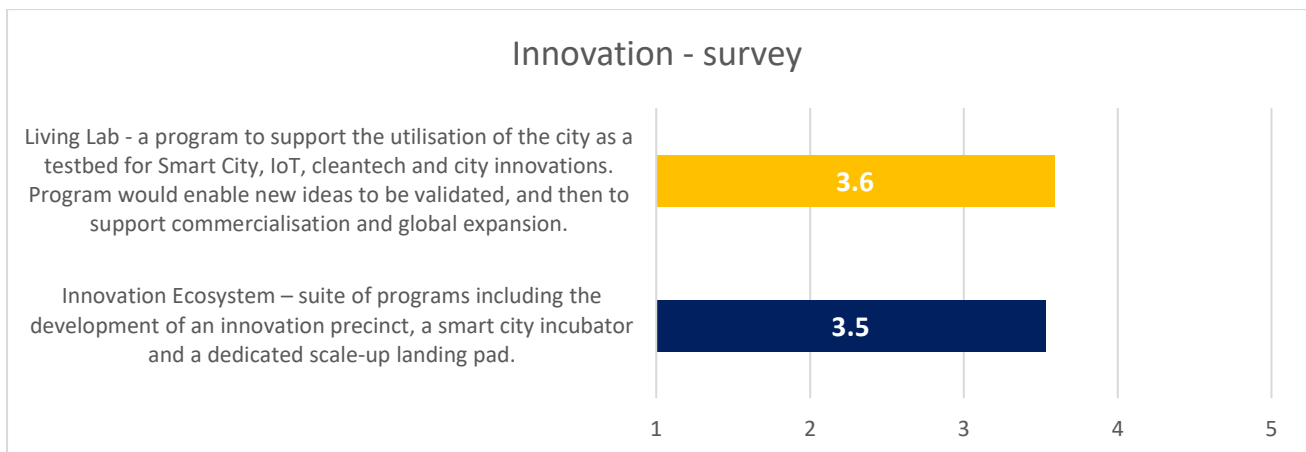


Figure 18 - Enabling Innovation Program – survey mean scores

Pillar three: City shaping

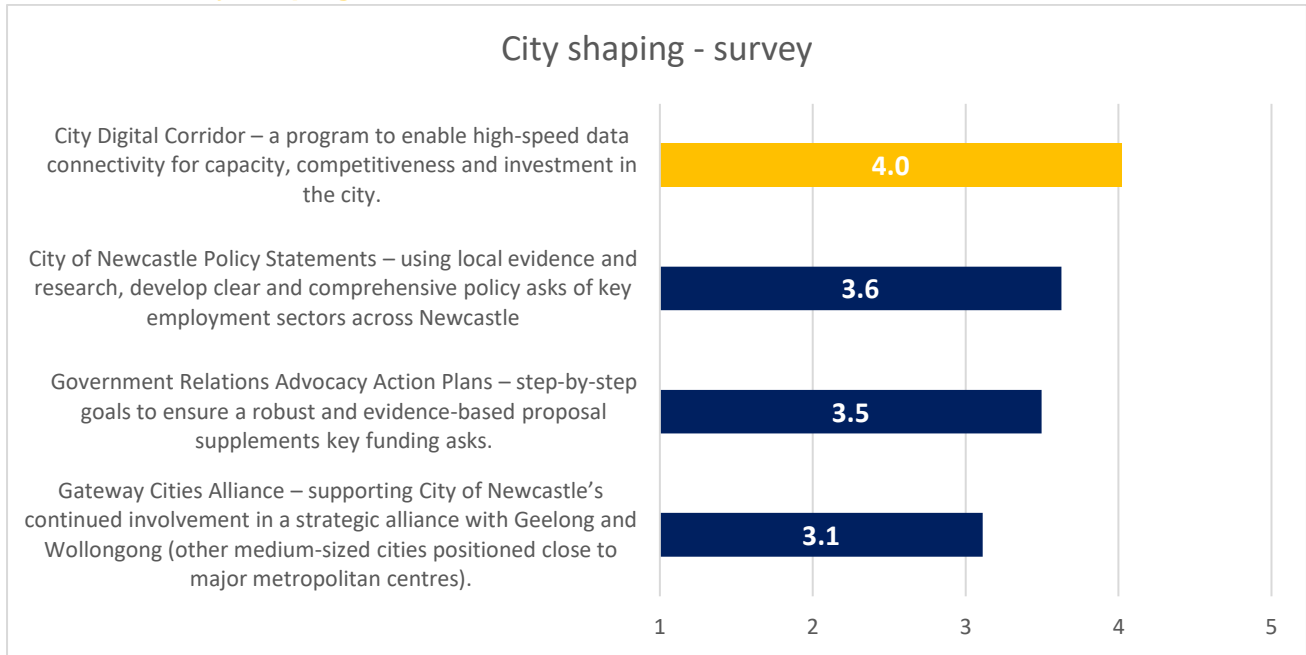


Figure 19 - City Shaping Initiatives – survey mean scores

Pillar four: Vibrant city

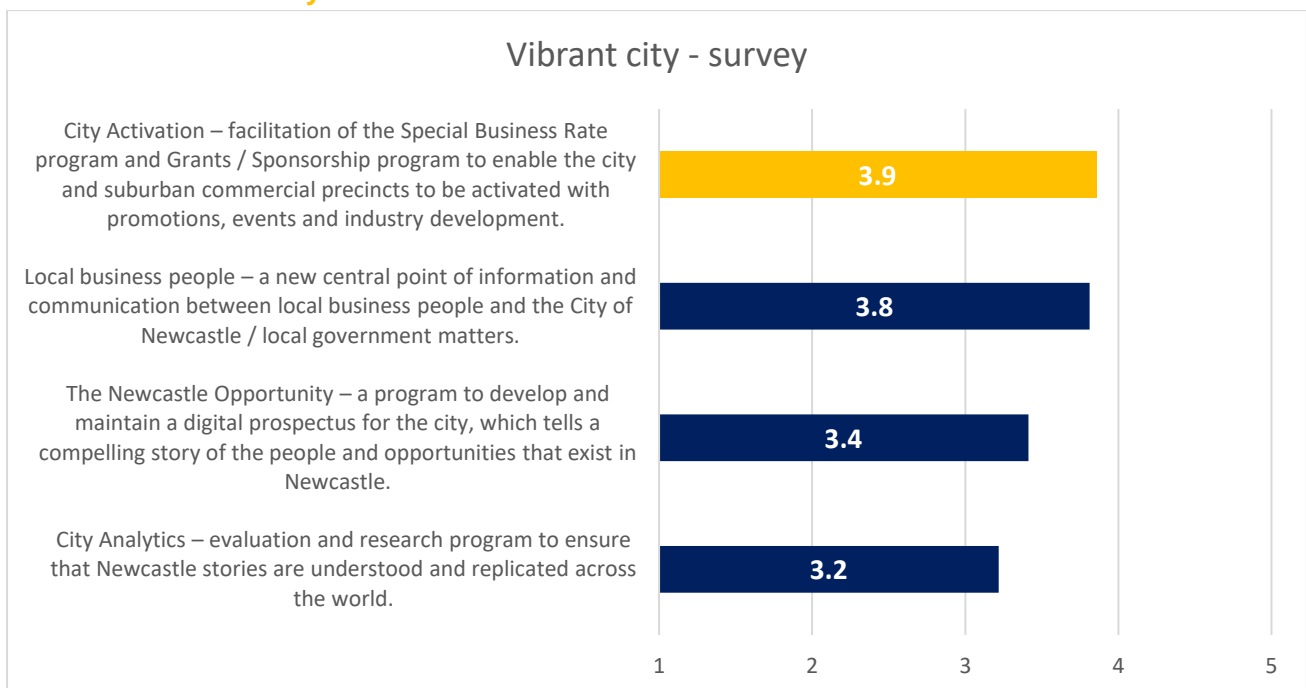


Figure 20 - Vibrant City program – survey mean scores

“I feel that the four pillars program is a step in the right direction. To pull it off you will need the complete support of the council and the business sector”

- Maybe the strategy could be widened under the inclusive pillar to make points about indirect benefits
- How will CN ensure that women in particular participate and benefit economically through this plan?
- CN needs to deal with the big picture in terms of what is good for the city and remember that the minorities are just that, minorities
- CN should only employ staff who reside in the Newcastle LGA.

Transport/accessibility

- Ensuring public trust in public transport and investing in connecting Newcastle to other major cities / improve public transport - required to make all jobs accessible to all demographics
- It would help Newcastle to have a fast train to Sydney / better public transport is how you make small cities more accessible
- Change the culture of car use / think bike first / workplace bike purchase discount incentive schemes or similar
- Improve access and parking / Newcastle is a city that is only accessible by car / reduce the perceived huge amount of “wasted space” on car parks

Sustainability

- Sustainability and caring for the environment to be built into anything that is undertaken
- Bigger focus on the environment and becoming a world leading green city to attract young people
- Aim to have less Co2 emissions and to decrease our pollution levels
- Negative impacts will occur when coal industry declines
- Making Newcastle a greener more appealing city
- Newcastle to be positioned as a smart and green city / focus on green technologies, green spaces
- Newcastle needs to divest itself from fossil fuels and prepare for the future economy
- Need to be greening the economy / align with international norms relating to climate emission targets and renewable energy investment
- Net zero emissions by 2050 is essential
- We need to hear from Governments on how they plan to transition to that target by establishing alternative clean and green industries / is a critical need and will require significant focus and attention.

Other general comments covered a range of topics and diverse sentiments that included requests to make the Strategy clearer and easier to understand, CN to support and communicate with business and maintain the city’s perceived liveability.

Strategy communication suggestions (negative sentiments)

- Much of the language in this survey involves jargon and it is difficult to understand what the intent is / get rid of the jargon and business speak and give a better picture of what is being suggested / These are motherhood statements that do nothing to advance economic development / Wording of your so called “program pillars” do not clearly explain in simple terms, what the goals and objectives are supposed to achieve

- The language is quite jargon heavy and I think some would have a difficult time engaging with the strategy for this reason/ Don't get too carried away with your jargon / Sounds like a lot of non-practical jargon / So much jargon and so many buzz words
- Lack of sound, well explained strategies that appear to be achievable
- Most businesses and the general public will not understand what you intend to do to improve our city and community for the future. This was poorly explained and poorly written.
- Pie in the sky statements as an excuse to generate paperwork
- Keep communicating with the people to find out what stops them visiting or doing business in Newcastle
- Words are fine but there is still little evidence that Newcastle wants to truly be a smart city

General suggestions (negative/neutral sentiments)

- Don't spread yourself too thin and focus on your top, most impactful priorities
- Small businesses also need more support / incentives are welcomed / need action to support small businesses and social enterprises (unspecified)
- The cost and lengthy processes of setting up, change of use and continuing in business are too difficult and costly
- A result from COVID is that many building owners have been forced to absorb overheads making the whole situation a financial disaster
- Minimise the rate irregularity on commercial property and spread the burden similar to Sydney councils.
- CN to minimise the rate irregularity on commercial property and spread the burden
- If you were serious you would be talking about drastic reductions in business rates, improved access, infrastructure, internet improvements and innovative car parking initiatives instead of the marshmallow initiatives you wasted space on
- Just do your job! Roads, rates and rubbish / Use rates to build and maintain things.

Other comments:

- Remain liveable - healthy people are more productive and less of a cost to the system
- Strategy is sound / the focus on action will mean if it works / four pillars and associated initiatives are well thought out particularly the linkages to evidence-based decision making and planning.

Newcastle's competitive advantage

Respondents were also asked the multiple-choice question, '*What advantages or benefits (if any) do you believe Newcastle offers people looking to move, live or invest here?*'

The lifestyle available in Newcastle was the standout response with 89% response. This was followed by quality of life (75%) and then proximity to Sydney and other capital cities via the airport to a lesser extent at 53%. See Appendix XXII for the survey verbatim comments (n=34).

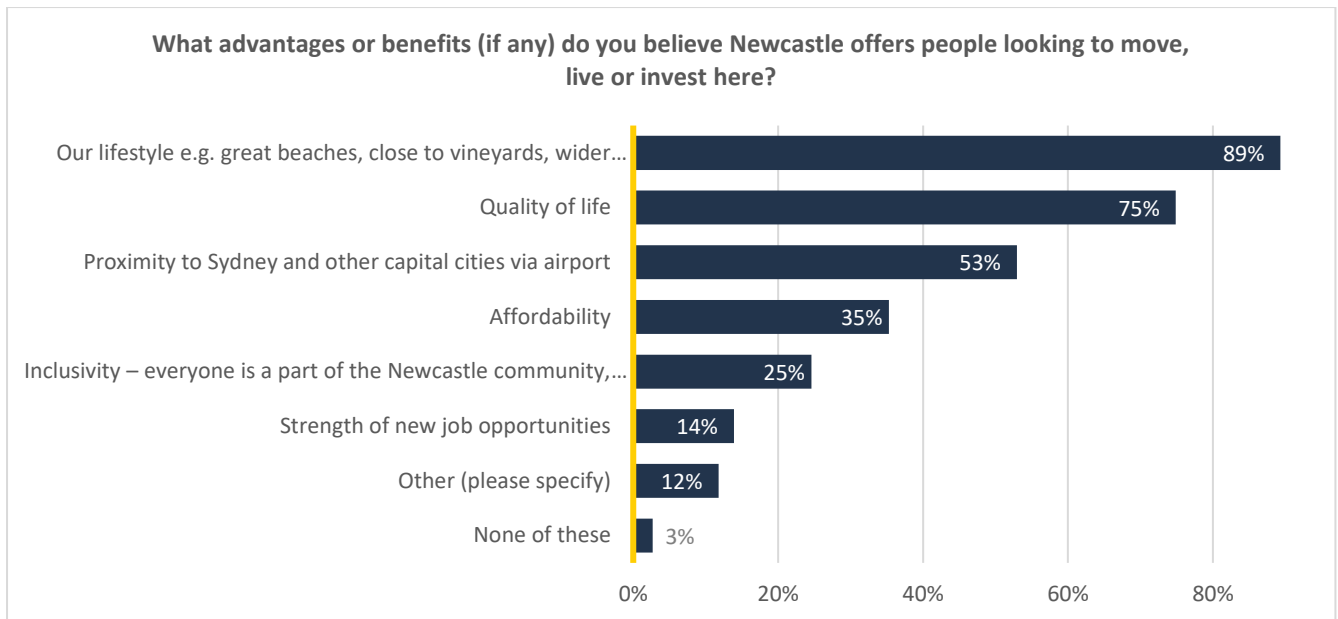


Figure 21 - Perceived advantages Newcastle offers

Confidence levels - 2yrs and 10-years

Respondents were asked, how confident do you feel about the following new economic opportunities being created in Newcastle. A five-point scale was presented 1 to 5 with 1 to indicate No confidence at all, 5 to indicate Absolute confidence.

The strongest increase in confidence over between the 2 to 10 years was towards innovation with from 2.4 to 3.3 mean score. Across the three options respondents appear to have confidence that jobs, investments and innovation will be areas for new economic opportunities over the next 10 years.

Potential new economic opportunities	No confidence at all	2	3	4	Absolute confidence	Mean score
Jobs – 2 years	13%	27%	36%	17%	6%	2.7
Jobs – 10 years	8%	13%	31%	31%	10%	3.3
Investments – 2 years	11%	19%	47%	19%	4%	2.8
Investments – 10 years	7%	14%	39%	39%	14%	3.2
Innovation – 2 years	13%	17%	36%	27%	6%	2.4
Innovation – 10 years	11%	10%	26%	39%	9%	3.3

Figure 22 - Confidence levels (Jobs, Investment and Innovation) –2 & 10 years

7. Next steps

The release of the Discussion Paper and associated engagement program was one of the early stages in collecting feedback and knowledge from a wide range of stakeholders and community. The activities aimed to encourage discussions across a range of engagement tools and methodologies and be both accessible and person-centred.

Considering the topic would not necessarily appeal to all sectors in the community and the timing (ongoing COVID-19 pandemic) the breadth of engagement and depth of measured feedback should provide many points for consideration in the production of the draft EDS. All information presented in this report should be reviewed and considered.

The mix of surveys, online and in-person workshops and presentations including the engagement City Plan undertook, along with conversations and the survey created many opportunities for involvement. Participants are thanked for sharing their views and contributing to the engagement process. In addition, the associated communications and social media campaign resulted in a wide reach (240,000+), again encouraging the public to provide their ideas and perspectives.

Once the draft EDS has been produced endorsement will be sought to place the draft on Public Exhibition from CN's elected Councillors prior to June 2021 and further communications undertaken to ensure stakeholders are provided further opportunities to review and influence the Strategy.

Appendix I – Table of Submissions

1	<p>Letter from individual</p> <p>2nd December 2020</p> <p>To the City of Newcastle staff,</p> <p>I'd like to make a submission for your Economic Development Strategy Discussion paper.</p> <p>I was hoping to be able to attend your zoom meeting on this topic but was unfortunately unable to make it. I'm very interested in ways to boost economic activity in Newcastle, and to investigate ways of supporting caring, ethical economies that are safe and sustainable for our workers and our environment.</p> <p>I'd like to make the suggestion that the CoN has a role to play in advocating for changes in fields beyond the control of local government. Council has a strong voice that is more likely to be considered by other levels of government than individual community members.</p> <p>I think council could play an important role advocating for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free education from preschool all the way through to university. This allows parents to return to work sooner and encourages young people to develop their skills sets. 2. Returning funding to the TAFE sector. The continual erosion of TAFE is a widely and deeply felt issue in Newcastle. The shift towards competition with private training organisations has resulted in inferior courses being run with a focus on maximising profits. This will have long term detrimental impacts on the skills available in Newcastle. 3. A container terminal at the Port of Newcastle which will increase jobs at the port and in the Hunter region more broadly. 4. Raise the rate. If those unemployed in our city weren't living below the poverty line, they would find it much easier to look for work. Things like buying and maintaining a car, purchasing clothes for an interview, or maintaining one's health or personal grooming is almost impossible on the scarce job seeker rate. 5. Reversing the trend towards casualisation. With an increase in casualisation of our workforce comes a lack of financial security and a reluctance to spend or invest in our city. <p>I think Newcastle has an opportunity to increase the number of festivals, events and markets as a way of boosting local employment. We could investigate which parks could host summer food truck markets with locally made arts and crafts and live music.</p> <p>To my knowledge the CoN doesn't yet host any outdoor cinema events which can be hugely popular in the summer months and again could be held in a number e of our parks across the LGA.</p>
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We could look at ways of increasing the number of art, music, dance and theatre events by exploring new venue options and looking at more than one cultural precinct in the city.

Returning an initiative like the Renew Newcastle program where local businesses are given empty shop fronts free rent to test out their business idea was hugely popular and successful and I think will be required as we attempt to bring our shopping strips back to life. Pop up shops are also a great way to allow businesses a reduced risk opportunity to bring their product to the market. I'm not yet sure how council can support or facilitate more of this but would like to investigate the idea. I'd like to know if CoN owns any shopfront areas and if we could use these to test and demonstrate these ideas as a way of encouraging shop owners to do the same.

I think we have an issue nationally with the way we report job figures. When we talk about who is unemployed and how many jobs have been created, I'd like to see more detail on who is receiving those jobs. Too often I think we are creating jobs for white males and this is masked when we only refer to a figure such as '78 jobs created by this project approval'. The discussion paper rightly points out that "Women, people from Non-English speaking backgrounds, people living with disability and others experiencing social disadvantage (such as casualised employment conditions) have been disproportionately impacted." I'd like to try to find ways to create jobs for those who need it most. Approaching women's groups, multicultural groups, migrant groups, and first nations groups to talk about barriers to employment and any startup or employment ideas that they have would be a good start to addressing employment inequalities.

I think Newcastle has an opportunity to explore businesses that focus on sustainability. As we grapple with the climate crisis this needs to be everyone's focus and economic development in our city is inextricably linked. Perhaps those types of businesses and innovative ideas could be the ones that we prioritise. In the area of tourism I think there's opportunity for cycle based tours of our city, canoe tours in our harbour and walking wildlife tours.

I know of at least one city in the UK that solved their collapsing economy through the council setting up cooperatives. By doing this they created secure jobs for their own local community members and the economic benefits flowed from there. CoN has an opportunity to look at how we can address the casualisation of the workforce, as mentioned above.

Finally, I think the CoN can do more to promote local businesses and events in our city. Currently it seems that CoN promotional material is mostly for events being held in council owned spaces. The instagram posts were almost entirely made up of coastal shots although that does seem to be beginning to change. I'd like to see an expansion of CoNs role to promoting and celebrating all things that happen in our city: exhibitions, gigs, markets, pop up shops, restaurants, upcycled goods- everything we have to offer, and hopefully our tourism bodies are doing that too.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, I look forward to following the development of this strategy going forward.

