

# Nambucca

## Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 - 2022

### *Vision*

*A region strengthening key activities such as manufacturing tourism and agriculture and strongly enhancing its social and natural resource endowments to make Nambucca an attractive place to live and prosper.*



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# Preface

The NSW Government has assisted local councils and their communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies across regional NSW. Each Strategy is designed around one or more local government areas that form a functional economic region as defined by economic data and community input.

While the strategies have been developed using consistent methodology, each is a product of detailed data analysis and local community consultation to ensure ownership through a ‘bottom-up’ process: it sets out a vision for the Region, the strategies, and early stage actions required to achieve the vision.

Regional Economic Development Strategies articulate a framework for identifying actions crucial to achieving the regional vision. Projects listed within this strategy should therefore be viewed as example projects that have emerged from the initial application of the framework. Adoption of these projects would be subject to further evaluative processes.

The power of the Strategy is its ability to be used on an on-going basis to identify additional high value projects over time. By complimenting existing funding processes, these strategies present new opportunities to strengthen and increase investment in regional development across NSW.

Importantly, the Strategy should be viewed as the first stage of a process that will assist those with an interest in the economic development of the Region, particularly councils, communities and local businesses, in planning their future economic activities. It provides a vehicle for engaging the community in a ‘conversation’ about regional needs and priorities, assists in bringing together key stakeholders and mobilising resources, and in so doing, can facilitate faster access to dedicated NSW Government funding, such as the Growing Local Economies Fund, as well as helping to capitalise upon other economic opportunities.

This Strategy, prepared by Corview on behalf of the Region, was formed in collaboration with Nambucca Shire Council, key stakeholders and the broader regional community, which benefited from economic-analytical assistance from the NSW Government’s Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

The Strategy is presented in two documents, the [Nambucca Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 - 2022 \(this document\)](#) which allows the reader to quickly and easily determine key content, while the accompanying [Nambucca Regional Economic Development Strategy - Supporting Analysis 2018 - 2022](#) – details the Strategy methodology, evidence and the strategy development process.

For further information about the Regional Economic Development Strategies Program please contact CERD on (02) 6391 3025 or [CERD@dpc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CERD@dpc.nsw.gov.au)

# Introduction

The **Nambucca Shire Regional Economic Development Strategy 2022** (the Strategy) sets out a long term vision and strategic approach for the economic future of Nambucca Shire (the Region).

Formed in 1915, Nambucca Shire is located on the north coast of New South Wales between the regional cities of Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour. The Region is home to over 19,000 people, concentrated in Nambucca Heads, Macksville, Bowraville and Scotts Head.

While the objective of this Strategy is similar to previous local strategies – to support economic development for social advancement across the community – it takes a new approach to economic planning.

Fundamental to this approach are the distinctive and unique strengths of the Region. Economic principles suggest unique strengths provide regions with sustainable economic advantages, and so they should be points of focus for regional development policy.

Nambucca Shire's unique strengths were determined through review of several factors:

- the Region today – considering the Region as a whole and the localities within it for their demographics, infrastructure, institutions and economic structure, risks and opportunities
- specialisations - activities in which the region has a demonstrable advantage

- endowments - key features of the natural environment, built environment, geography and society specific to the region or location
- stakeholder consultation – ‘on the ground’ feedback on local economic conditions and forward-looking assessments of issues and opportunities that will shape the future

The Strategy also takes account of regional risks and how they might be addressed.

The Vision is to be a region strengthening key activities such as manufacturing tourism and agriculture and strongly enhancing its social and natural resource endowments to make Nambucca an attractive place to live and prosper.

Nambucca Shire's key endowments lie in its coastal, riverine and hinterland amenity; arable soils and favourable climate; mid-point location on the Pacific Highway between Sydney and Brisbane; balance of lifestyle, social and economic opportunities; and clean, green, organic branding.

These endowments are the basis of the region's specialisations, which include:

- export-oriented activities like vehicle manufacturing, tourism and agriculture
- business-enabling activities, such as property services supporting tourism, commercial construction and financial, professional and technical services
- internal, population-serving markets like residential construction, residential care and education.

These strengths and the analysis of current issues, opportunities and risks suggest some key strategic imperatives, including:

1. enable growth of the manufacturing cluster by increasing the supply of zoned and serviced industrial land
2. develop a Vehicle Body Manufacturing Cluster Plan, potentially including a SkillsPoint partnership in Nambucca Shire
3. protect and enhance the region's endowments supporting tourism and agriculture
4. grow the Shire's internal markets and support increases in labour supply, specialisation and productivity

This Strategy began with its guiding vision for the Region's future. Next we establish the composition and defining economic characteristics and strengths of the region today.

Finally, the strategic imperatives suggested by the analysis and stakeholder feedback are established, supported by detailed strategies and actions against the implementation themes.

This Strategy is the culmination of collaboration between the Nambucca Shire Council, their respective community and the NSW Government's CERD.

Strategy implementation will be overseen by the General Manager of Nambucca Shire Council, drawing on staff and broader stakeholders as appropriate.

# Background

The name 'Nambucca' originates from the Region's first residents, the Gumbaynggirr, meaning either "entrance to the waters" or "winding or crooked river".

The Region's total area is 1,491 square kilometres, with the majority of its population living within its coastal and riverine stretches. The Region's major population centres are Nambucca Heads, Macksville, Bowraville and Scotts Head.

The economic origins of the Shire lie in timber, with timber-getters settling in the area in search of cedar from the 1830s onward. Primary production and the natural environment remains central features of the economy today.

The Pacific Highway is the region's key road link, making the Region a natural midpoint between the two cities. The Shire's context is also defined by its proximity to two of the North Coast's four regional cities, Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour.

The Region's natural beauty is highlighted in its National Parks and Nature Reserves. It is home to the Dunggir, Gumbaynggirr and Gaagal Wangaan National Parks and the Juugawarri, Jaaingga, and Ganay Nature Reserves. The region's topography largely reflects steep gradients and extensive waterways.

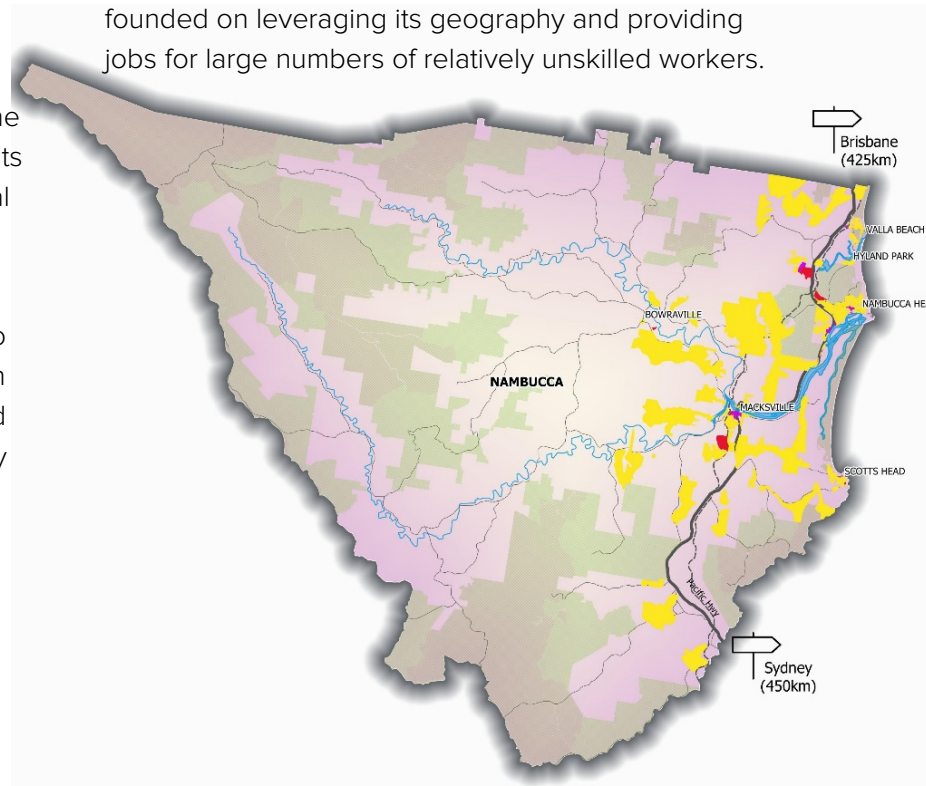
A scarcity of flat land (making up only around a fifth of the total land form) accentuates the Region's natural features, but represents a challenge to production activities that can make best advantage of its access to major metropolitan markets.