2	<p>Email – Recruitment Agency</p> <p>With regards to the highest-demand skill sets we are hearing from employers, I have listed them below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Accountant for chartered accounting firms - CA qualified accountants in Business Services or Audit with leadership qualities and ambition. • Software Developers • Cyber Security Consultants • Web Developers • Specialised Digital Marketing roles • Client Service Officers in Financial Planning • Admin Assistants for Chartered Accounting Practices • Legal Secretaries • Rail Engineer - Trackwork Design • Draftspersons - all disciplines in engineering
3	<p>Email from individual</p> <p>I would like to thank you and congratulate on many positive changes in Newcastle which I am sure you had a significant input.</p>
4	<p>Response from Hunter Research Foundation</p> <p>Comments on Discussion Paper see pages 48 - 50</p>
5	<p>Discussion with University of Newcastle</p> <p>Discussion (informal at Hometown Holiday launch) with Professor Mark Hoffman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President Academic Division (Second in Charge) at UON.</p>
6	<p>Discussion with University of Newcastle</p> <p>Discussion with Professor Tony Travaglione, Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Global Engagement and Partnerships UON. Notes from the conversation below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International students as market insiders for globalisation and export strategy • International multicultural events so international students can see their culture • South American students and Indonesian students as potential focuses / gateways for Newcastle • Providing network connection into startup/scaleup for Work Integrated Learning

Page 1 Introduction	<i>What has been the traditional approach to city econ development, and what has it lacked?</i>
Page 2 Key Newcastle LGA statistics	<p><i>Good framing of near-term challenges. What about long-term challenges - like the need to diversity the regional economy and the need to cultivate greater cultural diversity? the latter may seem like a stretch, but many attribute Sydney's rise to the arrival of international migrants, something that Newcastle lacks.</i></p> <p><i>No need to label international migration as a focus for the City at this point, but some would argue that it ought to be on the table.</i></p> <p><i>Might be good to talk more about the City and its region. The regional economy affects that of the city and vice versa.</i></p> <p><i>The city-region ties can also be seen as a strength. Some would suggest taking into account the Sandstone Megaregion aspirations, as well. Again, just place it on the table as a consideration.</i></p> <p><i>That suggests that it might be useful to state who this plan is meant to affect - not just City residents, but City-based businesses, visitors, potential future residents and employers from elsewhere in NSW, around Australia and overseas.</i></p>
Page 4 Four Pillars	<p><i>Good set of initial targets</i></p> <p><i>Could be useful to turn this diagram inside out, as well as using this version. That is, the diagram suggests how the City's efforts can complement one another. Another perspective would be to categorise the initiatives in terms of target groups.</i></p> <p><i>If I am a teenager, what would I see the city doing?</i></p> <p><i>If I run a small business, how would I interact differently with the city?</i></p> <p><i>If I am a middle manager in a local office of a national firm, where is the touch point for me, and is that different to what it has been?</i></p> <p><i>You have noted below how one can 'get involved' in this process of identifying priorities. Might be good to make that more explicit each time the priorities are shown, such as here. For example, what are criteria for making this list? who assesses the candidates? This area is tricky as it is not just a popular vote; some expertise needs to be brought to bear, albeit expertise informed by considering what is going on internationally.</i></p>
Page 5 Discussion Paper "headlines"	<i>Review - The plan is a touchstone, where aspirations may persist, but particular strategies need to change to respond to a shifting context.</i>
Page 6	<p><i>It might be handy to provide a page on the economic bases of the city and to acknowledge the elephant in the room - the coal export industry. No need to pass judgement on it, but perhaps acknowledge 'changing international markets' and stated needs for 'economic diversification'. I mention coal here as your 10-year timeframe starts verging into when one might see some early but significant shifts in the industry. That coal economy certainly affects the fortunes of the city and its residents.</i></p> <p><i>Later in the document, I see mention of the big infrastructure and other economic developments that can affect the City. That is good.</i></p>

	<i>Again, it can be good to identify who else needs to be a partner in these changes.</i>
Page 7 Project outline / process	<i>In this process, do larger organisations have more say? How do you decide which ideas to run with or which criticisms to take on board?</i>
Page 8 Pillar one: Enabling Skills	<i>Good overview of some of the basics about who lives here. This section would be a good one in which to mention international migration. That is a particularly challenging area given the closure of international borders. There will be a lot of competition for international migrants from places like Western Sydney or Melbourne or Southeast Queensland. Do you want to mention such alternative localities in this document? They are the competition.</i>
Page 8 1. New Skills	<i>What are the criteria for success for these programs? Enrolments are a positive sign. One might also look for ultimate outcomes, such as when the skills learned are used.</i>
Page 9 2. Talent Attraction 3. International Networks	<i>What are the criteria for success for these programs? Enrolments are a positive sign. One might also look for ultimate outcomes, such as when the skills learned are used.</i>
Page 11 1. Williamstown	<i>This defence opportunity should not be underestimated as it is a large, long-term investment. What strategies might improve the relationships and interchanges between the local defence establishment and the City's businesses and residents?</i>
Page 9 Newcastle Port	<i>More generally, Port containerisation – at over \$1 billion – would represent the largest capital investment in the City and region. Seems like it needs more attention, even though when it will happen is up in the air.</i>
Page 10 Summerhill	<i>Waste management has become more of a regional issue. Here again is an area where the city-region relationship deserves attention.</i>
Page 10 Callaghan	<i>One needs to keep closely involved in such initiatives. Passionate academics can take such initiatives and run them in the direction of their own interests. Might be handy to have the Uni establish an external advisory board for this Regional Transformation Hub, if it does not have one already.</i> <i>The Uni is one avenue for getting more international engagement in the region. Seems worth providing special attention to that topic, as international students can represent a form of imported talent and a source of foreign investment.</i>

Page 13 City Centre	<i>What does state designation as an innovation precinct provide?</i>
Page 14 Living Lab	<i>It might be worthwhile asking about how increases in social distancing behaviours, including working from home, might be shifting what is needed in workplaces. How can the City accommodate new modes of working in a way that provides competitive advantage?</i>
Page 15 City-Shaping Initiatives	<i>It is my understanding that some of this additional investment after announcement of the Light Rail can be attributed to changes in the rules for grouting the abandoned mining voids underneath the city. No need to complicate the story here, but it is important to consider how upsurges can have multiple triggers.</i>
Page 16 Government Relations	<i>This arena - govt relations - could be tough given the City's history of not being a marginal electorate. That is where having the evidence base, and making it widely visible, can be important. This sort of advocacy can benefit from regional collaboration. Would be good to outline for stakeholders the growing collaboration among local govts in the lower Hunter. Such a generosity of spirit in documents such as this one can buoy regional collaboration.</i>
Page 17 City Analytics Program The Newcastle Opportunity	<i>City's knowledge base? How is the City's strategy integrated with regional aspirations and strategies? How do you 'sell' that regional view to residents and business operators here in the City? No need to mention it here, but a key part of the City, or anyone, being a pioneer is getting others to follow. Doing something different, no matter how innovative it is, only gets you brownie points if others recognise it as being advanced. So, part of the City's strategy is to get recognition nationally and internationally for areas where the City is providing leadership. That recognition then needs to attract certain types of migrants and investment.</i>

Appendix II – External Workshop Mentimeter Results **Business Improvement Associations (BIA's)**

Enabling Skills Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

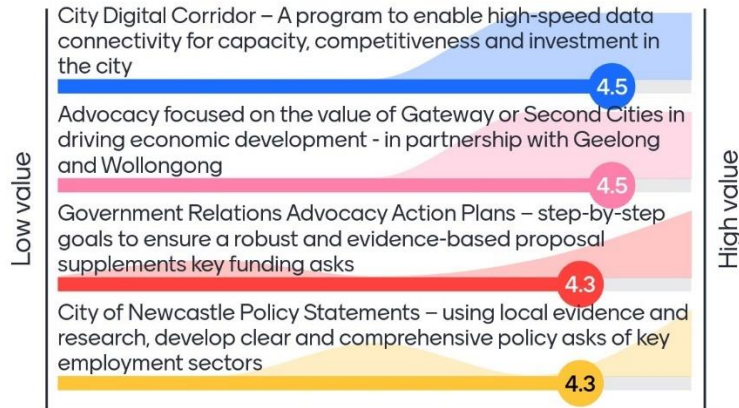


Enabling Innovation Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5



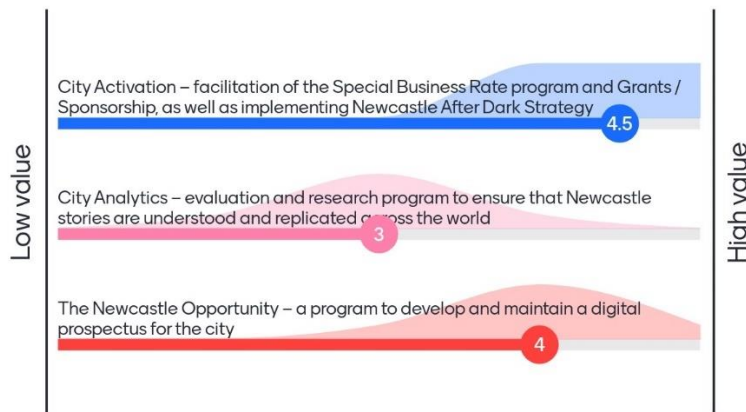
City Shaping Initiatives Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



Vibrant City Program - please rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?



to be constructive and build for the future rather than negative and focus on the past.	At times a more practical approach.	people to carry out
Identifying "low hanging fruit" for immediate action while refining longer term plans.	Develop plan for 'Clusters' in new sectors eg clean tech, climate tech, Develop Uni/business programs for the new sector Target the demographics we want so that the city is offering the require lifestyle amenities eg night life or parks for kids	Connectivity across various stakeholders
Programs have to be understood by the Businesses in a more simple manner Not everyone understands what is being purposed	Connection between small business and bug business (ge hunter water or NIB) to preferentially hire local.	FYI: Karl's deets: karl@climaterisk.com.au 0412 25 75 21 if you want to keep convo going_



Appendix III – External Workshop Mentimeter Results City Taskforce

Do you support the City of Newcastle's proposed vision for the Economic Development Strategy



Enabling Skills Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5



What are the challenges for the proposed Enabling Skills programs? What's missing?



Adequate funding	Advanced Manufacturing International Returners	Clear identification of which skills to target
Ability to have scaleable lettable space	What skills would most help the youth get jobs?	Selling the vision as to why?
Devil is in the detail - many of these programs would be high value if what is on offer is thoughtfully prepared/co-created and done not for profit. Also return on international connections could be quite high for investment.	What skills do people nearing the end of their career have to offer?	The right jobs at the end of any skills training program



What are the challenges for the proposed Enabling Skills programs? What's missing?

Mentimeter

<p>Youth recruitment and internship programs in key organisations - how many are there?</p>	<p>Put a better time frame than 2020s and call it future jobs not economic opportunities</p>	<p>Lots of players in this space, definite value in coord role, navigating a person through</p>
<p>Ability to easily find sector networking groups</p>	<p>Creative skills</p>	<p>Important to avoid duplication of existing programs</p>

Enabling Innovation Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



13

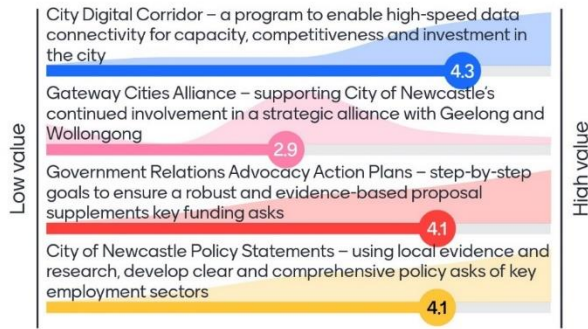
What are the challenges for the proposed Enabling Innovation programs? What's missing?

Mentimeter

<p>Advanced manufacturing specifically</p>	<p>Competition (attraction and funding) from other cities and regions</p>	<p>Getting the general community to understand and engage with "innovation" as a thing that relates to all.</p>
<p>Purpose-built real estate sites</p>	<p>As a living lab getting more runs on the board</p>	<p>Work out of home hubs</p>
<p>Ability to interlink different sector Cohorts as most people don't appreciate how close a lot of sectors actually are</p>	<p>Strong engagement with mining communities and businesses to encourage skills development and transition to clean energy</p>	

8

City Shaping Initiatives Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5 Mentimeter



What are the challenges for the proposed City-Shaping programs? What’s missing? Mentimeter

Genuine partnership with surrounding cities and regions - Lake Mac

Lack of local control over big infrastructure decisions

A unified approach/avoiding duplication/leveraging existing investment

City shaping infrastructure is also programs on community and local infra incl cycling, walking, amenity etc all within council remit. Not just major projects

Build fibre or wireless backbone and make it affordable

Business/industry agreement and support

City Deal

regional partnerships.

Providing opportunities for different sectors to collaborate to deliver on the goals



What are the challenges for the proposed City-Shaping programs? What’s missing? Mentimeter

Leveraging the invaluable city-university-community helix. Huge strength for the city and promoting and progressing smart city agenda. (I'm biased)

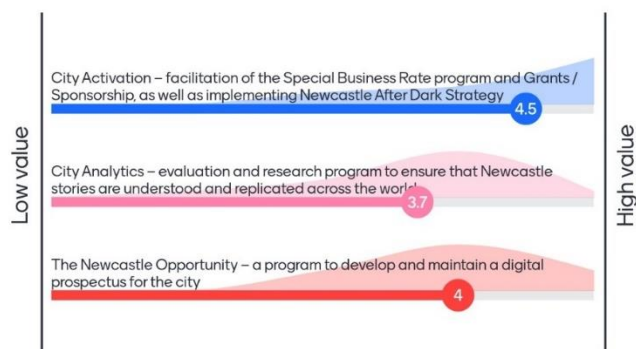
Not enough of us continuously put our foot forward in the actual offices of ministers of both levels of gov

Value propositions with greater awareness of need of other regions - density, decentralisation, regional scale etc

positioning the city as the hub to the larger regional transition

Vibrant City Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5

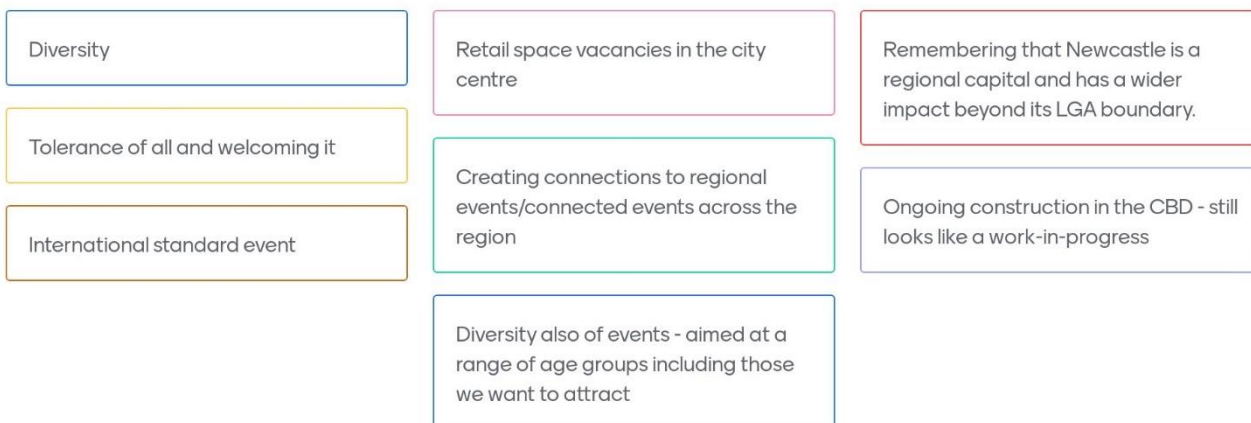
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13

What are the challenges for the proposed Vibrant City programs? What's missing?

Mentimeter



8

Appendices IV External Workshop Mentimeter Results **Hunter Young Professionals (HYP)**

Enabling Skills Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



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Enabling Innovation Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

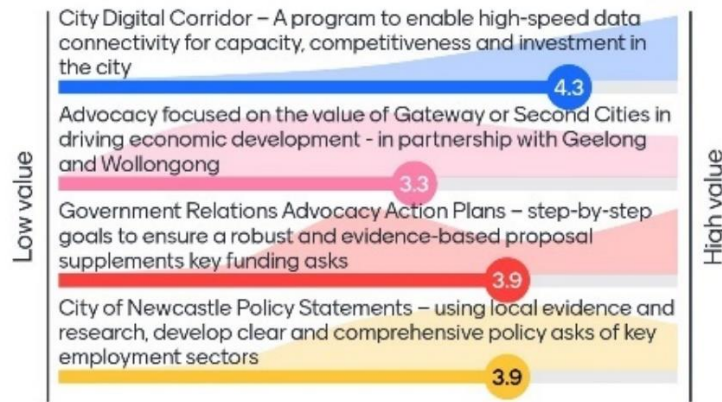
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City Shaping Initiatives Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

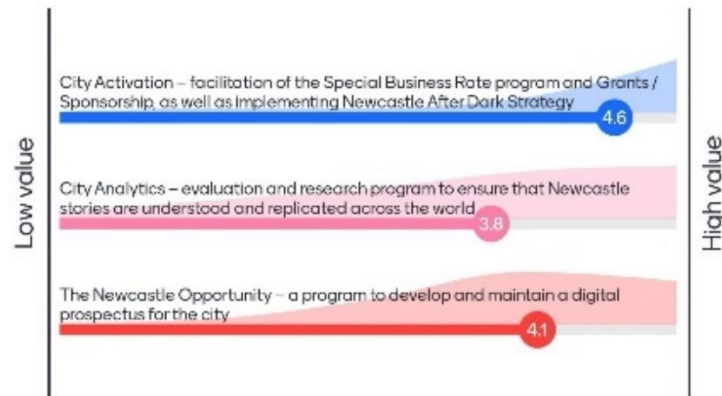
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26

Vibrant City Program - please rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



26

What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?

Mentimeter



What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?

Mentimeter

Promoting local tourism within Australia to gain exposure for Newcastle which will in turn attract people to move to the city.	Focus on gross national happiness and developing the soft skills of the Newcastle public (resilience, proactive mental health, emotional intelligence etc). Particularly in government roles such as education and healthcare where burnout is high	Local talent hub, support and recognition of businesses that drive local growth
The programs should have a stronger focus on providing opportunities to younger people who might not have years of career experience but are keen to learn new skills	Promotion of diverse and inclusive workplaces and engagement from talent acquisition teams to achieve this	Work on council's direct relationship with business' as a stakeholder rather than being in opposition. Engage w/ local business to improve efficiency and cut red tape
Incentivise big business to relocate to Newcastle and decentralise from Sydney to boost job opportunities and local economy	Greater focus on the After Dark strategy and bringing more people into the city centre (focus on transport).	Awareness of the big picture future plans for the city and where values/skills are expected to be placed

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What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?

Mentimeter

Politics sigh	Improving access to internet, a critical resource for accessing new work and development opportunities, by providing public access to internet facilities.	Lack of apprentices and this will impact an industry if not abated. Direct engagement by council and promote and encourage industry to partake given the incentives surrounding engagement.
Smart city technologies. High speed internet.	Challenge to rolling a lot of these out is internet accessibility and quality.	A focus on local procurement initiatives and supporting business in utilising available channels
Transforming the global image from a steel/coal city	Centralised place for opportunities for both businesses and people facilitated by Council and key local organisations and businesses.	Light rail access to the 3 key elements to a city infrastructure, retail infrastructure Direct link to Broadmeadow, International stadium Direct link to John Hunter Hospital Direct link to International Airport

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What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?

Mentimeter

Be more open to collaborations	Popping the social bubbles and integrating outside talent.	Collaborate with global organisations
Short term focus that is unfortunately inherent in political re-election cycles	Make Newcastle Great again	Declan Edwards for Prime Minister
Highlight more grassroots organisations focused on community growth	Strong push for locals supporting locals.	Align with the SDGs

Young Professionals (HYP) event photos



Appendices IV Workshop Mentimeter Results Strategy and Innovation Committee

Do you support the City of Newcastle's proposed vision for the Economic Development Strategy Mentimeter



Enabling Skills Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5 Mentimeter



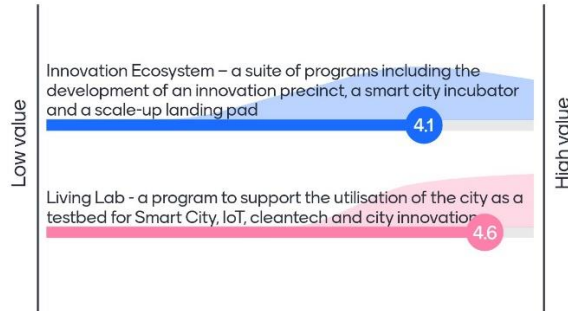
What are the challenges for the proposed Enabling Skills programs? What's missing? Mentimeter

Mechanism to engage with market. Do we need to pick winners or get input from business?	What are the local skill shortages (Current and emerging)? How do these link back to the core goals and direction	Understanding and articulating the levers that local govt controls
Understanding the gaps Alignment with trends and need Flexibility	Exploration of the opportunity to amplify these programs through regional approaches / regional partnerships	Mapping skills pathways and gaps
skills that are not transferable	Mapping global trends against local actors	Not councils role



Enabling Innovation Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



What are the challenges for the proposed Enabling Innovation programs? What's missing?

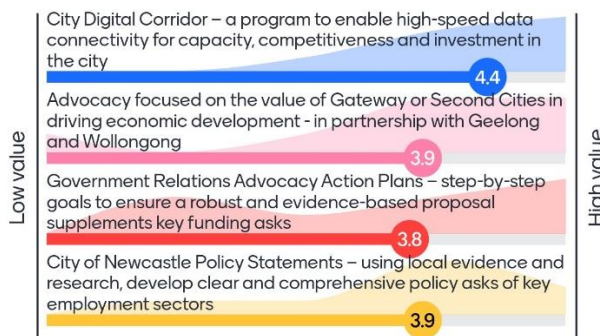
Mentimeter

the special sauce	Who are your partners? Ams their roles and responsibilities.	Willing to take the risk in supporting new innovation
Is there evidence that these programs are what existing business need/are asking for to grow and expand?	A number are highly reliant on cwth / state funding for major catalysts	Understanding and leveraging the fact that the innovation ecosystem is not constraint by LGA boundaries BUT yet it is place based
Some focus on scale ups not just start ups. Matching need to capability and capacity. Awareness and connection to the business ecosystem locally and broadly.	Residents shutting down live music	



City Shaping Initiatives Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



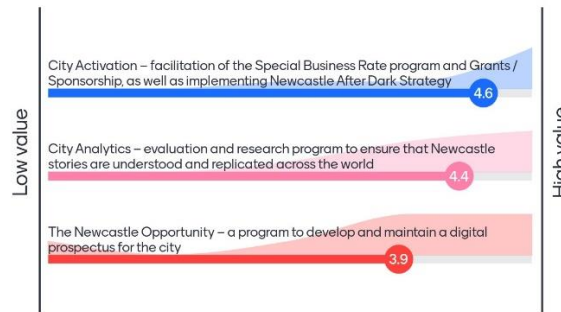
What are the challenges for the proposed City-Shaping programs? What's missing?