Compared to State averages, incomes in Nambucca Shire are relatively low, with unemployment relatively high. However, over recent decades, the economic fortunes of the Region have been improving.

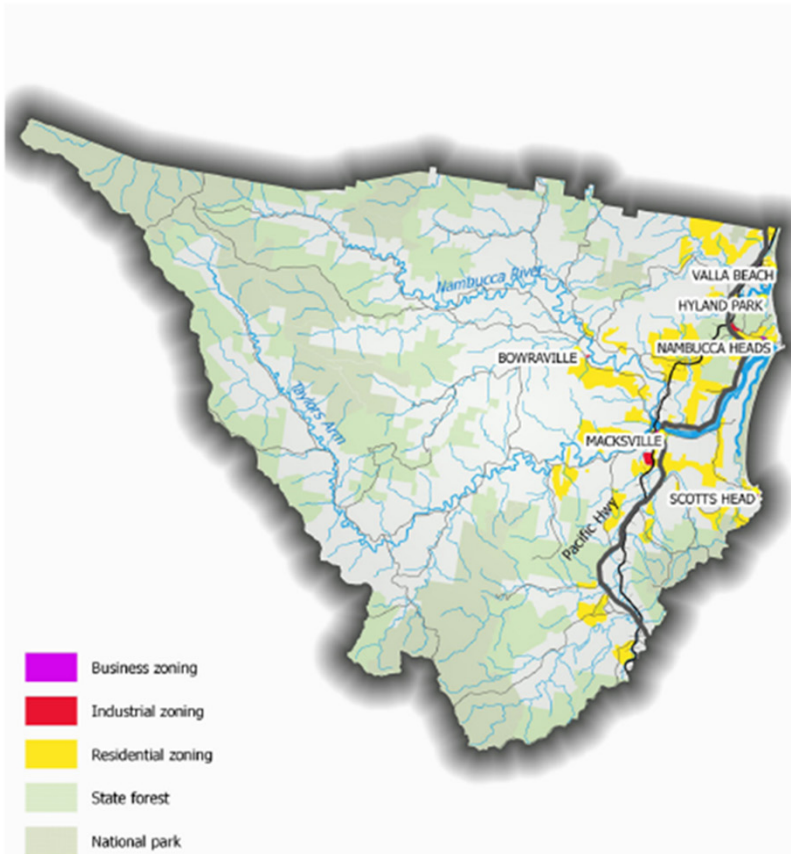
A key turning point in the Shire's economy followed the loss of its meatworks and 350 full time jobs in 1998. Shortly after, the Council started its active pursuit of a manufacturing cluster. That strategy was founded on leveraging its geography and providing jobs for large numbers of relatively unskilled workers.

Despite relatively high exchange rates across the 2000s, the vehicle body industry cluster has grown to be the stand out in the Region's manufacturing base. From a handful of workers in a limited number of companies, today hundreds are employed across a range of complementary activities and markets.

Recently, the Pacific Highway duplication program has added construction jobs to the economy, helping to reduce the unemployment rate over time. Further, the Region's amenity has helped it sustain population growth over time and re-orient its employment base towards greater emphasis on serving people.



# Nambucca Shire



**GRP**  
**\$478 M**

**1,491 km<sup>2</sup>**  
**area**

**Employment by Industry**  
**Top 3**

Health Care and Social Assistance	16.7%
Construction	12.7%
Retail Trade	10.8%

**\$467**

**Weekly Median Income**



**90.6%**  
are employed in  
Nambucca Shire



unemployment

**9.4%**



**16.5%**  
of population  
are younger  
than  
15



**51**

**Median Age**



**Population**

**19,212**

**27.6%**  
of population  
are  
older  
than 65  
(2016)



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# Snapshot of Population, Economy, Industry and Opportunity

## Production and Income by Sector

The Figure on the next page is a key 'roadmap' to understanding economic opportunity in the Region. It reflects the income split between workers and businesses in each sector (blue and orange bars) and how much each industry contributes to regional production (the stacked height of the bars).

Construction and Health Care & Social Assistance are the leading sectors in the Region's economy, accounting for 36 per cent of production. These two sectors, together with Education & Training and Retail Trade account for almost 60 per cent of wage and salary income paid to employees.

The region's leading sources of business income are Construction and Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, and together accounted for 45 per cent of business income.

In analysing the Region's economic features, it can also be useful to group similar industries together to allow review and comparison of some of their common underpinning economic drivers. One useful classification of activities is:

- "Engines of Growth" – activities linked to external markets and opportunities beyond the bounds of the region, like agriculture, manufacturing and tourism
- "Enabling Industries" – activities within the region providing key support services to Engines of Growth businesses, like finance, utilities or IT inputs
- "Population Serving Industries" - activities serving the people and communities of the region, including activities like health, education and retail.

Relative to the structure of NSW's regional economy, Nambucca Shire is significantly overrepresented in construction, retail and other tourism activities (like accommodation & food services and rental & property services), administrative services and health care.

These strengths reflect a diversified economy emphasising population and visitor-facing advantages.

For a Region with a relatively small population base, the degree of economic diversification in Nambucca Shire is relatively unusual. In part, this reflects the success of the Region in developing an emerging specialisation in Manufacturing and the impact of the Pacific Highway program on local Engineering Construction activity.