A solution to Parking on the city	Seeing newcastle as a city. Sum of whole is greater than its parts.	Measurability
City is still too car dominated	Double down on the role of the city centre as the regional CBD	True understanding of current status and condition. Pathway and consensus on where to next. Collective recognition by region of city importance
Needs to present as the regional CBD	Collective understanding of and by existing businesses	



Vibrant City Program - please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5



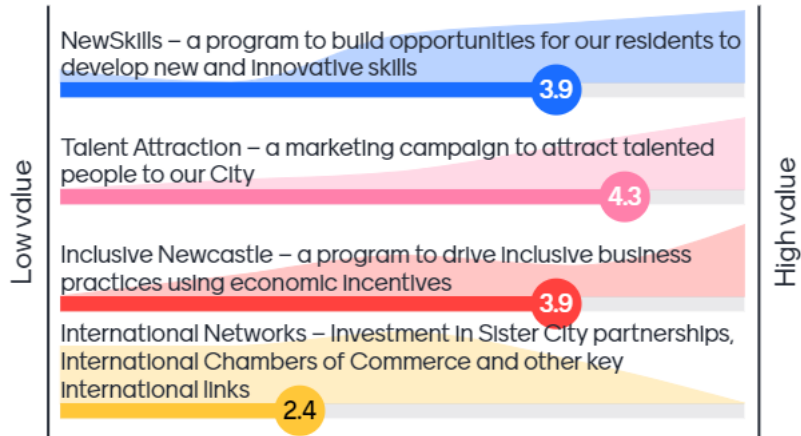
What are the challenges for the proposed Vibrant City programs? What's missing?



Walkability	Need to retain and enhance the individual character of different places and neighbourhoods	Need to think outside CBD. And define the specialisation
Collective and collaborated understanding of the vision.	Walkability x 2	Not policing bad behaviour through residential streets after dark
Sense of comfort for visitors		



Appendix VI – ALL STAFF Workshop Mentimeter Results



Enabling Innovation Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

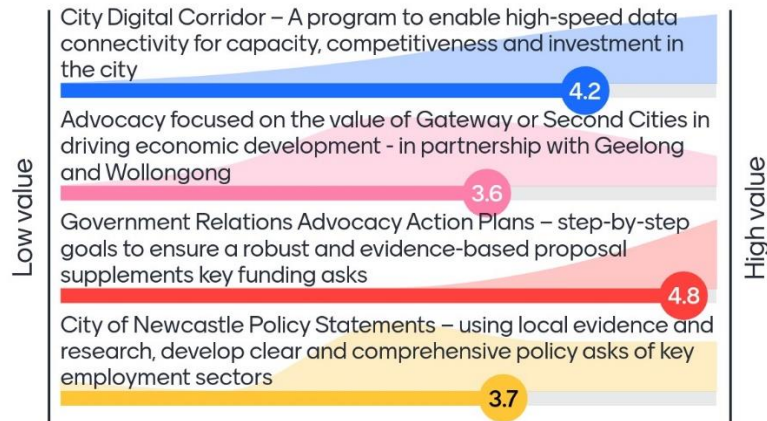
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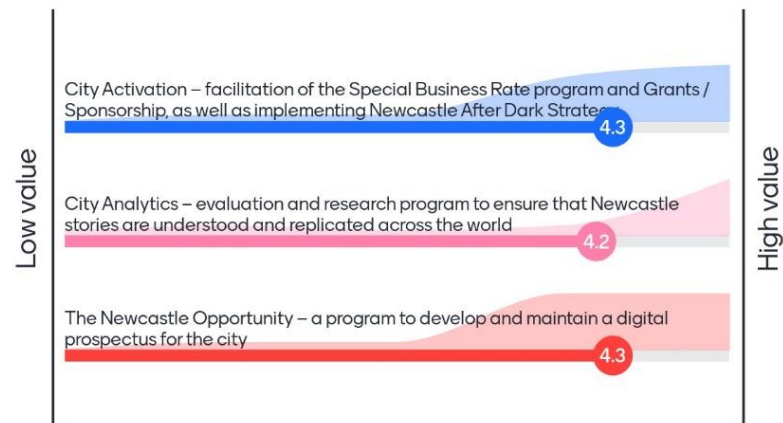
City Shaping Initiatives Program - rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



Vibrant City Program - please rate the following program ideas from 1 to 5

Mentimeter



What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?



Competing priorities, what if Covid comes back	Very city center focus, what about the Western Corridor and lower socio-economic geographic areas of Newcastle?	Strong evidence to support importance and attractiveness of Newcastle
challenge is gaining the 'ear' of state govt to be promoted as city to promote to large business enterprise	Data. We need to provide data to demonstrate the benefits to bottom line, or non monetary values.	Improve connectivity to Sydney - Speed rail. (State Govt engagement) Better connections to other universities - not just UoN.
Dedicated resources & budgets to adequately communicate the current programs to increase awareness & engagement	Not be Newcastle centric work on basis of greater Newcastle and take the lead	The vibrant city is so important for keeping youth



What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?



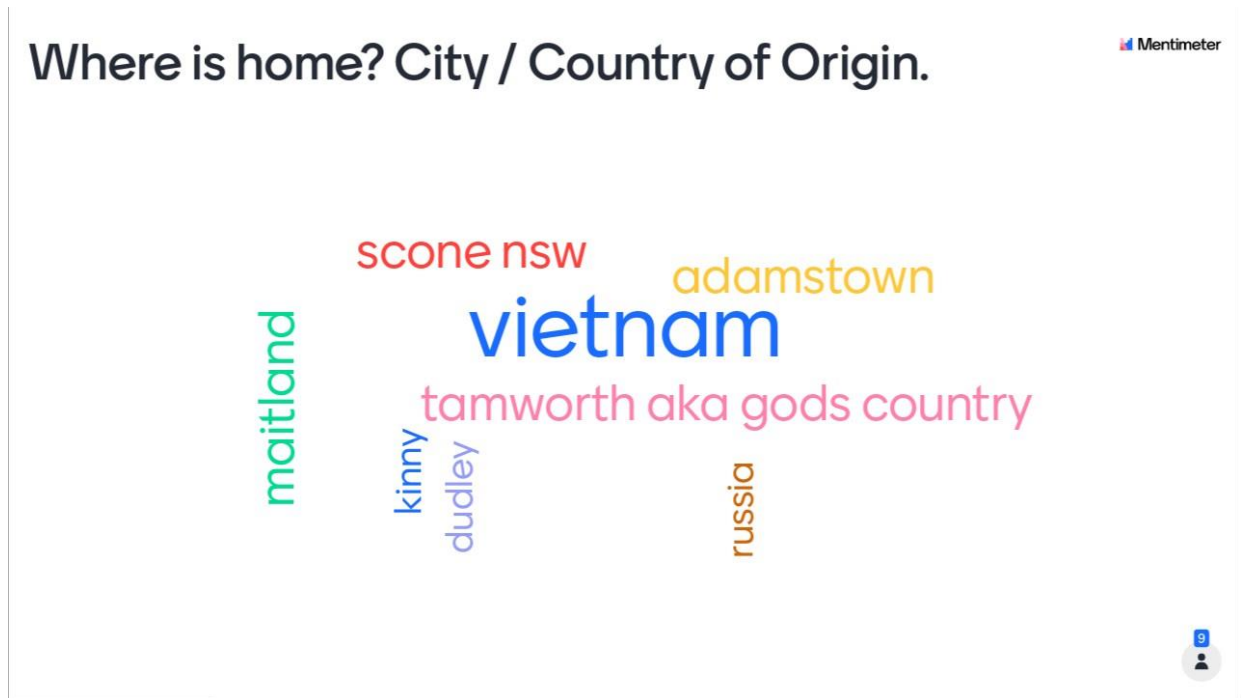
Recognise that our role in many of these things is advocacy and as a facilitator	Challenge is to market Newcastle appropriately and target the right people/businesses.	Clarity on regional v metropolitan status .. not just for govt funding but as a driver for people to move here
How do we support the unskilled labour force?	Grow tourism product and marketing	Welcome information , businesses & families. Information to assist with attracting & then re-establishing in a new city.
Attracting industries / business linking to other activities such as tourism and events to promote outside of the city.	Not be totally focussed on University and take a whole of economy view	CN need to show support for increased tourism. It can attract visitors to support existing food/night time economy, and provide more services and activities for residents, but it can also attract attract people to move/study/invest here

What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?

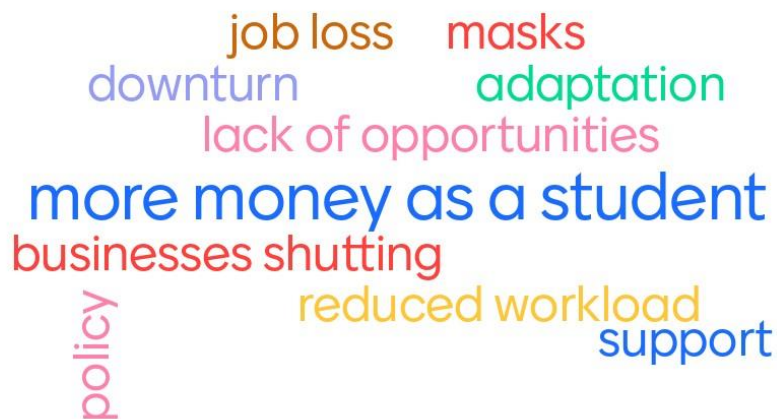


Capitalising on shift from coal to renewable energy

Appendix VII – University of Newcastle Workshop Mentimeter Results



Provide three words to describe the main economic impacts of COVID-19 that you've seen



What do you see as the top three priorities for achieving economic growth / recovery in the next 12 months?



invest bringing people into the city	Good leadership. Spending from public, ability and encouragement to interact financially with society	Businesses coming back to life
People coming back to work	Strong investment into renewable energy industry to help transition our reliance on fossil fuels especially in the Hunter. Further reopening of pubs and club especially within the Newcastle CBD	INNOVATION
Sustainable work practices	Partnerships within the region to promote employment opportunity. Innovation and diversification. Promoting travel to and within the region	We could tell



What do you see as the top three priorities for achieving economic growth / recovery in the next 12 months?



Sharing ideas	Community involvement
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We want Newcastle to be a city where everyone has an opportunity. This will require collaboration and partnerships. How do we get there?



More open forums

Academic engagement

Sharing ideas

Local council getting out and about within the local region to establish their presence and relationships within the area

community involvement

networking events

More local and international conferences once available

Proper publicisation of developments and progress

Ensuring a streamlined and measurable approach (i.e. SDGs) and buy-in from the local businesses and industry irrespective of their size.



We want Newcastle to be a city where everyone has an opportunity. This will require collaboration and partnerships. How do we get there?



Sporting opportunities and redevelopment of facilities can also build a sense of community throughout the Hunter

Im not educated in it but people complain about the transport situation



What do you think is the City of Newcastle's role in enabling economic opportunities? How can City of Newcastle help businesses succeed?

Deliver actions as defined in the Operational Plan.

Giving people support organisational and financial to be creative and innovative

community events

People complain about public transport

Greater involvement with small business within the area

involves the supports of job seekers

Creating platforms for business to business interaction

Providing opportunities and activities to younger people throughout the area

Promote the benefits of creating employment opportunities



Appendix VIII – Communications and promotional materials

- Information on the DP and engagement period included in e-newsletters, including:
 - Have Your Say email newsletter (1) distributed on 11 November 2020 and (2) on 26 November 2020 (2,300+ subscribers)
 - Interagency email newsletter (1) distributed on (600+ subscribers) on 26 October 2020 and (2) on 16 November 2020
 - Lean in Newy email (1) (2,400 subscribers) on 21 November 2020
 - HunterHunter email newsletter (1) distributed to 16,200 subscribers on 17 November 2020
 - Hunter Business Chamber email newsletter (1) distributed on 13 November 2020.

- Targeted advertising, promotions, social media and media release:
 - Media release distributed on 3 November 2020
 - Print advert in the Newcastle Herald on 11 and 18 November 2020
 - Print advert in Newcastle Weekly on 12 November
 - Billboard in header Hunter Headline website 9 November to 6 December 2020
 - Home Page MREC Hunter Headline website 9 November to 6 December 2020
 - Hunter Hunter full website takeover 9 to 15 November 2020
 - Digital library screens (Wallsend and Newcastle Library)
 - Showcase tile on CN's home webpage 2 to 30 November 2020 with 104 click throughs and 73 unique visitors
 - CN LinkedIn posts (12,500+ reach) in August 2020
 - Facebook CN (9,400+ reach) on 4 August 2020
 - Facebook CN (900+ reach) on 7 August 2020
 - Facebook Group Have Your Say (900+ reach) on 4 August 2020
 - Facebook Group Have Your Say (900+ reach) on 18 August 2020.

- Internal communications:
 - Staff NovoNews email newsletter (1) distributed to (900+ subscribers) on 18 November 2020 encouraging survey and workshop participation
 - Featured news story on staff Intranet
 - Promotion on 12 Stewart Avenue digital screens.

Have your say webpage



We're developing a strategy to create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation in Newcastle

The release of our Discussion Paper is designed to create a conversation and critical consideration in order to inform a new economic plan for our city. More than ever, we've heard business and our community are concerned about future economic opportunities and want to be part of the solution. Establishing a new Economic Development Strategy (EDS) will allow us to make the most of tomorrow's opportunities and support a resilient city.

Our discussion

We encouraged our community and stakeholders to have a say on how we can create the right environment for a stronger Newcastle economy. The engagement program included:

- Over 180 completed surveys
- Presentations to CN's City Taskforce and staff workshops
- TAFE NSW – two workshops with over 50 staff / student reps across multiple disciplines, and importantly well represented by CALD and ATSI communities
- Community Sector – workshop with nearly 30 reps from the NGO space
- Hunter Young Professionals – workshop with 60 attendees.

Our Discussion Paper engagement and survey closed 5pm on Sunday 6 December 2020. We are now preparing engagement reports.

EDS values

- **People-centred** – Programs will place people at the centre with outcomes to benefit the broad community.
- **Future focused** – Programs will push the boundaries, making Newcastle a place where we pilot, rework and try again; innovation is fundamental to everything that we do.
- **Evidence-driven** – Data-driven research will inform our programs. Newcastle will be the most researched and analysed Gateway City in the world; our stories and programs will be evaluated and understood, becoming models of success for replication across the world.

Key Newcastle statistics

- Almost 1 in 10 Newcastle residents are unemployed
- 11,000+ people are on JobSeeker or Youth Allowance, almost 1 in 5 if you're aged 18-25 years
- Women, people from Non-English speaking backgrounds, people living with disability and others experiencing social disadvantage (such as casualised employment conditions) have been disproportionately impacted.

Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic

CN recognises that locals have been impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. To help address these impacts, we provided leadership through the creation and facilitation of a City Taskforce, which has brought together 17 key city leaders from across manufacturing, small business, tourism, transport and logistics, arts and culture, workers, education and community sectors to chart a path for community and economic recovery. We have also developed a comprehensive community and business support package designed to help the community and businesses through the effects of COVID-19.



Key documents

- [Read our Discussion Paper](#)
- [Read our Discussion Paper Summary](#)
- [View our Covid-19 Economic Response Timeline](#)

Economic Development Strategy

- [Our Vision](#)
- [Our Mission](#)
- [The Horizon](#)
- [The Review](#)

Project timeline


- November - December 2020
Early Consultation
We're consulting with local businesses, industry groups and community members to test and identify actions we can take to improve opportunities in Newcastle.
- December 2020 - January 2021
Developing the Draft Strategy
We're reviewing the feedback received during the discussion period and developing the Draft Strategy.
- February - March 2021
Public Exhibition
The draft Economic Development Strategy will be open for submissions during a Public Exhibition period, before seeking Council adoption of the draft Strategy.

[Expand timeline](#)


Contact us

Economic Strategy & Government Relations Manager
 Phone: 02 4974 2000
 Email: mail@ncc.nsw.gov.au


Digital advertising/advertorial





We're developing a strategy to help create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation



We're developing a strategy to help create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation



Take our survey to help us make the most of tomorrow's opportunities

Take our survey to help us make the most of tomorrow's opportunities








Print advertising

Get involved

We're developing a new Economic Development Strategy to create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation by making the most of tomorrow's opportunities.

Have your say on how we can create the right environment for a stronger Newcastle economy at newcastle.nsw.gov.au/EDS

For enquiries please call 4974 2000

Discussion Paper

Discussion questions:

1. What do you see as Council's role in enabling local skill acquisition and development?

2. Who should the City of Newcastle be targeting our talent attraction strategies towards?

3. What incentives could local government provide to Newcastle businesses to encourage more employment opportunity, identify their skills needs, and promote social inclusion?

Discussion questions:

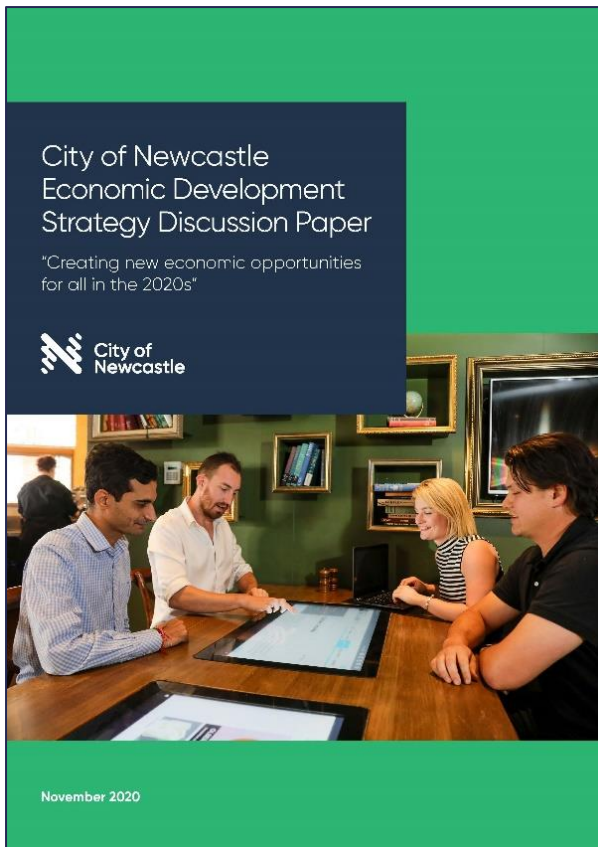
1. How could the City of Newcastle incentivise innovative scale-ups to relocate to Newcastle?

2. What further actions could we take to support the city as a testbed for Smart City, IoT, clean tech and city innovations?

Discussion questions:

1. How important is the investment in a City Digital Corridor for future economic opportunities in Newcastle?

2. What further actions could we take to build the case for Federal / State Government investment in Newcastle?



You're encouraged to comment on the questions and proposed pillars and actions outlined in the Discussion Paper. By getting involved you can help shape the development of a new/reimagined Economic Development Strategy.

How to join the discussion?

This paper is open for comment from Monday 2 November to Friday 4 December. You can make a submission during this time.

Take our survey

Submissions can be emailed to smassey@ncc.nsw.gov.au.

Submissions can be posted to Attn: Simon Massey, The City of Newcastle, 12 Stewart Avenue, Newcastle West 2300.

You can also call us on (02) 4976 1300

Please note: All submissions received may in whole or part, be referred to within or attached to the formal report to Council. Please indicate in your submission, whether you approve for your name/organisation to be included or whether you prefer for your submission to be published anonymously.

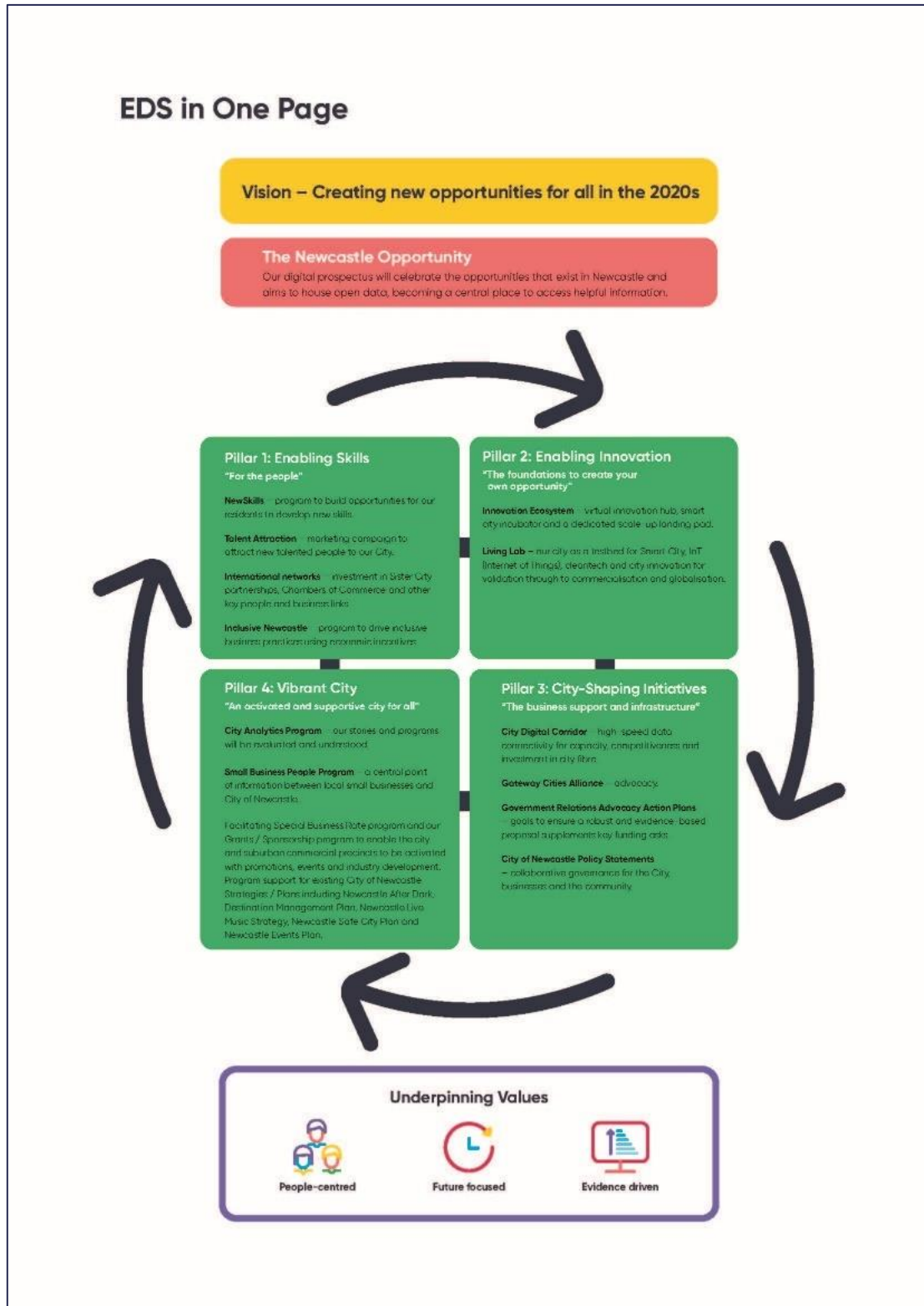
Next steps

City of Newcastle will consider all submissions and feedback received during the discussion period. The next step in the development of the Economic Development Strategy will be seeking the outcomes and insights as part of the final Economic Development Strategy, which will be presented to Council in February 2021.