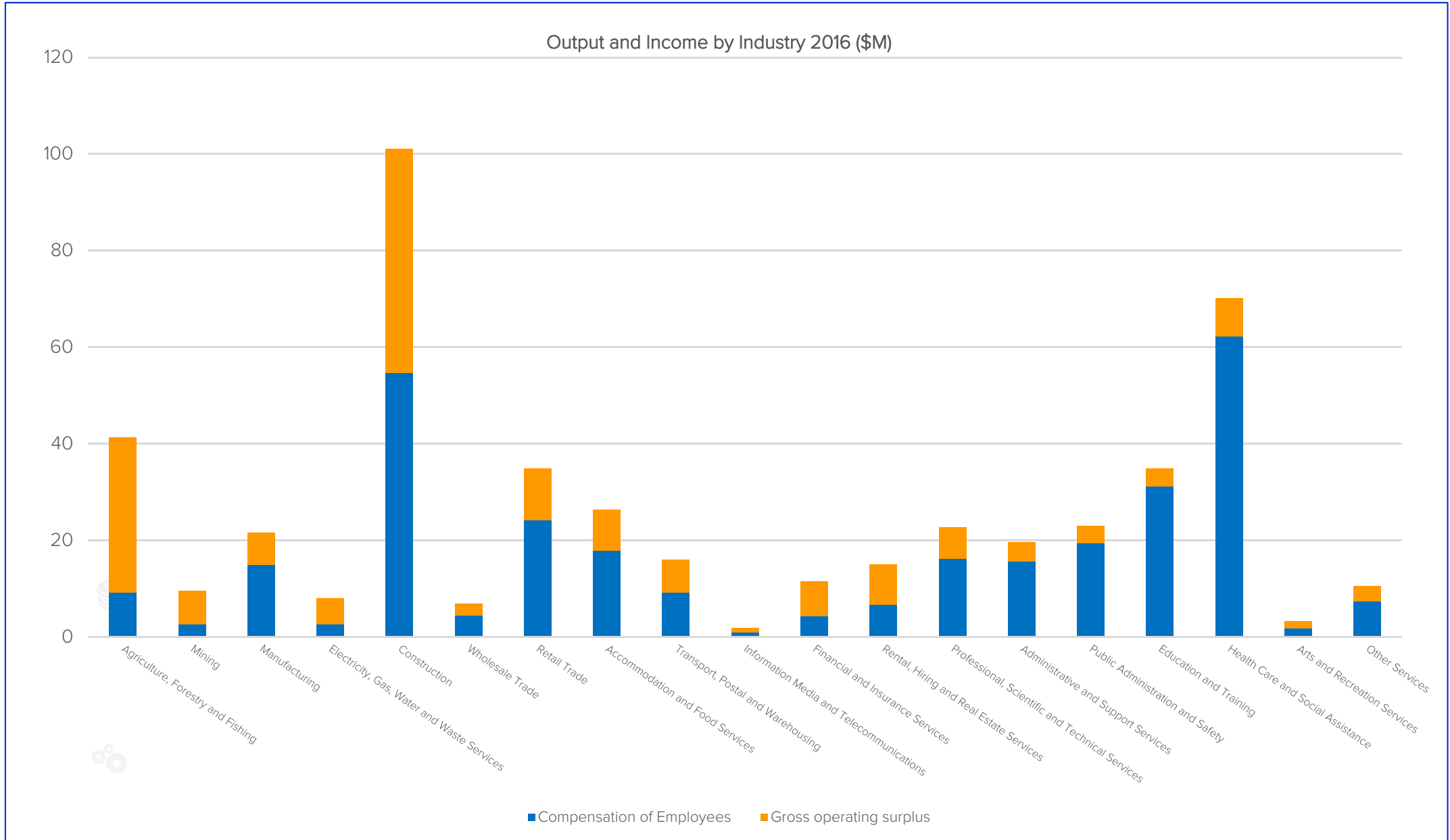
The Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD) has also produced an Input Output table for the Nambucca regional economy based on the ABS Input Output (IO) Tables for New South Wales.

The CERD analysis shows Nambucca is a net importer, with exports out of the Region estimated at \$129 million and imports into the Region estimated at \$277 million.

Nambucca's leading export industries are Manufacturing, Accommodation & Food Services and Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing.

Construction and Manufacturing are the leading industry sources of demand for imports for production processes.

# Regional Output by Industry and Income



# Population Profile

The Nambucca Shire has enjoyed substantial population growth over time, with 2016 levels about 8 per cent above 2001 levels, equivalent to about 1,500 extra residents. In relative terms, the rate of growth is nonetheless lower than the rates of growth for Sydney (+21 per cent) and regional NSW (+12 per cent) over the same period.

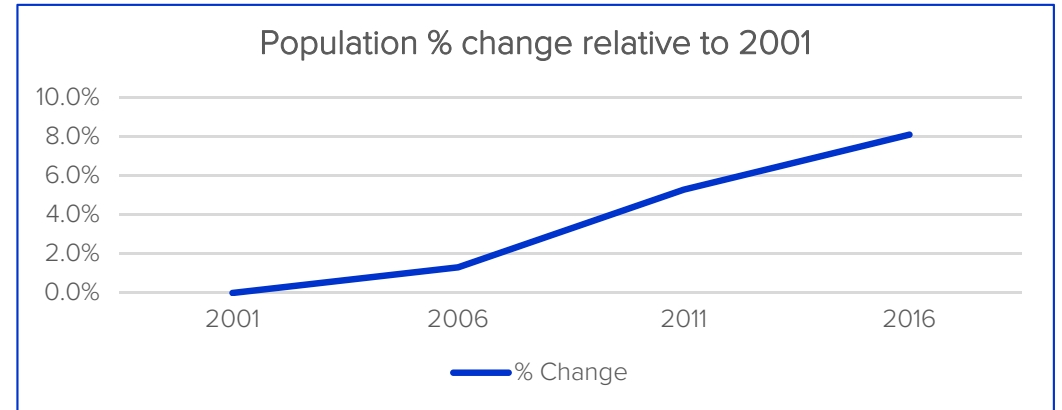
More than 3,200 Nambucca Shire residents from the 2016 Census lived in another region in 2011. Proportionate to population, this meant that Nambucca Shire had the second-highest rate of inward migration among all FERs on the North Coast.