To remain updated on the progress of the project, you can

HYPERLINK: www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/yoursay/economic-development-strategy

Discussion Paper one-page summary




Social media

City of Newcastle
35m · 🌐

Jump online on Tuesday 24 November at midday to join our Economic Discussion Paper workshop.
Please register here:
<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/.../city-of-newcastle...>

As residents and business owners in the region, you will be encouraged to chat about our new plan and what are priorities for Newcastle.




hyp - Hunter Young Professionals
2,662 followers
1w · 🌐

We're teaming up with the **City of Newcastle, Australia** to help develop a local vision for the next generation of Novocastrians. Share your ideas and make your mark on the new Economic Development Strategy by taking part in our free Future Vision workshop.

Join us and Deputy Lord Mayor **Declan Clausen GAICD** in enjoying light refreshments and deep discussion next Friday, the 27th November, from 7 am - 8.30 am. Have your say and make a real impact on the future of Newcastle.

Reserve your seat by following the link below:



HYP and The City of Newcastle 'Future vision' workshop
eventbrite.com.au · 1 min read

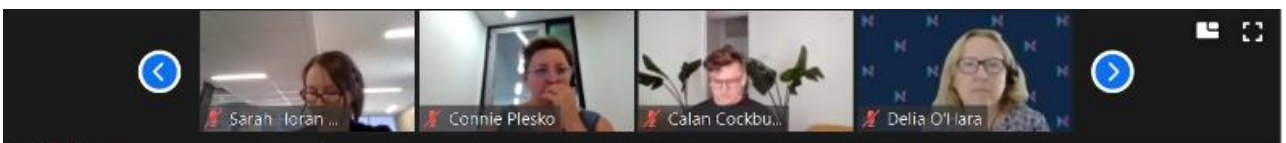
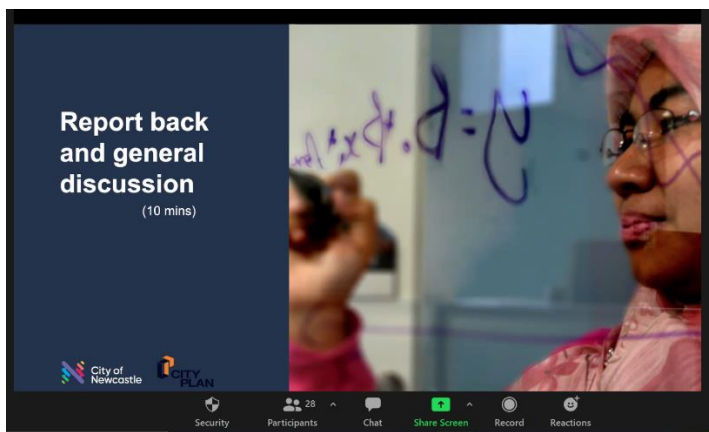
City of Newcastle
November 27 at 10:35 AM · 🌐

BIG THANKS to **hyp - Hunter Young Professionals** for sharing their insights and expertise around future economic opportunities with our city.

Participants gathered this morning at City Hall to discuss the City's economic future and generate ideas that can make a positive difference. This event is all part of an engagement program bringing different voices from across Newcastle together so we can build even better foundations for opportunity. If you also want to comment on our pe... See More



Workshops and promotion

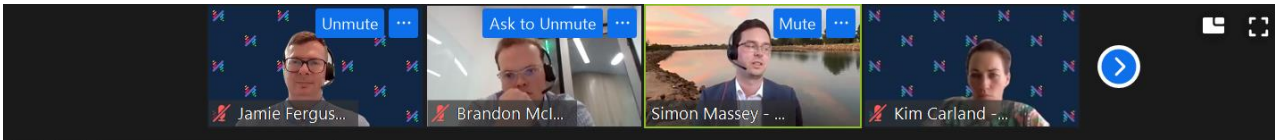


Go to www.menti.com and use the code 56 29 70 1

What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?

Mentimeter

challenge is gaining the 'ear' of state govt to be promoted as city to promote to large business enterprise	Very city center focus, what about the Western Corridor and lower socio-economic geographic areas of Newcastle?	Strong evidence to support importance and attractiveness of Newcastle
Dedicated resources & budgets to adequately communicate the current programs to increase awareness & engagement	Data. We need to provide data to demonstrate the benefits to bottom line, or non monetary values.	Improve connectivity to Sydney - Speed rail. (State Govt engagement) Better connections to other universities - not just UoN.



Go to www.menti.com and use the code 56 29 70 1

What are the challenges or opportunities for these programs? Is anything missing?

Mentimeter

Competing priorities, what if Covid comes back

line, or non monetary values.

Improve connectivity to Sydney - Speed rail. (State Govt engagement) Better connections to other universities - not just UoN.

challenge is gaining the 'ear' of state govt to be promoted as city to promote to large business enterprise

Not be Newcastle centric work on basis of greater Newcastle and take the lead

The vibrant city is so important for keeping youth

Dedicated resources & budgets to adequately communicate the current programs to increase awareness &

Challenge is to market Newcastle appropriately and target the right people/businesses.

Clarity on regional v metropolitan status .. not just for govt funding but

Press ENTER to pause scroll

Digital screens

Help us develop a strategy to create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation.

The new Economic Development Strategy will enable us to make the most of tomorrow's opportunities.

Have your say on how we can create the right environment for a stronger Newcastle economy at newcastle.nsw.gov.au/EDS

Help us develop a strategy to create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation.

The new Economic Development Strategy will enable us to make the most of tomorrow's opportunities.

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Email newsletters



We want to hear from you! 🗣️



We're developing a strategy to create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation in Newcastle. We'd love to know how City of Newcastle can help create more opportunities for you and your family! 🙌

You can **Have Your Say** and **earn up to 2,500 points** by attending one of our workshops or simply taking a short survey. Not to mention you can enjoy your rewards at your favourite local business!

Have your say

Help shape our Strategy for economic recovery

We're developing a 10-year Economic Development Strategy, which will play a critical role in guiding the city's COVID-19 economic recovery.

Join the discussion shaping Newcastle's future economic opportunities by having your say on the Strategy by 5pm Sunday 6 December.

Visit newcastle.nsw.gov.au/yoursay

The Strategy will envision a future for the Newcastle economy and strive to empower, retain and attract people with skills of the future and create equal opportunity for all members of the community.

Young people will provide an important voice in the conversation, with the COVID-19 economic crisis disproportionately impacting 18-to-25-year-olds, driving the Hunter Region's youth unemployment rate to 20.7 per cent.

We've partnered with TAFE NSW Newcastle, HunterNet and Hunter Young Professionals to directly engage with young people and facilitate discussion through multiple youth-specific workshops.

The draft Strategy will be presented to Council in the early new year for consideration to be placed on public exhibition.

Have your say

Economic Development Strategy

Join the conversation to help us create new jobs, drive investment and promote innovation by taking our survey until 5pm Sunday 6 December 2020.

We recently released a discussion paper to help guide the development of a new Economic Development Strategy for our City as we look to the future and continue our recovery from COVID-19.

The Strategy will have a 10-year focus and is set to play a critical role in guiding the city's economic recovery through the creation of economic opportunities for all.

TAKE OUR SURVEY



Continuing to understand our community

City of Newcastle are consulting with community members and representatives around issues that are both timely and important to the social sector.

The City's next Economic Development Strategy is in development so we will be aiming to ensure as many people as possible have their voices heard so the we can develop an action-orientated document with associated one-year action plans. This work can build on our 'Community and economic resilience package', City Taskforce and Greater Newcastle Youth Employment Charter.

We're also still progressing our next Disability Inclusion Action Plan and will start facilitating conversations around social infrastructure (places) and seeking your insights around community wellbeing to support Newcastle's growing population.

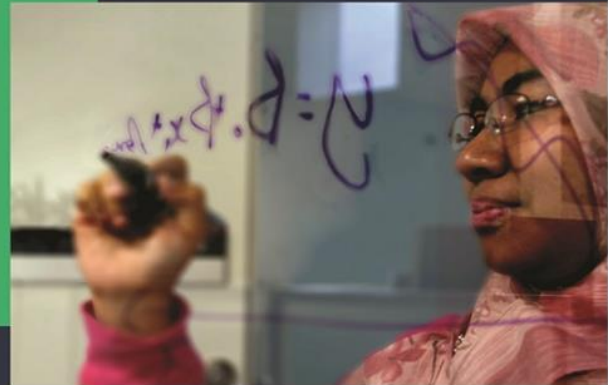
Our online community engagement hub '[Have Your Say – Community Consultation](#)' provides a great platform for your input to be heard and we'll keep you updated via this e-newsletter too.

Get involved

We're developing a new Economic Development Strategy to create new jobs, new investment and promote innovation by making the most of tomorrow's opportunities.

Have your say on how we can create the right environment for a stronger Newcastle economy at newcastle.nsw.gov.au/EDS

For enquiries please call 4974 2000



City of Newcastle invites business input on economic strategy

City of Newcastle is developing a 10-year Economic Development Strategy, which will play a critical role in guiding the city's COVID-19 economic recovery. The strategy will set a vision and action plan to help build skills and create new jobs, drive investment and innovation, and create equal opportunity for all members of the community.

The business community is invited to give input on what actions are needed to drive future economic opportunities to create a stronger Newcastle economy. City Plan (an independent planning and community engagement consultancy) is hosting a 45-minute virtual workshop on behalf of the City of Newcastle.

The workshop is virtual via Zoom on Tuesday 24 November from 12-1pm workshop. To register or find out more about the strategy, visit www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/EDS

Media release

City's new Economic Development Strategy to play a critical role in COVID-19 recovery

City of Newcastle is developing a 10-year Economic Development Strategy, which will play a critical role in guiding the city's COVID-19 economic recovery.

The community is invited to shape the Strategy, which will envision a future for the Newcastle economy and strive to empower, retain and attract people with skills of the future and create equal opportunity for all members of the community.

Young people will provide an important voice in the conversation, with the COVID-19 economic crisis disproportionately impacting 18-to-25-year-olds, driving the Hunter Region's youth unemployment rate to 20.7 per cent.

City of Newcastle has partnered with TAFE NSW Newcastle, HunterNet and Hunter Young Professionals to directly engage with young people and facilitate discussion through multiple youth-specific workshops.

Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said with a further almost one in 10 Novocastrians currently unemployed, it was more important than ever to identify future economic opportunities across the board.

"City of Newcastle's Economic Development Strategy will focus on long-term actions to help create new jobs, drive investment and promote innovation," Cr Nelmes said.

"When the pandemic first hit, City of Newcastle was one of the first Councils across Australia to act, adopting a \$5.5 million Community and Economic Resilience Package with a range of programs to support community wellbeing and maximise cashflow. The Resilience Package was endorsed six days before the Federal Government announced the JobKeeper wage subsidy."

Deputy Lord Mayor Declan Clausen said the City had also provided collaborative leadership and advocacy through the facilitation of the City Taskforce.

"Now, we are turning our attention to creating new long-term opportunities for our city, and we are seeking the community's input," Cr Clausen said.

A range of programs will be explored under four key pillars: Enabling Skills, Enabling Innovation, City-Shaping Initiatives and Facilitating a Vibrant City.

Community members can have their say via City of Newcastle's [website](#) until Monday 7 December. City of Newcastle will also conduct face-to-face and online workshops with stakeholders and its networks, including the City Taskforce and Strategy and Innovation Committee.

The draft Strategy will be presented to Council in the early new year for consideration to be placed on public exhibition.

Photo caption: (L-R): TAFE Services Manager Newcastle and Lake Macquarie, Adrian Collins; City of Newcastle's Economic Strategy & Government Relations Manager, Simon Massey; Hunter Young Professionals President, Kate David; Deputy Lord Mayor Declan Clausen; Hunter Young Professionals Vice-President, Danielle O'Neill; TAFE Regional General Manager, Jason Darney; and HunterNet COO, Nick Couper at Hamilton TAFE Campus.

Appendix VIII: Survey script

City of Newcastle is working on a new plan to help create economic opportunities for all of Newcastle post COVID-19 – new jobs, new investments, and promote innovation.

To make sure our ideas and actions have an impact, we need your opinions and ideas.

Please take our 7-10 minute survey.

Firstly, so we ask the right questions, please tell us a few things about you.

Are you answering as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

X Individual

X Organisation

CITY OF NEWCASTLE DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONS

And which of the following best describes you? [select all that apply / multiple response allowed]

X I am a resident in the City of Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA)

X I work in the City of Newcastle LGA

X I am a business owner in the City of Newcastle LGA

X I am a student in the City of Newcastle LGA

X I am a retiree/pensioner

X Other

X None

If “I work in Newcastle”

What type of organisation do you work for?

X Small business (1 – 19 employees)

X Medium business (20 – 199 employees)

X Large business (200+ employees)

X Not-for-profit / social enterprise

X Government Agency

X Educational Institution

X Other

If “I am a business owner”

My business is:

- X Small business (1 – 19 employees)
- X Medium business (20 – 199 employees)
- X Large business (200+ employees)

Please select from the below list the main sector your organisation operates in

Agriculture, forestry and fishing

Mining

Manufacturing

Electricity, gas, water and waste services

Construction

Wholesale trade

Retail trade

Accommodation and food services

Transport, postal and warehousing

Information media and telecommunications

Rental, hiring and real estate services

Professional, scientific and technical services

Administrative and support services

Public administration and safety (private)

Education and training (private)

Health care and social assistance (private)

Arts and recreation services

Other services

If “I am a student...”

Are you currently a

- Primary or High School
- University – Bachelor degree
- University – Post-graduate
- TAFE
- College
- Other

City of Newcastle is committed to making the most of tomorrow’s opportunities. We also appreciate for most people it has been a challenging year.

If **business / business owner**

Firstly, please tell us what have been the main economic impacts of COVID-19 to your sector / business. [select all that apply / multiple response allowed]

- poor sales / reduction in customers
- increasing costs
- mental health / emotional stress caused by uncertainty
- loss of employment [employment positions / hours worked for employees]
- no change
- business has grown since COVID-19 began
- increased productivity
- Other _____

If **individual**

Firstly, what have been the **main negative impacts** (if any) of the COVID-19 pandemic to you and your family?

- loss of employment
- decrease in working hours / hours of employment
- loss of income
- isolation from family
- reduction of mobility

- X travel uncertainty
- X mental health / emotional stress caused by uncertainty
- X decreased physical health due to reduced activity and exercise
- X Increased household pressures due to working from home and home schooling arrangements
- X no change
- X COVID-19 pandemic has mainly led to positive impacts and new opportunities for me
- X Other _____

And looking to the future, what do you see as the top three **challenges** for achieving new economic opportunities like new jobs, new investments and promoting innovation in Newcastle?

- X skills shortage / access to skilled staff
- X retaining skilled and educated young people/professionals
- X cost of living
- X lack of physical infrastructure / utilities
- X lack of digital infrastructure
- X Costs of doing business
- X lack of market demand
- X small business recovery
- X Reduced ability to travel and trade internationally or interstate
- X barriers to create / establish new businesses
- X reduced international demand for sunset industries
- X Other _____

Looking to the future, what do you see as the **top three opportunities** for achieving new economic opportunities like new jobs, new investments and promoting innovation in Newcastle?

- X growing sector of new and innovative businesses being encouraged to establish in Newcastle
- X Optimal geographic size: "not too big, not too small"
- X global trade infrastructure – access to global markets
- X smart city infrastructure
- X engaging local suppliers
- X new innovation precincts such as Astra Aerolab and John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct
- X development pipeline
- X diversification
- X investment in new industries

- X digital transformation
- X lifestyle benefits of living in Newcastle
- X tourism and the visitor economy
- X increasing small business support

As part of moving forward, our Plan is proposing four key program pillars that include a range of initiatives with align .

Please rate the following program proposals from 1 to 5, with:

1 = not at all useful, and 5 = extremely useful.

Enabling a skilled workforce

- *NewSkills – a program to build opportunities for our residents to develop new and innovative skills through partnerships with key local tertiary institutions.*
- *Talent attraction – City of Newcastle-led marketing to attract talented people to our City*
- *International networking – investment in Sister City partnerships, International Chambers of Commerce and other key international people and business links*
- *Being inclusive and welcoming – facilitating inclusive business practices using economic incentives.*

New page

Enabling Innovation

- *Innovation Ecosystem – suite of programs including the development of an innovation precinct, a smart city incubator and a dedicated scale-up landing pad.*
- *Living Lab - a program to support the utilisation of the city as a testbed for Smart City, IoT, cleantech and city innovations. Program would enable new ideas to be validated, and then to support commercialisation and global expansion.*

New page

City-Shaping Initiatives

- *City Digital Corridor – a program to enable high-speed data connectivity for capacity, competitiveness and investment in the city fibre.*
- *Gateway Cities Alliance – supporting City of Newcastle’s continued involvement in a strategic alliance with Geelong and Wollongong (other medium-sized cities positioned close to major metropolitan centres).*
- *Government Relations Advocacy Action Plans – step-by-step goals to ensure a robust and evidence-based proposal supplements key funding asks.*
- *City of Newcastle Policy Statements – using local evidence and research, develop clear and comprehensive policy asks of key employment sectors across Newcastle*

New page

Program Pillar Four: Vibrant City

- *City Activation – facilitation of the Special Business Rate program and Grants / Sponsorship program to enable the city and suburban commercial precincts to be activated with promotions, events and industry development.*

- *City Analytics* – evaluation and research program to ensure that Newcastle stories are understood and replicated across the world.
- *The Newcastle Opportunity* – a program to develop and maintain a digital prospectus for the city, which tells a compelling story of the people and opportunities that exist in Newcastle.
- Local business people – a new central point of information and communication between local business people and the City of Newcastle / local government matters.

After reading through the four program pillars and the proposed initiatives, do you have any further comments? [open-ended response]

FOR ALL:

What advantages or benefits (if any) do you believe Newcastle offers people looking to move, live or invest here?

- Affordability
- Strength of new job opportunities
- Proximity to Sydney and other capital cities via airport
- Quality of life
- Our lifestyle e.g. great beaches, close to vineyards, wider regional attractions
- Inclusivity – everyone is a part of the Newcastle community, including new people
- None of these
- Other (please specify)

FOR BUSINESS:

Competitive advantage question?

Apart from 'liveability' aspects such as work-life balance, housing affordability and the like, what advantages or benefits (if any) do you believe Newcastle offers business looking to relocate or expand here?

- Low costs/overheads
- Strong/quality workforce
- Access to logistics/transport networks
- Gateway City / proximity to Sydney
- Access to raw materials
- Proactive Council
- Strong partnerships with academia/University
- Quality of life
- Low costs/overheads
- Low start-up costs
- A place to trial, test and fail business ideas
- Strong community support for new businesses
- Inclusivity – we give everyone, including new people a fair go
- None of these
- Other (please specify)

COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE QUESTION

How confident do you feel about the following new economic opportunities being created in Newcastle? (1 = No confidence at all, 5 = Absolute confidence)

Over the next two years:

jobs

investments

innovation

Over the next ten years:

jobs

investments

innovation

Lastly, if you were asked, how likely would you be to actively encourage businesses / someone to move to Newcastle?

0 not at all likely	1	2	3	4	5 extremely likely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Don't know

Do you have any further comments?

Thank you for completing this survey.

If you'd like to help to find out more about our economic planning click this link to view our Discussion Paper.

Appendix X: Survey demographics

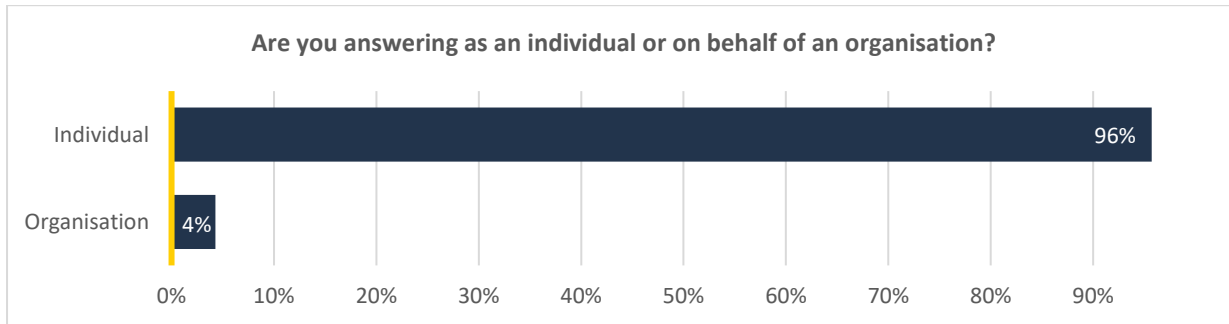


Figure 23 - Response by individual or organisation

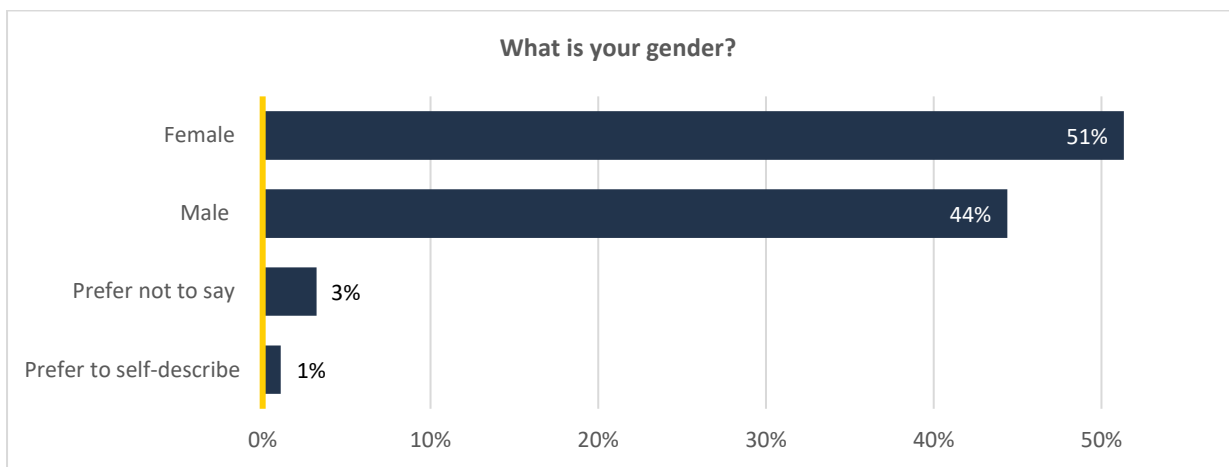


Figure 24 - Respondents gender

Almost all survey respondents indicating living within the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) with the top suburbs including:

- Newcastle (10%)
- Wallsend, Newcastle East and Wallsend (6% each)
- Hamilton, Maryville and New Lambton (5% each)

The ward breakdown reflected a higher proportion of participants from Ward 1 followed by even participation count from Wards 2 and 3, followed by Ward 4.

Ward 1	46%
Ward 2	19%
Ward 3	19%
Ward 4	14%
Other	2%

Table 1 - survey participation by CN ward

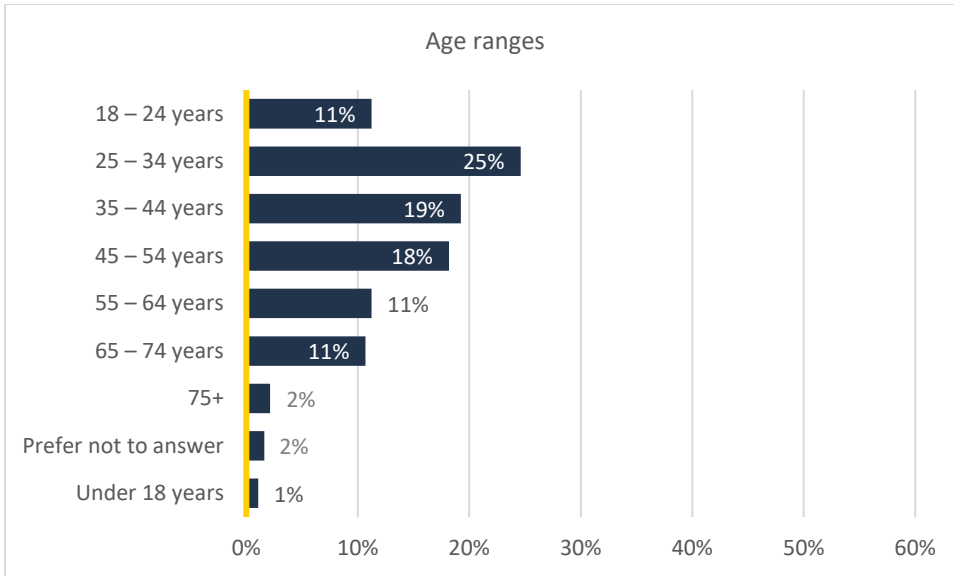


Figure 25 - respondents age ranges

The profile of survey response indicated that over two thirds of respondents were a resident within the LGA (67%) and just under half (41%) work in the LGA.

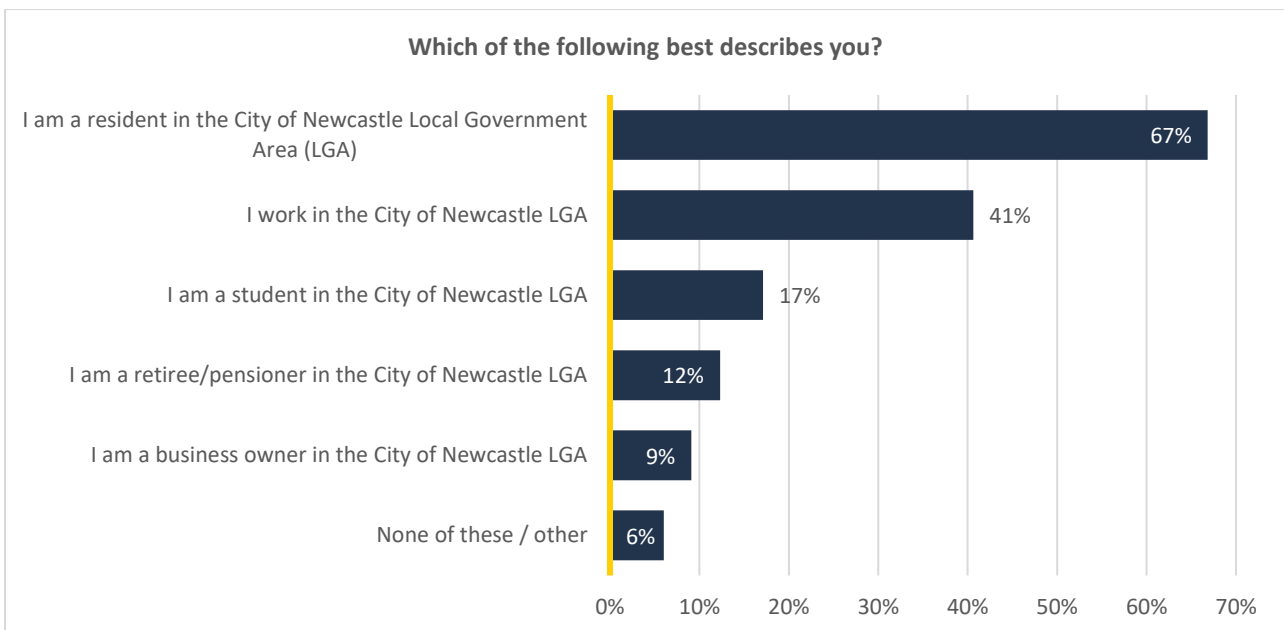


Figure 26 - Resident, student, worker, retiree/ pensioner or business owner

From the 32 individuals who indicated they were currently studying the highest percentage (69%) were studying at a Bachelor degree level.

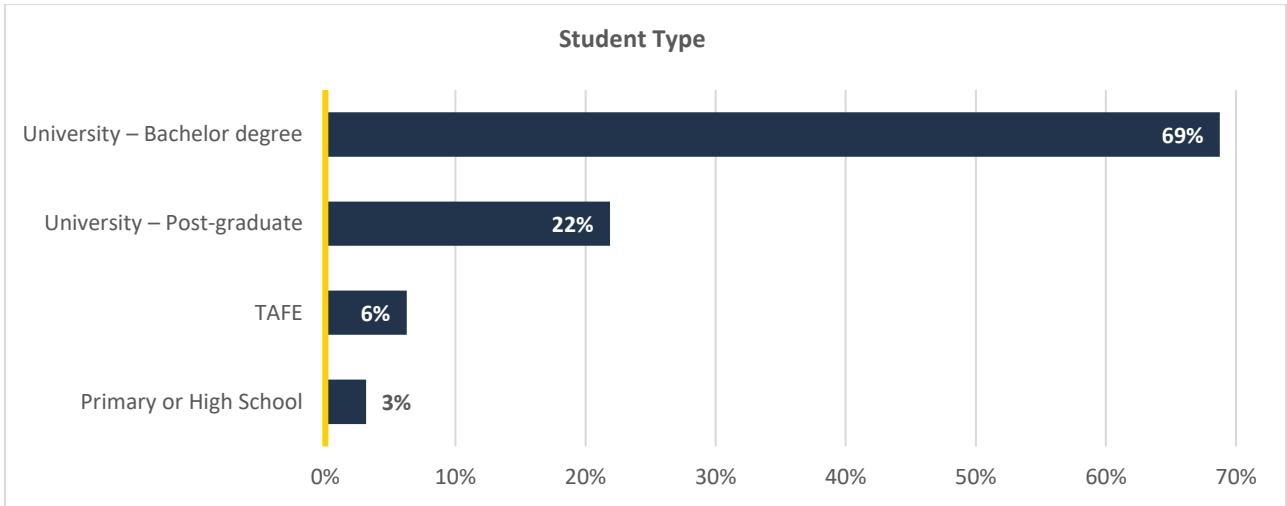


Figure 27 - Level currently studying (if student)

Appendix XI: Survey verbatim comments – negative impacts to you and your family

Impacts to individual – Other (verbatim)
Lack of events and opportunity to go out, see live music, festivals
A lot of my activities, social engagements have ceased because of COVID eg playing bridge
Stress because in work in Aged Care and have been managing significant risk
Increased work stress
increased working hours, less physical activity
Isolation from friends
Bloody pubs and restaurants shut
Covid forced my employer to allow more flexibility in work hours and location (work from home) this has been very positive.
Family members loss of employment resulted in moving back home
the lockdown laws and policing seemed to be utilised mainly against the poor
Anger and frustration towards both State Politicians and the fear that all members of the public now feel

Appendix XII: Survey verbatim comments – negative impacts to your sector or business

Impacts to sector - Other (verbatim)
Council reaping of business owners with the highest commercial rates in NSW
We are a church organisation, as a result community need has increased
Life has moved on and greater efficiencies and higher health standards adopted

Appendix XIII: Survey verbatim comments – top 3 challenges

Top 3 challenges – Other (verbatim)
Lack of direct access to international markets, eg flights via Singapore
Lack of job security
Lack of focus on innovators, and access to international networks
Lack of foresight by the federal government to adopt clean energy technology and promote green industries
More Open undercover space (eg: Outdoor activities for children like a mountain bike track / or zip line course at Brae Park -- after Covid we have been sick of seeing no Major park infrastructure like speers point park (Brae park would be perfect for this), yes New Lambton park is great but..
Lack of anything for older people.
not enough parking in the city - I avoid coming in there at all costs. Otherwise, I don't see any barriers
lack of other manufacturers in Newcastle - no "cluster"
how about retaining skilled and educated older people. Your statement is highly discriminatory.
CCouncil council reaping of business owners with the highest commercial rates in NSW
Limited public affordable housing
Reduced confidence in opening new businesses
Reduced opportunities for young people, especially new graduates
Deciding is Newcastle a Town / City / or turning into a Ghetto!

Over reliance on old industries, lack of policy around just transition and geographical narcissism (Sydney focused NSW Govt)
Gummint red tape
Perception of the region as a technical backwater rather than an innovation hub. High-tier devs etc. do not want to move here because they think it'll be a career-killer.
depletion of our cultural & architectural heritage - that what makes us uniquely Newcastle
A council focused on the "night-time economy", tourism and alcohol-related businesses while doing little to build Newcastle's day-time economy, particularly in the inner-city where retail and office based businesses have moved out because of poor access created by light rail.
Limited number of diversified businesses operating here, thereby reducing range of high level professional opportunities
Lack of job advertising in my specialised area.
a need for bug business to consider Regional based employees / work from home ; lack of ASX-listed companies in Newcastle
Attracting experienced, skilled and educated young people to Newcastle from bigger Cities
Being stuck on coal.

Appendix XIII - top 3 opportunities

Educated migrants hopefully moving to area
Using the Local Parks and unused OPEN SPACE that we have in the Fringe areas for new eco friendly business to accommodate the new Post Covid needs of families - eg : ideas like what they have been doing in Dugong/// More focus on the outer city Fringe suburbs and now a little less focus on the city
green new deal
the city center swapping outsider car traffic for resident foot traffic
we have innovation precincts in Newcastle for quite some time ... and they work well. How about "continue to support innovation precincts" in emerging areas
Emphasis on a green economy
Thriving CBD
Cease a proliferation of booze business decrease commercial rates by at least 50%, improve parking and access and put a stop to destructive events such as Supercars
Investment in ethical industries
None of the above.
Become a city, not a large country town
The cost of rates for business premises is extortionate in Newcastle. When one adds up insurances, rates, water, electricity, fire safety and maintenance these costs add up and from experience rates in Newcastle for commercial property is far higher then elsewhere.
Shift from coal to renewable energy
retrofitting our city with household renewables that will reduce cost of living and emissions
Art Gallery expansion and investment in the Cultural sector of the city
Investment in Sustainable Energy resources
Now people are working remotely provides people opportunity to leave Sydney/Melbourne - and have the lifestyle and professional opportunities
I would like to see Newcastle 's growth and development be sensitive to it's inhabitants. Where people's quality of life is not sacrificed to the mad pace of development, at all costs.
Location
Liveability - Green open space, beaches, in a position to place Newcastle as a world leader for liveability (with some work)
Investment in arts and night life
More incentive to hire young employees

Appendix XV: Survey verbatim comments – programs/pillars comments

Take action to support for small business and social enterprises
CN need to ensure that new activities and programs are not funded at the expense of existing infrastructure maintenance and replacement programs. CN must ensure that the current city facilities, services and assets are maintained.
We have talented students here but they always leave for major cities because the jobs just aren't here. We need to attract a diverse range of employers. Small businesses also need more support. [REDACTED] doesn't do you guys any favours, all he does is declare war on small business owners and residents. His ego puts your council at risk.
There does not seem to be much engagement or collaboration with State government in the actions. There could be wider benefits for the community by working better and more effectively with NSW government. Has this been explored?
Over the last 6 years the City of Newcastle has been riding on the backs of the hard work of many within the local innovation ecosystem (you are not the only one). Partnering and funding only a small select group of individuals and organisations, which has led to the known ecosystem shrinking, not growing.
The four program pillars are only words, detail, execution and measurable outcomes are most important. And if you don't have the right cattle on the park...
** Please stop making excuses that Brae Park is half Awabakal owned and council can't do anything (it's a cop out), instead start taking action and leadership and be proactive to get together with Awabakal to come up with a better solution - this is such a waste of space in this area. It could be a great eco tourism or outside the box city leading project.
In saying this I think City of Newcastle do a fantastic job in all other areas and I am proud to live in this great progressive city . There seems to be a lot of focus on trying to attract more people to Newcastle, when in reality there is a lot of talent and innovation which already exists here. I just don't think there has been enough done recently to help foster these existing talents and support local businesses to help them thrive. A loss of events in the city has really impacted a sense of community over the past year and even opportunities for sharing thoughts and learning from one another. I hope that moving forward with COVID restrictions easing there are more opportunities for the existing citizens of Newcastle to come together to share their experiences and talents they have to offer.
I think the strategy is sound and the focus of action is imperative to making it work.
Ensuring public trust in public transport and investing in connecting Newcastle to other major cities
independent cost benefit analysis of programs, for a benefit for the poorest people.
Government Relations Advocacy Action Plans – step-by-step goals to ensure a robust and evidence-based proposal supplements key funding asks. what does this even mean
Ban whiners. Negative thinking ratbags are bringing this city down, and facebook takes that negativity global. Get the Herald on a more positive mood. In fact, ban any paper owned by Murdoch.
The four pillars and associated initiatives are well thought out, particularly the linkages to evidence based decision making and planning. Just a note that the language is quite jargon heavy and I think some community members would have a difficult time engaging with the strategy for this reason. It will be important to make sure that all jargon is unpacked and outlined so the pillars and initiatives are clear and accessible to all community members.
Aligning business opportunities while not excluding the public inclusion in developments. Incentive to bring entertainment and tourism together in what is a wonderful natural setting being the city and beaches.
Programs to bring the public back out of COVID with open, free events and festivals as a chance to promote small business and local entertainment.
The return of Supercars is an amazingly backward step to the city. Not smart, not inclusive, disruptive to business in general and very very expensive for the city and rate payers in general
Don't get too carried away with your jargon. Keep communicating with the people to find out what stops them visiting or doing business in Newcastle. For example, it is no good to say, "we will design this without cars because we want people to leave their cars at home; when the people expect to travel by car". Try to use our own people for all your projects. Make things easier for tourists to travel from airport to motel to beaches and city.
Have an entertainment precinct in the remaining Newcastle West land. Something like the ICC convention centre in Sydney. This would attract a lot of business re conventions, promote our hotels and entice bands to come to our city and people in turn.
I see Arts/Culture, travel and clean tech as Newcastle's future.
We're the business people, not you. Your job is to keep costs down, reduce traffic and parking that is ruining the city as a place to live and do business, collect the rubbish, fix the cracks... etc.. If you know anything about business you wouldn't be working in council!
Doesn't seem to be enough jobs for the graduates coming out of Newcastle uni - many grads are forced to move away to find work.
I think continuing to develop the Newcastle CBD will really help Newcastle recover economically. Keep Newcastle's flavour (people come to Newcastle because it ISNT Sydney) but improve public transport and make CBD more appealing for locals to travel into for leisure.
Need to get retail business back in the city. As great as the city looks, the empty retail spaces everywhere is and looks terrible and obviously does nothing to bring people in. Even with the development like East End, there is still no increase of surrounding retail, something which I think should be happening now in anticipation of its completion and all those people living

<p>there. Revive street shopping and work with the owners of all these empty spaces to get life back into the city in the mall and Hunter St etc</p> <p>Hunter St also could do with some small greenery or pots or something as it looks very bare.</p>
<p>Newcastle in my opinion needs to be more open to new comers. I wont give too much away for free but thought through focus on who is has the easiest access to the city and what could make it more appealing. Comparing Newcastle to my Native Brisbane which has better parking oportunities which enables appealing access to high end activities. The lighting in inner city Newcastle is nothing like inner city Brisbane, Sydney, London, Newyork or Prague where I have lived lighting is essential for a night time economy. While high end shops for example Burberry or Versace add appeal to larger cities I am not sure if they would be interested in Newcastle. A simple question would we have the appeal of Hard Rock Newcastle for it to Materialise or Planet Hollywood. When I think of the Gold and Sunshine coast for example there is something missing here</p> <p>Most of this is either already happening or used to happen and got swept away at some point in the last decade.</p> <p>we have plenty of talent here in Newcastle - why are you not supporting local people in their innovative careers and business development? Whatever happened to growing local talent? If you are always employing talent from somewhere else, then there is no point in staying in Newcastle, is there? we become the talent attracted to somewhere else</p>
NO
<p>Vital to all is a commercially sound, longitudinal and 'promises delivered' active effort to bring more interaction between the arts, industry and science in Newcastle region. From the start of the city (1797 - 1804) Newcastle has contributed amply to wealth, energy, productivity and curmudgeonly criticism of Australia's performance and support for each citizen's progress. That core value must be encouraged, and be rendered practical. Secure the future of the individual who works.</p> <p>Words are fine but there is still little evidence that Newcastle wants to truely be a smart city as long as Supercars are still talking about returning. There is nothing smart about this. Policy, procedure and plans are fine but we have seen these completely disregarded in the past when. dumb idea comes along that no-one in CoN bothers to explore before signing a contract. It's such shame to see the businesses struggling in our city. Light rail and Supercars did an enormous amount of damage to city businesses. COVID19 has made things worse. Please don't do anything else to make things worse.</p> <p>Newcastle must be positioned as a smart and green city. Offering subsidies undermines the message that we have something great already. Educating our community with examples from around the world backed by science is important. The focus must also be on supporting our niche industries that we already have. Some industries and storage need to be moved further away from the harbour and city centre in order to open up to greater tourism including cruise ships.</p> <p>A focus on green technologies, green spaces and improved public transport.</p> <p>The existence of Charlestown square and westfiend Kotara has drawn people away from the centre of Newcastle which is a real shame.</p> <p>I would be interested to see how you intend to counter this and attract people to the lovely inner parts of Newcastle.</p> <p>Much of the language in this survey involves jargon and it is difficult to understand what the intent is. It would be great, if you are seeking input from wider society, to get rid of the jargon and business speak and give a better picture of what is being suggested.</p> <p>We should aim to have less Co2 emissions and just try to decrease our pollution levels in general as we are polluting the air and the water at a increasing rate. You always have to start somewhere and it might seem irrelevant to adults bc it won't effect them as much as it will affect my generation and the next.</p> <p>I feel we could do so much more to change the culture of car use. We need to think bike first and only car if bike is not possible. Workplace bike purchase discount incentive schemes or similar</p> <p>Newcastle needs to spend its time preparing for the future and where jobs will be and look at how similar size cities have become successful. I think their are a few key areas that make everything else easier.</p> <p>-accessibility. Newcastle is a city that is really only accessible by car. Look at similar sized cities like oxford. Bike lanes, no car zones,</p> <p>Public transport. This is how you make small cities more accessible and reduce the huge amount of wasted space on car parks. Places like JHH shouldn't be so hard to get to.</p> <p>-Invest in future technology and education. Newcastle needs to divest itself from fossil fuels and prepare for the future economy. Renewable energy is the future of jobs growth and Newcastle has huge potential in this area. Likewise education and health will continue to be growing areas and we should be investing heavily there. If and when coal takes a nose dive Newcastle and the hunter are set to lose big.</p> <p>-making Newcastle a greener more appealing city. Our beaches should be he envy of the world and yet Newcastle is not viewed as a place to come visit especially internationally. The city centre is delapidated and frankly looks like an old concrete jungle. It's simply not a super appealing place to visit. Making the city greener, more art and generally making the inner city more appealing will help bring in people internationally.</p> <p>-sport. The hunter is a proud sporting area and we should continue to push forward in that area especially women's sport.</p>
not at the moment
<p>I would like to see more attention of the beach front, as they are one of the first things people see, in particular at a resident of bar beach, the recreation area needs a major overhaul from removing the present concrete and tar, I would concrete and tile the whole area with more shade and eating sheds with more showers, not the single use shower at the moment, where you have to have their water run down where you are standing, It is a tourist area with a large car park with facilities near the junction village.</p>