Population growth carries a range of economic implications, including increasing the scale of the internal markets of the Region. New arrivals bring added demand in the form of household consumption. The adjacent chart shows local businesses benefiting considerably from population increases through the provision of housing, medical care, food and beverage, transport and recreation.

Population driven development also can be expected to add to the rate base of the Region over time. Further, where the new arrivals add to the local pool of workers, the productive potential of the Region is increased.

Increases in labour supply are an important consideration for Nambucca Shire. Like many parts of regional NSW, its population is older than the State average. This trend is particularly pronounced in Nambucca, such that the average Nambucca resident is almost 9 years older than even the regional NSW average.

The migration by age group table shows that compared to other North Coast regions, the share of new arrivals of late working age or older is relatively high, heightening the Age Dependency Ratio. This implies an increasing scarcity of workers to service those requiring services, especially in sectors like Health Care & Social Assistance. This implies that it may be difficult to sustain services locally unless it proves easier over time to attract workers to meet expanding needs.



Leading Household Expenditure Categories, 2015-16

Expenditure Category	Average Weekly Spend	% of Total
Housing	\$279	19.6
Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages	\$237	16.6
Transport	\$207	14.5
Recreation	\$172	12.1
Medical Care	\$82	5.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,425</b>	<b>100.0</b>

5 Year Migration by Age Group for North Coast FERs (% of total)

Location	Youth	Young & Prime Working Age	Late Working Age & Older
Northern Rivers	2,836 (13.6%)	11,573 (55.7%)	6,340 (30.5%)
Hastings Macleay	2,444 (14.0%)	7,966 (45.6%)	7,045 (40.4%)
Coffs Coast	2,333 (16.1%)	8,005 (55.1%)	4,193 (28.8%)
Tweed Shire	2,389 (13.1%)	8,634 (47.2%)	7,217 (39.5%)
Clarence Valley	1,009 (13.8%)	3,198 (43.8%)	3,085 (42.3%)
Nambucca Shire	456 (13.5%)	1,522 (45.0%)	1,409 (41.7%)



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# Endowments

Endowments are strengths that a regional economy possesses and can capitalise on. Economic principles suggest that endowments play a key role in the economic development of regions. The CERD in its Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report (2017) found that:

the future of individual regional economies is inexorably linked to their natural endowments and attempts to retain or establish industries without an underpinning endowment are unlikely to succeed.

Economic development policy should therefore focus on factors that enable the growth of endowment-based industries, as well as building local leadership and institutional capacity and capabilities to better enable businesses and public agencies to capitalise on the opportunities a Region's endowments present. Endowments can lead to opportunities from which commercial and industrial interests may leverage and develop specialisations.

## **Physical or geographic endowments**

**Natural amenity** – The beauty of the Nambucca River, dramatic topography of the hinterland and the coastal amenity of Nambucca Heads provide great appeal and amenity to visitors and residents alike.

**State Forests and National Parks** - Around 25 percent of the Shire land area is State Forest and it is home to the Dunggir, Gumbaynggirr and Gaagal Wangaan National Parks and the Juugawarri, Jaaingga, and Ganay Nature Reserves.