Council needs to deal with the big picture in terms of what is good for the city and remember that the minorities are just that, minorities.
I don't think we should really be focusing on international and inter state links but instead be focussing on training and employing novocastrians in novocastrian businesses, things like increasing council work jobs and reducing/removing costs of training
Look toward the surrounding areas and not just the city you have totally wrecked the city and Hunter street
not at this time
These are motherhood statements that do nothing to advance economic development just provide a reason to do nothing useful.
Remove CoN impediments and high rates, improve infrastructure and technology, improve transport, improve access and parking, stop selling city owned property assets to finance operations, treat council staff with dignity and become totally 100% transparent on destructive events and council luxury spending.
Encouraging innovation will spark employment
Efficient and widespread public transport is required to make all jobs accessible to all demographics.
One of the biggest things which will hold back recovery is a return to old ways of thinking and old ideologies. We need to be Greening the economy so that it is aligned with international norms relating to climate emission targets and renewable energy investment. At the same time we need to strengthen or develop those local industries which supply goods most vulnerable to interruptions to the global supply chain. We also need to diversify our international markets so that we are not reliant on one major trading partner.
Assistance to experienced older employees to access certification currency and recognition of a strong existing skills and knowledge base. There is a lot of talent out there, not being utilised but for a little input and acknowledgment. Incentives are welcomed.
If you want to retain people my age I, or attract them to come live here, then Newcastle needs to have the cultural attributes that draw people like me to cities. People my age say Newcastle is beautiful but it's boring. I agree. What does your research say about attractive young adults to your city. We like pubs, clubs, music, dancing, eating out going to festivals. Newcastle has the creative foundations to be a really cool and exciting place to live but council will need to take risks.
The cost and lengthy processes of setting up, change of use and continuing in business are far too difficult and costly. I request that Council take into consideration that often people own say a small factory and one earns a living or part living from the rent. One has to receive a reasonable return on the capital investment of the building however particularly during COVID that many building owners have been forced to absorb overheads making the whole situation a financial disaster.
Please council minimise the rate irregularity on commercial property and spread the burden similar to Sydney councils.
Doing this survey makes me excited and proud to be part of this city. Given the size, life style and trajectory of Newcastle, I think this current "post COVID" season is a great opportunity to pivot/adapt slightly and press on with the 2030 vision.
With all the high density living that has been constructed in Newcastle I feel it is going to be very challenging and important to make the right decisions in uplifting Newcastle economically and there must be a stringent plan in place on what the living/working lifestyle is going be?
Where are the initiatives that cross-over between different sectors? The non-profit sector is an important economic actor in any region, and should be supported and incentivised the same way as other key segments are.
Where are the initiatives that take a proactive approach to fostering innovation that combines social, economic, and environmental impact potential? This focus is truly 'smart' - going beyond just relying on technological developments to generate outcomes for the region.
Ensure when focusing on the talent problem in Newcastle, you focus on retention of existing talent, nurturing of new talent as well as attracting talent from external national and international sources. We need a multi-pronged approach.
Just do your job! Roads, rates and rubbish. Stop doing all this stupid, pointless stuff just because they are doing it in Sydney. Small government, get rid of middle management. Use rates to build and maintain things, not to make ridiculous "corporate plans". Stop the hubris, know your place.
I'm not sure how many people would see a place for themselves in those pillars. The focus appears to be heavily weighted towards high tech industries. How would a coal miner being told she has to transition to a job in renewable energy relate? She may not be involved in the development of the next phase of storage batteries but could benefit by being a retailer, manufacturer or installer of technology. Maybe the strategy could be widened under the inclusive pillar to make points about indirect benefits?
I feel that the four pillars program is a step in the right direction. To pull it off you will need the complete support of the council and the business sector. A politician once said that every school child in Australia had the right to go to university. This I feel was the start of the slide. If you have a piece of paper from Uni you don't have to do heavy and/or hard work because you are a professional, thus the rapid loss of skilled workers. We need to start educating our children at an early age that being a skilled worker is an important job. You may want to work in an office and sit behind a mahogany desk but who will build the office block and manufacture the furniture.
Yes, you can bring in skilled labour from overseas but as already seen on building sites around Australia the skill levels are not there and often fail to meet our basic building regulations. You can also import the furniture, is it mahogany or just dressed to look like mahogany?
If we do bring in skilled workers and imported furniture from overseas are we not condemning our children to living on the dole and defeating the purpose of talking about increasing skills in our community.
Give a person a loaf of bread and they will be fed for a day.

Teach them how to bake and they will be fed for the rest of their life.
Sustainability and caring for the environment needs to be built into anything that is undertaken.
Stop trying to do everything for everyone - lean on private entities such as Newytechpeople, HunterIF and I2N to do the lifting. They have a better understanding of this community and its inherent issues and potential solutions, so use their knowledge. You won't succeed if you try to overtake their initiatives because they've been doing it for longer and will do a better job than you.
Engage at an individual level with key figures in the innovation ecosystem. Throwing people onto a Zoom call where they can speak for maybe 30 seconds is nothing more than a bad-faith effort to pretend you've consulted with the community. The innovation community is incredibly disengaged with the Council (as evidenced by the turnout on the call today), and a lack of immediate action isn't helping this.
The success stories that Newcastle has to preach about (Camplify, Pegasus, SwitchDin etc.) have succeeded *despite* a lack of support. You have a lot of work to do to regain their trust, and based on what I saw in that call, I don't think you're doing enough to do so. The idea that a CoN employee had to be given the elevator pitch on Camplify, SwitchDin and Pegasus during the breakout session is nothing short of embarrassing, but is indicative of how far away CoN is from the innovation community.
Enabling skills, innovation and vibrancy are all excellent but they run into the contradiction in that the city is still being shaped by a car race that promotes old technologies and dominates the cities heritage heart for up to 12 weeks a year.
Assist in support of local builders, farmers etc all local
No.
Pie in the sky statements as an excuse to generate paperwork. This Council is incompetent in doing anything but obstructing business. If you were serious you would be talking about drastic reductions in business rates, improved access, infrastructure, internet improvements and innovative car parking initiatives instead of the marshmallow initiatives you wasted space on.
A building program including the Art Gallery expansion and the cruise terminal to showcase (and display pride in) Newcastle. Restoration of buildings such as the Victoria theatre to display our cultural heritage
Sorry, the wording of your so called "program pillars" do not clearly explain in simple terms, what the goals and objectives are supposed to achieve. Most businesses and the general public will not understand what you intend to do to improve our city and community for the future. This was poorly explained and poorly written.
So much jargon and so many buzz words. Lack of sound, well explained strategies that appear to be achievable
After reading the suggestions made I hope the searches done to get them in place and working
Your economic development plan is not gender responsive; it is gender-blind. How will you ensure that women in particular participate and benefit economically through this plan? Where is your women's economic empowerment strategy?
What is your plan to transition out of coal? How will you cushion the economic transition for Novacastrians to ensure there remains jobs and a safety net for people who will lose jobs. Net zero emissions by 2050 is absolutely essential. We need to hear from Governments on how they plan to transition to that target by establishing alternative clean and green industries. This is a critical need and will require significant focus and attention. Don't spread yourself too thin, and focus on your top most-impactful priorities.
As with most surveys run by the City of Newcastle, this one is self-serving and only gives options on an agenda already decided by the NCC and bears no relationship to private investment or the opinion of real people who live in this community
What would help Newcastle would be a fast train to Sydney, where all the graphic design, media, magazine and photo retouching jobs are. What else would help would be Newcastle employers EVER responding to job applications - or alternatively them not discriminating against people who are TAFE educated rather than University educated. Also the strong "locals only" attitude stinks.
Incentives for property owners in CBD to redevelop their properties. More community toilets in Newcastle Wider footpaths as pedestrian congestion already common and unsafe
I would like to see Newcastle's development and progress be sympathetic to our relaxed and enjoyable lifestyle. Cities often develop to the degree that the locals then wish to leave because it is no longer an enjoyable place to live. When this happens community starts to disintegrate. I dearly wish to see Newcastle develop into a showcase Liveable City. I truly believe a balance can be found where the development can run parallel to an enviable and enjoyable lifestyle." Build and they will come", however, it has to be carefully managed. I feel, given the mental health issues facing us today, a pleasant city to live, work and play can have a significant and important role in the inhabitant's well being. Healthy people are more productive and less of a cost to the system. Open spaces, open skies, art, greenery, walkways and cycleways and connectivity, all contribute to an interesting, diverse and enjoyable place to be. I moved here from Sydney many years ago. Down there I worked in many places where there was nowhere quiet to go during my lunch hour. Where I could switch off and take time out. This seems a trivial thing in the big picture of development awaiting Newcastle but we are suffering as human beings and taking time out, in peaceful surroundings, is something we are not factoring in when designing cities. We substitute bird some for rushing traffic and pollution, hard hot surfaces for cool green trees. The elderly can't cross 6 lane main roads unless they walk half a kilometre to the nearest traffic lights. People with a disability and mothers with toddlers in tow have to do the same. Please don't turn our beautiful city of Newcastle into a city where only the fittest can survive.
Missing elements: 1. There should be a program targeting international and local large-and-ASX listed businesses to drive employers to set up an HQ or employee base in Newcastle. 2. Tourism and tourism-related infrastructure development, marketing and operating environment should be prioritised - this offers employment opportunities, revenue opportunities for F&B, local grocery, tour guides, etc and vacation rental owners as well as amazing promotional experiences as travellers share their positive experiences with friends, family and on social media. Win win win. Put Newcastle on the tourism map internationally and domestically. Utilise our extensive beaches, baths and heritage to encourage visits, along with same day drive-time proximity to Sydney, Hunter valley and great local F&B

options. The combination of University town / business and beach is unique. It's a "much better-than-Byron" opportunity and proposition if we get can get the positioning right. I would love to be part of the team working on this of a committee is formed.

3. Working closely with Newcastle Airport to incentivise and drive development of airport to allow for larger and international aircraft, supporting business and leisure travel demand for the city and its accommodation options.

Sounds like a lot of non practical jargon.

Bigger focus on the environment and becoming a world leading green city is attractive to young people and comes with a holistic understanding of what a liveable ecosystem is (that doesn't refer to IT infrastructure, but is focused on the natural world). Covid has taught many people to look in their own backyard and think about what is important. The environment is a top priority.

Invest in actual jobs for young people not just yuppie bullshit. We need a young skilled workforce and we need to do it by helping young people get entry level jobs with actual career paths rather than deadend mindless crap

1 There is no better catalyst than to buy and trade locally. CN should only buy from CN based businesses or their associates. CN should only employ staff who reside in the CN

2 Ventures like the container terminal will fail without appropriate rail infrastructure.

3 Projects like the establishment of a new dirt track oval speedway provides considerable tourism, employment and enterprise with a high level of re-circulation within our LGA

I feel more opportunities for local people to gain skills and then gain a position would be great. Therefore keeping the locals around.

Appendix XXI: Survey verbatim comments – perceived advantages (for all)

Advantages - Other (please specify)
2030 Direct from Newy council's 2030 vision (with full community consultation) is : "Walking, cycling and public transport will be viable options for the majority (50% at least) of our trips". Reduces congestion and makes main roads faster for the 49% of trips done by cars (less congestion)
Good teaching hospital and a university
Easy access to mountain bike facilities
better than most cities for getting around by foot, bike or skateboard... scooter... the fun stuff!
Sense of freedom and space. The feeling of being in Australia
Newcastle largely has an optimistic outlook in its leaders. It is however overly political for its size which is a distraction
we can now work anywhere - digital is coming of age; why not be near some great beaches
Independent thinking and industry can be found.
My experience of Newcastle is that it is one of the less inclusive places I have lived (and I have lived in a lot of places)
I am sorry but Council could do far more to make wanting to live here far easier
Civic innovation - strong social, environmental and economic potential
Smaller than Sydney- Let's keep it that way
Willingness to Innovate and change
Fantastic climate
sense of self and identity
I moved (back here after 20 years) for the lifestyle. But I've brought my Melbourne professional job with me.
Typical of this survey, what about proximity by rail or road
Better rail link to Sydney, more green space
see my previous comments.
Family friendly; Newcastle delivers a unique combo of beach-business-student vibe elements; down to earth / good natured people
"renovator's dream". Newcastle has a lot of potential and needs educated and experienced people to progress to the next level.
nightlife

Appendix XXII: Survey verbatim comments – perceived advantages (for business)

Competitive advantage
your rates are skyrocketting, so a lot of those didn't get ticked.
Less travel/commute times

Appendix XXIII: Survey verbatim comments – final general question

General OE
I just feel there has been a lot of focus put into the CITY CENTRE and yet the majority of rate payers live out of this centre or rarely visit the city centre -- Lets try having a better focus in the next 5 years in key innovation precincts outside the city centre in other fringe areas -- eg: move the Broadmeadow precinct forward // create a city fringe concert outdoor space // the medical precincts are great // the astro lab precincts are great // more heritage tours and outside the box tourism like New Zealand does (adrenaline tourism) ... backpackers and international students love it here ... lets encourage them to stay and set up innovative businesses.
Newcastle is a wonderful place to live and I would recommend it to anybody. As someone who has lived here their whole life it's been great to see change happening. I would like to see more community events though - as a child there were so many festivals, markets and fun runs that fostered a sense of community. I do worry affordability is going to decrease as it seems more people from Sydney and other cities have discovered the secret of Newcastle, with a steep increase in housing prices. I'd love to be able to buy a house in Newcastle one day but that is one reality which is slowly becoming out of reach for my generation.
I moved here seven years ago and started a business 2.5 years ago. It hasn't always been easy but the business community, inclusiveness and opportunity if you are willing to chase is exceptional in Newcastle. i love this city!
With amazon and online shopping, the retail sector is dead. Stop urban sprawl. Why wait for a bushfire to kill people. building a CycleSafe Network will reduce congestion Win Win Win for all! And human rights for fresh air, & walk and cycle safely (UN's UDHR Articles 3,5,13,25,26,27,29). Bust the transport myths that 99% of people are confused about: cyclingfallacies.com/en/ . https://secretstohappybiking.wordpress.com/
Trees We need more trees Smart city is nice and all, but it gets very hot without the trees that have been removed in Maryville
The success of Newcastle's economic future is related to its willingness and ability to adapt by moving towards a sustainable, more equitable future for all.
A lot of local people don't want any more people coming to Newcastle.
Stop looking to heavy industry, cruise ship and container terminals. Look to smart tech businesses. This is the future. Look to the future not the past.
Newcastle has a strong identity and story. Understanding our past and our strength will help sell our story as well as choose a path. Newcastle can be bold.
Mountain biking, bmx and other "action" sports are surging in popularity worldwide, this popularity brings with it tourists, industry and retailers who spend money and create jobs in local areas. Well worth the small investments needed. Should be in the City of Newcastle plans for the future.
I have a vested interest in telling them to come here, but if they looked at the land rates and what you did to us with that supercars rubbish, they would choose somewhere else. Thanks for that, CofN!
Retail is vital to this city and I think strip shopping is become popular again in other states and cities. Have to do something with all these empty shops. Restaurants, bars and cafes etc are great but we need all types of retail and people need to learn they can't park put the front of the shop or their workplace 🙄
I have been involved in a number of international business activities but feel Newcastle isnt open to such things. I feel it way easier to engage in business activities in Mayfair and Westminster than Newcastle. Even Harrow in Northwest London gave a greater feeling of Welcome
Don't forget the locals - we go to uni here and would like to stay too. On the other hand, one of my children (in their 30's) is working globally (based in Australia) but she will not come back to Newcastle to live. They are not impressed with what has been done to the city under the guise of "revitalisation"
Can we have some more transparency around future projects. Keeping financial information from rate payers does not help the community to properly evaluate projects and proposals.
When people visit the city sells itself. However, most people are looking for less pollution (air, noise, congestion- space, etc). The city is also changing with increasing house prices and the plans for the future must reflect that. People with security are more accepting of diversity within their community as well.
While the lifestyle is great, as mentioned earlier, Newcastle is not at all inclusive to new people. There are jokes that you are not ever considered local, even after 30 years, which speaks volumes and is sad. Sadly, the public transport could be a lot better. That said, the centre of Newcastle and surrounds is really inviting and is improving all the time, if the tram line was extended, all the better.

Think about the future and look at how similar cities in other countries make themselves a place to be. Stop thinking about the last and clinging to the things that used to define our city. Yes we were very much built around steel and coal but that is not the future and the longer we take to move away from our past the harder our transition to the future will be.
I don't want the Newcastle population to increase or to try to be like Sydney. Part of what is so great about Newcastle is that it's not overcrowded.
In the development of your plans it is important to remember that not all jobs are equal - most people need secure, full-time employment. We have seen how vulnerable people are to the casualisation of the workforce and what happens when things break down. We should also see education as a right rather than a privilege or a money-making exercise. I support educational initiatives based on merit not ability to pay.
Newcastle has a high unemployed rate, and high housing costs, encouraging people to move here will make it increasingly difficult for those that grew up here to afford to live.
I love Newcastle in the sense it feels like a small town, but has a city centre and streets (Darby & Beaumont streets) filled with amazing local businesses- cafes; restaurants & boutiques.
However, this town has major concerns of mine. Firstly, it's not a practical, small town geographically. It's HUGE geographically and our extremely unreliable transport and lack of car parks (which for people, eg. People who live in Lake Macquarie, out west, or on the coast it is a necessity. it takes over an hour from my home in Belmont north just to come into Newy via public transport... it's not feasible). Everything's so spread out and there's hills everywhere - Newy IS inaccessible. it's a major reason why this city is failing - (let's not lie, that beautiful mall is turning into a disgrace. What a shame. It could've been beautiful but now it's filled with Chinese investment apartments with no tenants living there. Or so it seems... it's a ghost town).
Secondly, the cost of living - mostly rental and housing market. Ridiculous. HUGE turn off, I can't move there for this reason.
I'm also very confused about this city's priorities.... do you really care about business owners if you get more money from car parking fines than in small business tax? (I assume, if you consider amount of closed businesses on hunter street VS workers who I know get fined regularly.... meanwhile no one in Lake Mac is scared to park their car in case of those street car fine people).
Finally... availability of jobs. Employers want skilled workers, leaving new people to industries or the workforce jobless & on gov assistance.
You say there's high numbers of young people on job keeper & seeker.... but there's no initiative plans to help us? This will just create generational workplace skill gaps, and more young people to move far away... it's so sad. All my friends live in fear about getting jobs.
Please consider all these things before you proceed with any other initiatives. Thank you.
While it's not a bad run from Stockton to the airport, for the rest of the city any linkages are a joke based on cost, duration and availability.
Labor is killing this city
As previously stated rates are far to high and the development process is far to onerous and is not timely.
We have seen our community grow 4x fold over the past 3 years from people moving into Newcastle.
The responses to the Q on 'confidence in generating opportunities' are entirely dependent on the strategic direction adopted. If it is just 'business as usual' relying on competing with other regions to attract the usual 'big business' actors who have no connection to the place and just see all the amazing potential here as a way to extract wealth for external parties - then not confident at all. If we take a complex innovations approach, that strategically seeks opportunities to combine social, environmental, and economic impacts - then NCC could become an innovations leader in local government, and Newcastle could realise its significant potential to become an AMAZING place to live and work. Please go beyond tired old economic development strategies - this place and its people deserve so much more!
A lack of highly specialised roles will cause a ceiling on how effective our talent attraction strategies are. For example - if software developers (theoretically) cap out at senior developer level (and therefore \$120-140k plus super), they have no option but to look elsewhere for career progression after ~10-15 years. This means we'll lose high-tier talent at the prime of their career.
Why have heads not rolled over the terrible failure that is "Revitalising Newcastle?" Totally lost my trust and respect.
Its a great City with fair road access to Major city. Has a large port and potential for International travel and support. Has good educational institutions (primary schools infrastructure and curriculum content needs improvement though)
Has a wonderful environment/lifestyle. Some areas could use a revamp for first impressions and roads would need to improve greatly to support expansion. Road and travel needs much better planning in new development areas to feel innovative. Use our capital city for road travel examples. Very well planned and improved early to control traffic congestion.
What is the obsession with getting people to move to Newcastle - why are you not looking after those who already live and love it here
It is important that the pursuit of economic goals , important as they are, does not inadvertently destroy Newcastle heritage and quality of life . People visit and live in Newcastle because they like what they see and experience, as Newcastle retains heritage and lifestyle features that have been lost elsewhere.
Newcastle's heritage and natural features are one of its 'selling points ' and should not be lost in the desire to make Newcastle more prosperous ie don't lose what we have while growing and developing. Sydney is a great example of the destruction of very features that originally attracted people to live there, Newcastle should not 'shoot its self in the foot' by becoming another Sydney.

Newcastle, Maitland and the Hunter are lovely, the whole area needs to work together to keep small businesses going, create a plan for looking after our environment, create jobs, and protect our wildlife.
Please take into consideration your role in this process and how that differs from the NFP/private sector component of the community. You can't move quick enough to rapidly respond to issues such as COVID, so look longer-term.
The city has to deal with the issue of affordability. Traditional residents are being displaced. It also has to manage the dependence on private car use at the expense of public transport which is becoming culture less frequent, reliable and more expensive.
Toxic Council with misplaced priorities
Unless you are fortunate to form personal relationships with councillors or high-level council staff you won't get any support for council in this city.
People are already moving here to get out of Sydney, but we need the right job market to attract them and sufficient infrastructure to support there lifestyle and work environment
It is hard for me to gauge my confidence in jobs and investment during the next 5-10 years when I am not certain what will exactly happen. I will be confident if we invest more in sustainable energy solutions.
Working from home had liberated professionals to move to a lifestyle location like Newcastle, and we bring our high incomes with us. You need to attract more people like this, who will pay for services and experiences in the city.
You need a plan to transition jobs and industries out of coal and something else? How will you support those workers so they don't lose out when you focus on new innovations and tech.
What are the specific women led industries and opportunities you will support to ensure women don't fall further and further behind economically. Thur needs to be specifically addressed through a twin track approach. Gender- disaggregate your analysis.
Newcastle is not longer a well kept secret. The Pasha Bulka put us on the map. I am very cautious about the pending development that awaits Newcastle. With the advent of prefabrication, change can occur quickly, not giving people time to adjust. If the right people do it, ie with the inhabitants quality of life as a key factor, both current and future, then it might work. Slow, thoughtful, well planned, connected development, inclusive of all inhabitants needs has to be factored in. I feel some of the development thus far has not been well planned. The business's destroyed by the light rail and the impact of the car racing for example. Car racing should be on racing tracks, not through narrow city streets and within meters of residents front doors. Development has to be respectful of those who are already here, be they business proprietors or residents. Incorporating creativity with development can soften the blow. Art installations, small plazas for musicians to play, little pockets of parks and gardens for people to retreat to, can all make a city liveable. A city for everyone, the elderly, families and young. It then attracts people who will love it and look after it. Housing that can provide a roof for people of different income levels, needs to be part of the development strategy and not leaving people stranded in pockets, isolated because of lack of infrastructure. How many seats do we see in suburbia these days, where an elderly person trying to get some exercise and fresh air, can sit and take a much needed rest. These things seem so trivial in the great scheme of things, but they are the grease on the small cogs that turn the larger cogs and it's all part of the big machine that makes a city work and be somewhere to live, work and play.
Newcastle needs to look up and become the beach and travel gateway of NSW and shake off forever the coal/industrial city elements in its marketing and yesterday-thinking. Seeking input from Manchester and other inbounmd, industrial cities to inform decision making retail and infrastructure planning is ridiculous - Newcastle should look to major tourism capitals of the world and see itself as comparable and proceed to plan and think with a strong tourism future as core to its development, city planning, legislation and business-opportunity thinking. Work form home as a key tenant - as aligned to Regional Australia Institute (RAI's) focus of helping Regional Australia thrive would lend advocacy and credibility to the vision of Newcastle as a thriving business centre with a wide spectrum of creative, digital and technical/trade skills and opportunity. A priority should be getting the train connected to Newcastle airport and the new aviation hub! Needing to drive from the airport to the city and Sydney is ridiculous and sets the city back!
Environment was not a possible option in the survey
I wouldn't want anyone to move to Newcastle because they would drive the property prices up further, and I am already struggling to buy a house
I don't believe that Council supports local business enough. Council has never offered local businesses support or compensation for the loss of business due to Supercars. Council pretends the event is economically viable for the city, but local businesses carry the heaviest burden of the event, with no acknowledgement of their plight by council. The economic report commissioned by council deliberately excluded costs and is a false indicator of the event's. It deliberately used a wild weather May weekend to compare visitor uplift. Misleading and unhelpful to businesses who are badly impacted.
The wording of some of these questions is unclear, couched in catch phrases, mumbojumbo to ordinary people
Newcastle is a small town and has a very low population. Newcastle is the second largest LGA in the Hunter (and destined to be third) Newcastle is very rich in assets and has clear roots. Newcastle has strong foundations. Newcastle must put itself and its people first! Newcastle needs to be positive but we need to take a reality pill!

ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

CCL 25/05/2021 – ADOPTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ITEM-42 **Attachment E:** City Plan Economic Development Strategy
Engagement Report

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

Ordinary Council Meeting

25 May 2021



DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

The background of the cover features a dark blue diagonal band on the left side. Behind this band and extending across the top and right is a grayscale image of a city skyline with several skyscrapers. Overlaid on this image is a pattern of white, 3D-style rectangular outlines that resemble a grid or architectural structure.




Newcastle Economic Development Strategy

Engagement Summary Report

Submitted to City of Newcastle

JANUARY 2021

REPORT REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date Issued	Revision Description						
01	15/12/2020	Draft provided to client						
		<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Prepared by</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Verified by</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chloe Boyd <i>Project Planner</i></td> <td>Chris O'Dell <i>Director</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jess Veenhuizen <i>Project Planner</i></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Prepared by	Verified by	Chloe Boyd <i>Project Planner</i>	Chris O'Dell <i>Director</i>	Jess Veenhuizen <i>Project Planner</i>	
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Disclaimer

This report has been prepared by City Plan Strategy & Development P/L with input from a number of other expert consultants (if relevant). To the best of our knowledge, the information contained herein is neither false nor misleading and the contents are based on information and facts that were correct at the time of writing. City Plan Strategy & Development P/L accepts no responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions or resultant consequences including any loss or damage arising from reliance in information in this publication.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Newcastle (CN) is preparing a new Economic Development Strategy (EDS) to outline the economic vision for the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA), which is *"to create new economic opportunities for all in the 2020s"*. The EDS, once complete, will provide a 10-year strategy to envision a future for Newcastle's economy. As part of this program, CN prepared an EDS Discussion Paper to stimulate and inform discussion on proposed economic development programs aligned to four key pillars:

- Pillar One: Enabling Skills - "The future of work is people"
- Pillar Two: Enabling Innovation - "The foundation to create your own opportunities"
- Pillar Three: City-Shaping Initiatives - "The support and infrastructure to facilitate success"
- Pillar Four: Vibrant City - "An activated and supportive city for all".

City Plan was engaged by CN to undertake targeted workshops as part of the broader community and stakeholder engagement program for the EDS, drawing on the concepts and programs explored in the EDS Discussion Paper. Four workshops were held with the business sector, community sector and TAFE students and staff on the 24th and 25th November 2020 using a range of online and face-to-face engagement activities. Four one-on-one interviews were also held with apprentices and Hunternet staff on the 9th and 10th December 2020. A total of 83 participants representing 33 organisations participated in the engagement activities.

2. KEY FINDINGS OF ENGAGEMENT

The purpose of this report is to describe the engagement process and analysis of the key findings from the workshops and interviews undertaken by City Plan. A summary of the key engagement findings is provided below and organised around the four key pillars, these findings provide focus areas, recommendations, and insights for CN to consider when preparing the new EDS.

2.1. Pillar One: Enabling Skills

Pillar One of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on 'enabling skills'. Participants were asked to share their insights on what CN can do to attract and retain new talent, as well as grow the skills of existing residents.

- Participants most commonly suggested that CN can attract and retain new talent by better promoting what the city has to offer, business attraction, and connecting new talent with employment opportunities.
- CN can grow the skills of existing residents by establishing more opportunities for apprenticeships, facilitating networking opportunities and events such as local career expos, and offering a service or mentorship program to help them secure employment.
- The most preferred EDS program under the enabling skills pillar was the New Skills program, followed by the Inclusive Newcastle program and the Talent Attraction Program. The International Networks program was the least preferred.

2.2. Pillar Two: Enabling Innovation

Pillar Two of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on 'enabling innovation'. Participants were asked to share their insights on innovation/business success stories, how CN can create more of these success stories and what innovative industries are best suited to Newcastle.

- Participants shared many start-up/ innovation success stories including businesses or organisations they are currently working with as well as other success stories that have revolutionised the way that particular industries operate, such as telehealth. Participants also expressed the importance of existing or past CN initiatives such as the Smart City Strategy in being an enabler to create start-up and innovation success stories.
- CN can support more success stories through ensuring physical and digital infrastructure integrate well across boundaries, establishing a business incubator model, and through advocacy to secure more funding for start ups.
- The innovative industries that participants thought were best suited to Newcastle include advanced manufacturing, renewable energy generation and storage, information technology, community and health services to support a growing and ageing population, and tourism, particularly cultural tourism.
- There was broad support for both the Innovation Ecosystem and Living Lab programs aligned to the enabling innovation pillar, with the Innovation Ecosystem project slightly preferred by workshop participants.

2.3. Pillar Three: City Shaping Initiatives

Pillar Three of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on 'city shaping initiatives'. Workshop participants were asked what actions CN should take to build the case for State and Federal Government investment in Newcastle.

- Participants most commonly suggested that CN should focus on seeking investment for the Living Lab concept, to provide more housing and transport options to meet the needs of all community groups, and for business cases that are identified through further collaboration with the business community.
- The community sector expressed that CNs support for youth employment is a good example of CN successfully leading advocacy and suggested that further local advocacy work is needed to focus on key issues of mental health, homelessness, poverty and drug and alcohol support.
- The most preferred EDS programs under the city shaping initiatives pillar were the City Digital Corridor program and City of Newcastle Policy Statements program, followed by the Government Relations Advocacy Action Plan. The Gateways Cities Alliance was least preferred.

2.4. Pillar Four: Vibrant City

Pillar Four of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on creating a 'vibrant city' which is activated and supportive for all. Workshop participants were asked what improvements are needed, and what can CN do, to make Newcastle a more vibrant and appealing city.

- Participants most commonly suggested that CN help create a vibrant and attractive city by facilitating more cultural activities, improving night time activation, promoting and supporting start ups, improving public and active transport, providing more parking, encouraging more accessible and diverse venues, and facilitating more employment opportunities for students.
- There was a clear preference for the City Activation program under the vibrant city pillar, with generally even support for the Newcastle Opportunity and City Analytics programs.

Overall, City Plan observed that there was wide support for CN preparing the EDS and to hear from range of community voices including those that are generally harder to reach such as the community sector, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and young people.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Project Context

The City of Newcastle (CN) is preparing a new Economic Development Strategy (EDS) to outline the economic vision for the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA), which is *"to create new economic opportunities for all in the 2020s"*. The EDS, once complete, will provide a 10-year strategy to envision a future for Newcastle's economy. The purpose of the EDS is *"to empower, retain and attract people with skills of the future and create a place where everyone has an opportunity"*. To achieve this, the EDS will be an action-oriented strategy which clearly identifies CN's role in mandating and implementing new programs and initiatives for the city. The Strategy will set 1-year implementation plans and undergo a regular review process.

Ensuring meaningful community and stakeholder engagement is a significant part of the strategy formulation process. An EDS Discussion Paper was prepared by CN to stimulate and inform discussion. The Discussion Paper encouraged community and stakeholder consideration and feedback on proposed economic development programs aligned to four key pillars:

- Pillar One: Enabling Skills - "The future of work is people"
- Pillar Two: Enabling Innovation - "The foundation to create your own opportunities"
- Pillar Three: City-Shaping Initiatives - "The support and infrastructure to facilitate success"
- Pillar Four: Vibrant City - "An activated and supportive city for all".

The EDS Discussion Paper guided focus areas for the EDS community and stakeholder engagement program.

City Plan Strategy & Development (City Plan) was engaged by CN to undertake targeted workshops as part of the broader community and stakeholder engagement program. Four workshops were held with the business sector, community sector and TAFE students and staff on the 24th and 25th November 2020 using a range of online and face-to-face engagement activities. Four one-on-one interviews were also held with Hunternet staff and apprentices on the 9th and 10th December 2020.

3.2. Purpose of this Report

This report describes the engagement process and analysis of the key findings from the workshops and interviews undertaken by City Plan. As part of the broader engagement strategy, this report, alongside other engagement summaries and outcomes, will inform the ongoing development of the EDS. City Plan would like to thank the participants who generously shared their ideas, enthusiasm and feedback throughout the engagement activities.

3.3. Engagement Objectives and Approach

The engagement undertaken by City Plan formed part of a broader EDS engagement strategy managed by CN. A key purpose of the EDS is to be "people centred", and the outcomes sought in the EDS engagement program were to take a user-centred approach, to ensure that stakeholders are not only aware of the strategy development, but are provided with meaningful opportunities to input into, review and comment throughout the entire development lifecycle of the document, with their insights reflected within the document and its objectives.

On this basis, City Plan established the following key objectives to guide the delivery of the four targeted workshops and phone discussions.

- Inform the community and stakeholders of the preparation and purpose of the EDS as well as CNs role and mandate in implementing actions and programs to create new economic opportunities for all;
- Provide community and stakeholders with a meaningful opportunity to input into the creation of the EDS including testing of proposed program ideas; and
- Hear from 'new voices', who's ideas often do not get heard. This includes young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with different educational achievements to seek a diverse range of perspectives.

Importantly, our engagement approach also had to recognise and adapt to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on everyone. The community has experienced increasing levels of economic stress and uncertainty, which in turn has impacted people's health and wellbeing. Rather than delay engagement, it was identified that this engagement provided the opportunity to talk to the community and stakeholders about projects such as the EDS that can help the city recover. The format and delivery of the workshops also needed to be adapted to respond to COVID-19 restrictions.

4. WHO WE ENGAGED

We sought to engage a diverse range of people working in the community sector, business sector, culturally and linguistically diverse students, people training for their apprenticeship, teachers and operational staff working in the education sector. There were 79 participants across the four workshops and four interviewees who participated in the one-on-one interviews. The 83 overall participants represented 33 organisations. A breakdown of the attendees by workshop / interviews is provided below.

Workshop 1	Business Community	
Registered Attendees	40	
Actual Attendees	20	
Organisations Represented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ASR Recruitment ▪ Camplify ▪ ClipChamp ▪ Design Anthology ▪ Eighteen04 ▪ Engima ▪ Hunter Research Foundation ▪ Ieee ▪ Innovation & Entrepreneurship Society ▪ Leading Edge DC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maitland City Council ▪ Newy Tech People ▪ Raine & Horne ▪ Robotic Systems ▪ Saphi ▪ SeftCorp ▪ Smart Crete CRC ▪ SwitchDin ▪ The Finer Line ▪ University of Newcastle

Workshop 2	Community Sector	
Registered Attendees	20	
Actual Attendees	10	
Organisations Represented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BaptistCare ▪ Connectability Australia ▪ Centre for Hope ▪ FirstChance ▪ Hunter Restorative Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NFSS ▪ NS Services ▪ The Canopy ▪ University of Newcastle

Workshop 3	TAFE Students	
Registered Attendees	28	
Actual Attendees	28	
Organisations Represented	<p>TAFE NSW including 23 culturally and linguistically diverse students from the following countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Afghanistan ▪ Brazil ▪ China ▪ Iraq ▪ Korea ▪ Malaysia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peru ▪ Philippines ▪ Republic of Congo ▪ Russia ▪ Thailand ▪ Syria ▪ Uganda ▪ Vietnam

Workshop 4	TAFE Teachers and Operational Staff	
Registered Attendees	35	
Actual Attendees	21	
Organisations Represented	TAFE NSW including teachers and operational staff, with 5 staff members identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.	

Interviews	Hunternet Apprentices	
Interviewees	4	
Organisations Represented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hunternet ▪ Veolia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Swanson Industries ▪ Lockheed Martin

5. HOW WE ENGAGED

5.1. Communication and Promotion

CNs community and stakeholder engagement program for the EDS was broadly communicated and promoted through a range of platforms including via digital and social media channels, digital and print advertising and providing information in Council buildings such as libraries and community centres.

City Plan used the following key communication and promotion methods to encourage attendance at each event.

Workshop 1 - Business Community	
Direct email	CN sent emails to the Hunter Business Chamber and The Business Centre asking them to promote the business community workshop among their members.
Have Your Say website	CN encouraged businesses to register for the business community workshop on the 'Have Your Say' website, where it was accessible alongside all other information relating to the development of the EDS and Discussion Paper.
Eventbrite	City Plan created an event through Eventbrite, this event link was promoted through emails sent to the business community and was used as a management tool to register attendance for the workshop.
Workshop 2 - Community Sector	
Direct Email	City Plan sent 24 emails to 64 community sector stakeholders (including schools, members/representatives of community groups and not-for-profit agencies, the Department of Health and the Department of Justice) inviting them to participate in the community sector workshop.
Phone Calls	CN provided their community engagement contact list and City Plan used this information to undertake a call campaign talking to 12 community sector employees over the course of two days to promote the event.
Eventbrite	City Plan created an event through Eventbrite, this event link was promoted through emails sent to the community sector and was used as a management tool to register attendance for the workshop.
CN Promotion	CN's Community Planning and Development Team also promoted the workshop through their monthly community e-newsletter.

Workshop 3 - TAFE Students	
Participants	28
Collaboration with TAFE	City Plan worked in conjunction with TAFE to organise Workshop 3. TAFE was responsible for the recruitment of participants.
Workshop 4 - TAFE Teachers and Operational Staff	
Participants	21
Collaboration with TAFE	City Plan worked in conjunction with TAFE to organise Workshop 4. TAFE was responsible for the recruitment of participants.
Interviews - Hunternet Apprentices	
Participants	4
Collaboration with Hunternet	City Plan worked with Nick Couper, Hunternet Chief Operating Officer, to identify a target group to interview. This group was selected to ensure diversity amongst interviewees.

5.2. Engagement Activities Description

City Plan facilitated four workshops with cohorts from the community sector, business community and culturally and linguistically diverse students and staff from TAFE NSW. CN staff were present at each of the workshops to facilitate breakout activities and assist with setting up and running workshop events. City Plan also conducted targeted phone interviews with four apprentices from Hunternet.

The focus of each session was to firstly to inform the participants of the EDS, explore the four pillars identified in the EDS Discussion Paper and rate the proposed programs/initiatives most likely to support economic growth. Each workshop also explored the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic participants.

A summary of each engagement activity is provided below, and key findings for engagement activities is provided in section 5.

5.2.1. Workshop 1 - Business Community

The first workshop engaged with the business community through an online Zoom meeting. An initial Mentimeter survey that focused on participants' response to COVID-19 was completed. Breakout rooms were used to facilitate small group discussions, with breakout groups asked to respond to four questions (each representing a pillar from the EDS Discussion Paper). Breakout groups then reported their discussion back to the whole group, enabling broader discussion to take place. Following this, the collective group was asked to complete a Mentimeter survey, where they rated the individual programs associated with each of the four pillars, as described in the EDS Discussion Paper.

5.2.2. Workshop 2 - Community Sector

Workshop 2 was a combined face-to-face and virtual workshop held at Newcastle City Hall, Town Hall House. Attendees were members of the community sector and could elect to participate in-person or

via a concurrent Zoom meeting. Prior to breakout groups, attendees were asked to complete a Mentimeter survey which focused on their response to COVID-19. Breakout groups were facilitated through the Zoom meeting and in-person, with groups asked to respond to four questions (each representing a pillar in the EDS Discussion Paper). Following the small group discussion, each breakout group presented their discussion to the broader group. The Mentimeter survey was also completed during this workshop, with participants rating the individual programs associated with each of the four pillars identified in the EDS Discussion Paper.

5.2.3. Workshop 3 - TAFE Students

The third workshop comprised a face-to-face workshop held at the Tighes Hill Newcastle TAFE Campus. Participants included TAFE students, particularly international students and those with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. As with Workshops 2 and 3, a Mentimeter survey that focused on participants' responses to COVID-19 was undertaken, before breakout groups were used to enable small group discussion around four questions based on the four pillars identified in the EDS Discussion Paper. Breakout groups reported their discussion to the entire group; participants then completed the Mentimeter survey.

5.2.4. Workshop 4 - TAFE Teachers and Operational Staff

The final workshop was held virtually via Zoom with TAFE teachers and operational staff. The same method was applied to Workshop 4, including the COVID-19 response Mentimeter survey and the use of breakout rooms to enable participants to answer four questions related to each of the pillars. Each breakout group reported back to the broader group, and the collective group completed the Mentimeter survey.

5.2.5. Interviews - Hunternet

One-on-one interviews were utilised to engage with four apprentices working for Hunternet. The interviews were undertaken via videoconference or telephone call and ran for approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour. Interviewees were asked introductory questions about where they lived, their employment and their course of study/apprenticeship. Additionally, interviewees were asked four questions, with each question based on one of the four pillars identified in the EDS Discussion Paper. Interviewees were also provided with the opportunity to make additional comments in relation to the Discussion Paper that may not have been otherwise captured in the four questions.

6. WHAT WE FOUND

A summary of the key findings from community engagement activities led by City Plan is outlined below. Key findings are organised thematically around the four EDS pillars which align to CNs Community Strategic Plan and the proposed economic development programs outlined in the EDS Discussion Paper. Key findings on participants experience during the Covid-19 Pandemic are also summarised in **Section 6.6**.

6.1. Pillar One: Enabling Skills

Pillar One of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on 'enabling skills'. This pillar recognises that the future of work is people. Brain drain is recognised as a key issue locally as the student population and young talent continue to leave Newcastle in large numbers. Newcastle also continues to have low levels of tertiary education. Participants were asked to share their insights on what CN can do to attract and retain new talent, as well as grow the skills of existing students.

6.1.1. Talent Attraction

A summary of participants insights into how CN can attract and retain new talent is provided below:

- **Promoting the city** was most commonly discussed as a key initiative to attract new talent. This includes promoting the liveability and "work-life balance" that Newcastle offers, but also needs to include a place branding approach beyond promoting lifestyle. This approach should highlight Newcastle's unique characteristics such as industrial heritage and maker spaces, and promote 'stories of success' occurring in the business and start-up community. Participants expressed that there is a lack of knowledge outside of Newcastle on what it has to offer, it is getting the stories out there that is the challenge.
- **Connecting new talent with local employment opportunities** was also seen as a key role for CN. Participants suggested that future CN programs could seek to target recent graduates locally and in other locations and connect them with the diverse employment opportunities locally, this could be achieved through networking events or CN offering a concierge service.
- **Business attraction** was also considered an important factor in attracting new talent. Participants expressed that attracting more larger firms to Newcastle will help mitigate the brain drain through providing additional employment opportunities for new grads. Suggested ideas include further support/advocacy to improve infrastructure that can attract new businesses such as digital infrastructure and better rail connectivity, as well as running conferences to showcase the city and the existing business ecosystem.

The community sector was also asked to share insights on ways that CN can support and retain new migrants to fill skills shortages. The sector expressed that there are skills shortages in disability support and occupational therapy, aged care and social work. Suggestions to help retain migrants include providing support for migrants to address barriers to securing employment and housing such as programs to obtain drivers licences and helping identify affordable housing options. Participants also expressed the importance of CNs role in creating a welcoming city that celebrates diversity, addresses safety and fosters community connections.

6.1.2. Growing Future Skills

The most common theme discussed by culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) TAFE students and staff was the difficulty for students transitioning from study to employment. Initiatives to transition CALD students into employment opportunities was commonly identified as the key factor to grow future skills and help students remain in Newcastle. Specific initiative examples include:

- **A service or mentorship program** to provide students with the support to determine appropriate employment opportunities available to them and the education pathways to get there, as well as help with applying for jobs during or after study and working through the recruitment process. Many students expressed that they did not know where to go to find this kind of advice and suggested that this would help build their capacity and confidence to gain employment.
- **Establishing more opportunities for apprenticeships**, internships and volunteering opportunities during study through facilitating more formal partnerships between CN, TAFE and local businesses. Participants suggested that there should be greater expectations placed on businesses and organisations to provide more apprenticeship opportunities for people that typically find it more difficult to obtain employment such as disadvantaged people, people with a disability and CALD students.
- **Networking opportunities and events** to provide opportunities for students to connect with businesses such as local career expos and guest speaking events.

6.1.3. Preferred 'Enabling Skills' Programs

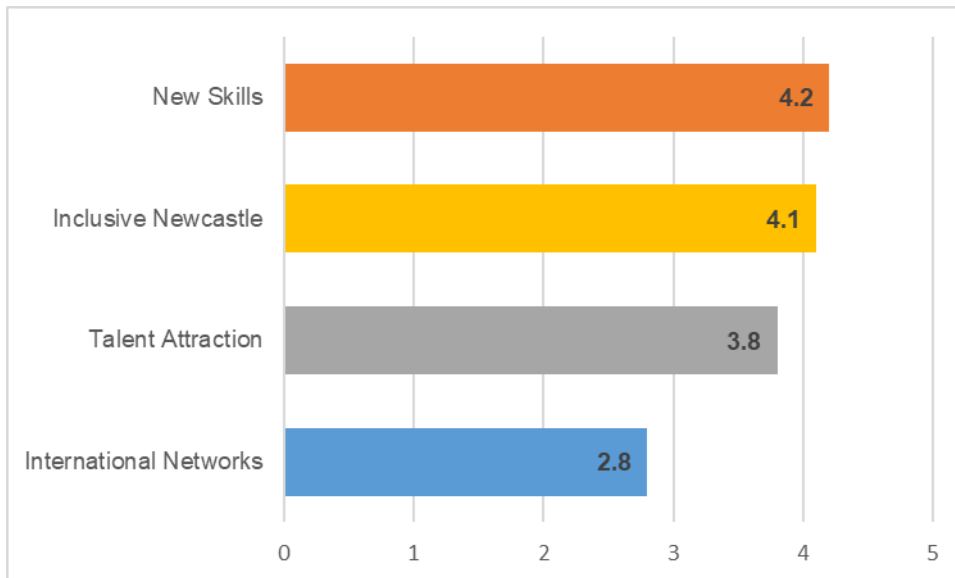
The workshops sought feedback on the proposed EDS programs under each pillar. The proposed programs under the Enabling Skills Pillar are:

- **New Skills** - a program to build opportunities for our residents to develop new and innovative skills.
- **Talent Attraction** - a marketing campaign to attract talented people to our city.
- **Inclusive Newcastle** - a program to drive inclusive business practices using economic incentives.
- **International Networks** - Investment in Sister City partnerships, International Chambers of Commerce and other key international links.

Workshop participants were asked to rank each of the proposed programs in order of preference, with one being the least preferred and five being the most preferred. The most preferred program across the workshops was the New Skills program, followed by the Inclusive Newcastle program and the Talent Attraction Program, as shown in **Figure 1** (n = 42 participants).

There was some variation in preferences between the different workshops with the community sector and TAFE staff favouring the New Skills program and the business community favouring the Talent Attraction program. This speaks to the challenges faced by each of these cohorts as TAFE staff and the community sector have roles focused on building the capacity of students and the community including through new employment and education opportunities, while the business sector relies on attracting talent to run and grow their businesses. The International Networks program was least favoured all cohorts.

Figure 1: Workshop participants preference for enabling skills programs (based on mean average across workshops)



6.2. Pillar Two: Enabling Innovation

Pillar Two of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on 'enabling innovation'. Newcastle is home to Australia's largest and most mature innovation ecosystem outside of a capital city. Participants were asked to share their insights on innovation/business success stories, how CN can create more of these success stories and what innovative industries are best suited to Newcastle.

6.2.1. Innovation Success Stories

Participants shared many start-up/ innovation success stories including businesses or organisations they are currently working with as well as other success stories that have revolutionised the way that particular industries operate, such as telehealth. Participants also expressed the importance of existing or past CN initiatives such as the Smart City Strategy in being an enabler to create start-up and innovation success stories. Example success stories are summarised below.

Hunter Angels. Telehealth. **Camplify**. Hunter Venture.
Hone. Space Tech. **CN Smart City Strategy**.
 Intellectual Property Innovation. **Switched In**.
Emerging Artists. Hunter IV.
Tele-Counselling. **Robotics Systems**.
 Local Syrian Tailor *Jesmond*. Migrant start-ups through
 previous CN pilot programs.

Suggestions as to how CN can support more of these success stories is summarised below:

- Working with stakeholders to **ensure physical and digital infrastructure integrate well across boundaries.**
- **Establishing a business incubator model** which provides floor space for start-ups as well as mentoring and assistance with grant applications and business skills.
- **Advocacy to secure more funding for start ups** and to support the transition of the Hunter Economy, with the Hunter Innovation Fund raised as a specific example.

6.2.2. Innovative Industries for Newcastle

Workshop participants were asked what innovative industries are best suited to Newcastle. Key suggestions include:

- **Advanced manufacturing** building on existing strengths in defence, aerospace, and engineering, and using automated technologies. CALD students also suggested that local clothes and shoe manufacturing opportunities could utilise the existing technical skills of immigrants.
- **Renewable energy generation and storage** recognising the Hunter's history of providing energy generation for broader NSW and the need to transition to greener technologies such as wind, hydrogen and energy storage such as lithium-ion batteries.
- **Information technology** as more industries adapt to an online way of working. There are opportunities in areas such as virtual reality technology.
- **Community health services** as health and aged care is one of the fastest growing industries locally to respond to a growing and aging population.
- **Tourism and accommodation services** including cultural tourism showcasing Aboriginal talent, heritage and our diverse landscapes, as well as hosting more drawcard events which take advantage of our existing infrastructure
- **Education services** leveraging the University, TAFE and other private facilities to position and promote Newcastle as an global education destination.

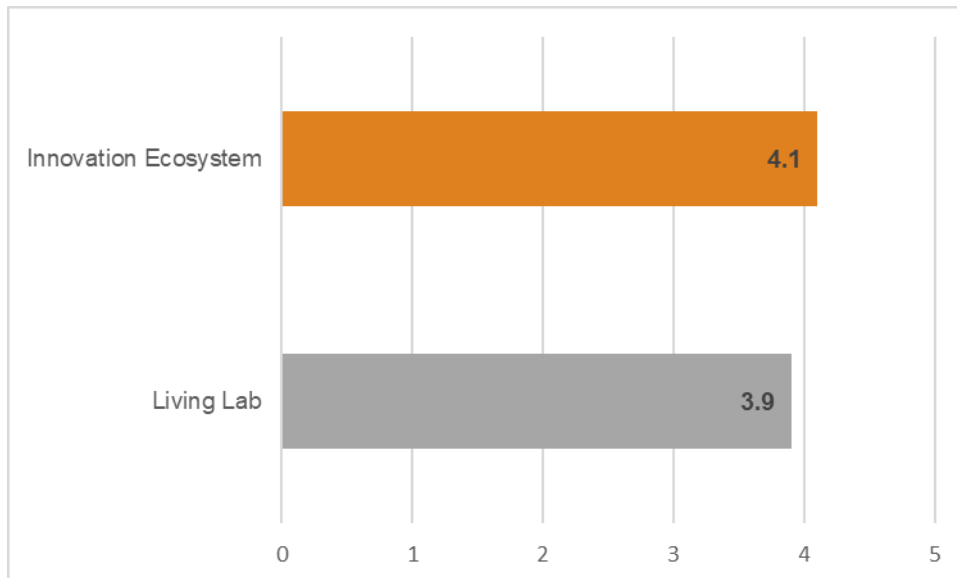
6.2.3. Preferred 'Enabling Innovation' Programs

The proposed programs under the Enabling Innovation Pillar are:

- **Living Lab** - Development of an innovation precinct, a smart city incubator and a scale-up landing pad.
- **Innovation Ecosystem** - A program to support the utilisation of the city as a testbed for Smart City, IoT, cleantech and city innovations.

Workshop participants were asked to rank the two proposed programs in order of preference, with one being the least preferred and five being the most preferred. There was broad support for both programs proposed to 'enable innovation', with a slight preference for Innovation Ecosystem, as shown in **Figure 2** (n = 42 participants). There was also little variation in preferences between the community sector, business community or TAFE staff.

Figure 2: Workshop participants preference for enabling innovation programs (based on mean average across workshops)



6.3. Pillar Three: City Shaping Initiatives

Pillar Three of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on 'city shaping initiatives'. Over the years, Newcastle has benefitted from investment in significant city shaping infrastructure to drive new economic opportunities including the Port of Newcastle, Newcastle Airport, John Hunter Hospital, University of Newcastle, the Newcastle Light Rail and growing smart city infrastructure. CN is proposing to leverage on existing strengths and infrastructure and drive new city-shaping initiatives through business support, new partnerships and a reformed approach to government advocacy.

6.3.1. Advocacy Priorities

Workshop participants were asked what actions CN should take to build the case for State and Federal Government investment in Newcastle. A summary of recommended actions is provided below:

- **Promoting and seeking more investment for the Living Lab concept** was the most common recommendation provided. Newcastle provides the ideal location for further investment in the Living Lab concept being an established hot bed to test tech and having the infrastructure and population to gain traction.
- Advocating to seek more funding and support **for investment in housing and transport to meet the needs of all community groups**. This includes more accessible housing for people with a disability and exploring different housing typologies to meet migrants needs. Public transport and active transport investment is also needed particularly to create better connectivity in the outer suburbs.
- Supporting and advocating for funding **to realise business cases** presented by the local business community.

Participants also shared advice regarding the role of CN in advocacy including serving as the "harmonious voice of the region" and working cohesively to develop a roadmap for a regional approach.

The community sector expressed that CNs support for youth employment is a good example of CN successfully leading advocacy and suggested that further local advocacy work is needed to focus on key issues of mental health, homelessness, poverty and drug and alcohol support.

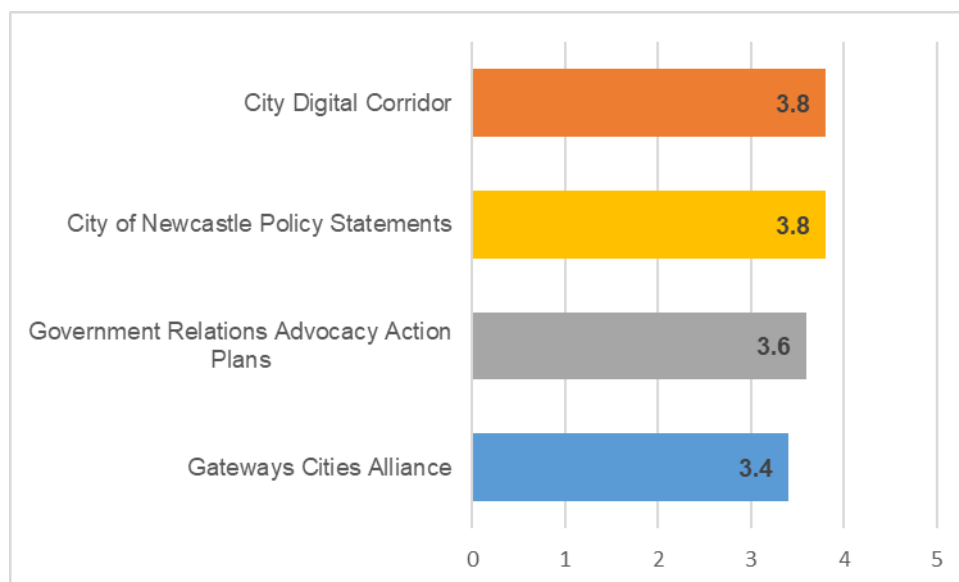
6.3.2. Preferred 'City Shaping' programs

The proposed programs under the Enabling Innovation Pillar are:

- **City Digital Corridor** - A program to enable high-speed data connectivity for capacity, competitiveness and investment in the city.
- **Gateway Cities Alliance** - Advocacy focused on the value of Gateway or Second Cities in driving economic development, in partnership with Wollongong and Geelong.
- **Government Relations Advocacy Action Plans** - step-by-step goals to ensure a robust and evidence-based proposal supplements key funding asks.
- **City of Newcastle Policy Statements** - using local evidence and research, develop clear and comprehensive policy asks of key employment sectors.

Workshop participants were asked to rank each of the proposed programs in order of preference, with one being the least preferred and five being the most preferred. The most preferred programs across the workshops were the City Digital Corridor program and the City of Newcastle Policy Statements program, followed by the Government Relations Advocacy Action Plan program, as shown in **Figure 3** (n = 42 participants). There was little variation in preferences between the different workshops.

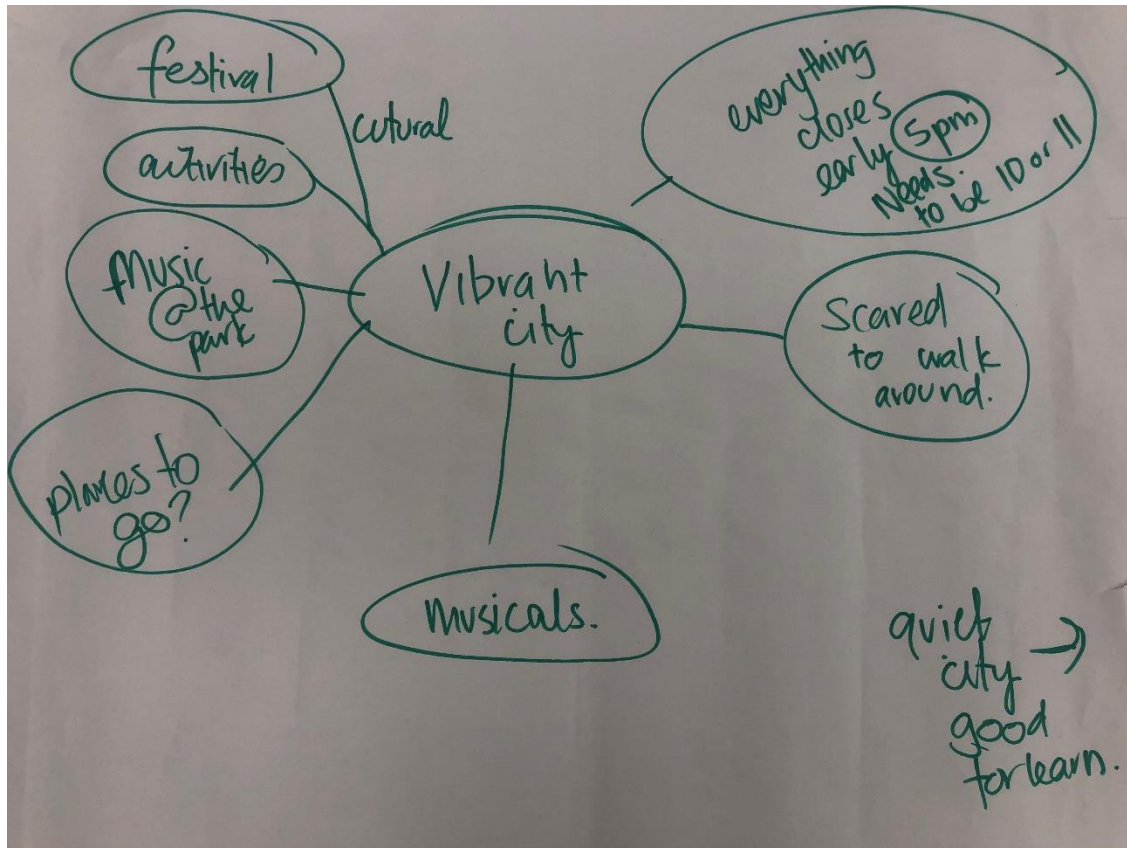
Figure 3: Workshop participants preference for city-shaping programs (based on mean average across workshops)



6.4. Pillar Four: Vibrant City

Pillar Four of the EDS Discussion Paper is focused on creating a 'vibrant city' which is activated and supportive for all. Workshop participants were asked what improvements are needed, and what can CN do, to make Newcastle a more vibrant and appealing city.

6.4.1. Making Newcastle a More Vibrant and Attractive Place to Live, Study and Work



Workshop participants provided many valuable insights into how to create a more vibrant and attractive Newcastle, a summary is provided below:

- **Facilitating more cultural activities** including festivals, major events and musicals that make life enjoyable outside of work and celebrate community and diversity. Specific examples include multicultural festivals for CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people to share their culture and skills, music at the park, the Newcastle street art festival and Innovation festival.
- **Improving night time activation.** Many students and young people commented on how dead the city is at night compared to other cities around the world. Students commented that after their classes finish in the evening there is nowhere to go. Working to encourage night time trading, and establish new bars and night time entertainment opportunities can create a more vibrant city.
- **Promoting and supporting start-ups** and innovators including through subsidised real estate, specialised economic zones and the Innovation festival.
- **Improving public and active transport.** Some participants expressed that they are deterred from visiting the city due to limited public transport options and expressed the need for better transport linkages to connect key locations and the outer suburbs. CN could advocate to extend the light rail. Participants would also like to see improved and safer cycleways.
- **Increasing parking and making it free.** Many participants also expressed that the lack of parking deterred them from visiting areas of the city and noted that if there was more parking availability and at cheaper rates, they would enjoy what the city has to offer more.

- **Encouraging more accessible and diverse venues and spaces** for all people to feel comfortable and enjoy including for people with a disability, CALD and ATSI people.
- **Facilitating employment opportunities for students.** TAFE students expressed the difficulty in finding jobs and that Newcastle would be a more attractive place for them to live if they had better access to employment opportunities.

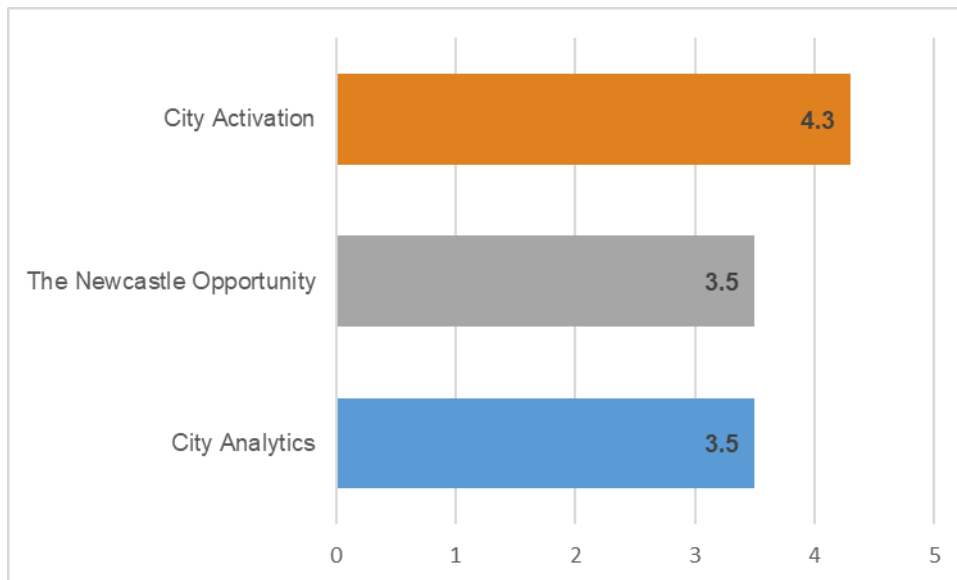
6.4.2. Preferred 'Vibrant City' Programs

The proposed programs under the Enabling Innovation Pillar are:

- **City Activation** - facilitation of the Special Business Ratee program and Grants/Sponsorship, as well as implementing Newcastle After Dark Strategy.
- **City Analytics** - evaluation and research program to ensure that Newcastle stories are understood and replicated across the world.
- **The Newcastle Opportunity** - a program to develop and maintain a digital prospectus for the city.

Workshop participants were asked to rank each of the proposed programs in order of preference, with one being the least preferred and five being the most preferred. There was a clear preference for the City Activation program across all workshops, with generally even support for the Newcastle Opportunity and City Analytics programs, as shown in **Figure 4** (n = 42 participants).

Figure 4: Workshop participants preference for vibrant city programs (based on mean average across workshops)



6.5. Program Challenges and Opportunities

There were several recurring themes expressed by workshop participants when asked about program challenges and opportunities. The key discussion points were:

- **Collaboration** was the single most important challenge and opportunity raised by participants. Currently bringing people together to promote common goals can be a challenge in Newcastle, but it is critical to the success of the proposed programs. Participants recognised the need, and significant opportunity, for CN to focus efforts on better collaborating and building consensus with the business sector, institutions such as the University of Newcastle and TAFE NSW, and State and Federal Government and the community.
- **Funding** was perceived to be the second biggest challenge, with stakeholders noting that CNs impact will be limited without adequate funding. Stakeholders suggested that CN not try to 'achieve it all' but rather focus on a smaller number of programs and initiatives which are likely to make the biggest impact and are relevant to Newcastle rather than trying to replicate what other locations or organisations are achieving.
- **Communication** was also expressed as a common consideration for the success of the programs, this includes ensuring that people actually understand the purpose, content and intended outcomes of the programs using simple language and communication. The programs should also be communicated through targeted platforms to ensure uptake and involvement from a broad range of groups including marginalised people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

6.6. The impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Throughout the workshops all participants were asked to share how Covid-19 has impacted them personally, including the key challenges, the unexpected benefits and if there is anything that they experienced as a result of Covid-19 that they would like to stick around permanently.

6.6.1. Benefits arising from Covid-19

Covid-19 has been tough on a lot of people and the impacts will continue to be felt for a long time, participants were still able to reflect on some of the unexpected benefits. The most commonly expressed benefits of the Covid-19 pandemic were:

- flexibility and opportunity to work from home
- spending time with family
- reduced pace of life
- increased or better online engagement and learning opportunities.

This was common across all workshop participants (business community, community sector and TAFE staff) except TAFE students, who commonly identified no benefits derived from the pandemic; no other workshop participants echoed this statement.

6.6.2. Key challenges from Covid-19

Participants across all workshops identified the below as the most challenging aspects of Covid-19:

- Job losses (both individually and in the community)
- Isolation and a lack of interaction
- Reduced working hours/income

- Having to stay at home/feeling a lack of freedom.

7. CONCLUSION

Engagement on the ideas and programs presented in the EDS Discussion Paper was well received by participants. The engagement activities elicited detailed feedback that directly related to the programs proposed by CN. It is expected that this report will be valuable for CN in understanding key insights, ideas and recommendations when preparing the EDS.

APPENDIX 1

Communication Materials

APPENDIX 2

Workshop Agendas

APPENDIX 3

Mentimeter Survey