**Arable land** – all soil types in Nambucca are assessed as being in fair to very good condition, however only around 20 per cent of the land is productive alluvial flats, with 20 per undulating terrain and 60 per cent is steep.

**Climate and Water** –The local climate is semi-tropical with summer dominant rainfall. The average rainfall is 1700 mm, and the estuaries as have good river health.

**Midpoint between major metropolitan markets** - Nambucca reflects the mid point for road based trips between Sydney (five hours away) and South East Queensland (four and half hours). Truck drivers' standard hours require breaks no less frequently than every five and a half hours.

**Access to South East Queensland markets** - access to South East Queensland is between four and a half hours (Macksville to Gold Coast) and five hours (Macksville to Brisbane) by road. For context, Sydney to Newcastle is about two and a quarter hours.

## **Built endowments**

**Pacific Highway** - the Pacific Highway provides the principal source of connectivity from Nambucca Shire to major metropolitan markets and other regions. The ongoing program of work to complete duplication of the Pacific Highway along the North Coast will further improve the quality of connection to South East Queensland.

**Private capital equipment** - Many operators in Nambucca Shire have made substantial investments in highly productive capital equipment, especially in manufacturing.

**Coffs Harbour Airport** - the Airport is outside the Region, it provides Nambucca businesses and residents with excellent access to major metropolitan markets.

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# Endowments

For a Region with a relatively small population, Nambucca Shire enjoys an enviable combination of natural, built and geographic endowments and effective institutional leadership within government and industry. Together, these features have significantly expanded its productive potential over time, especially in relation to the development of its manufacturing cluster. Ongoing efforts to build on gains to date should be a Regional priority.

Nonetheless, some considerable challenges remain ahead for the Region. In particular, expansion in Engineering Construction to accommodate the Pacific Highway program is unlikely to be sustained over time. This program not only attracted workers to the Region, but also increased demand for population services, providing indirect benefits across the Region's economy. In prospect, the end of the program will likely have the opposite effect.

There is much the Region can do, however, to facilitate new opportunities. Most obvious are other construction projects that can fill the gap such as the new Macksville hospital. A related alternative would be increases in housing supply, which not only sustain construction workers in the Region, but also bring new people, skills and extra economic activity to the Region. To the extent this deepens the Region's internal markets, this will tend to further diversify the economy and expand its economic potential.

## **Institutional endowments**

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**Nambucca Shire Council** - Nambucca Shire Council takes a highly proactive and professional approach to economic development. This is particularly the case for investment facilitation.

**Clean, Green, Organic Branding** - the quality and allure of Nambucca's natural environment has positive spillovers for economic activities in the Region, especially for activities like agriculture, food and ecotourism.

**North Coast Institute of TAFE** - is well-connected to the community. It specialises in providing vocationally oriented entry-level education and training in business, community services and information technology. The campus also features a sustainable herb and vegetable garden for students and the broader community.

**Aboriginal Cultural Heritage** - Nambucca lies on the border of the Gumbaingirr and the Dainggatti territory. The Gumbaynggirr and Dhanggati people share the same family system and initiation ceremonies, though they have a different language. There are numerous cultural sites including the Mount England Yam Increase ceremonial site. The Region has successfully preserved its Gumbaynggirr language and markets Australian native foods such as Perry Lemon Myrtle and Janning Tree Catering.

## **Human endowments**

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**Balance of Lifestyle, Social and Economic Opportunities** - Nambucca offers a mix of lifestyle and economic opportunities that make it an appealing place to live, work and play in any of its coastal, riverine or hinterland settings. Good and improving connections by road to major centres such as Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie expand the choices in combining lifestyle with work commitments.

**Specialised Skill Sets** - The Nambucca workforce has a high representation of Laborers; Machinery Operators; Technicians and Trade Workers; and Community and Personal Service Workers.

**Entrepreneurship** – the Region is fortunate to be home to a number of businesses and investors who demonstrate very high degrees of acumen. The willingness of these parties to invest is critical to converting future opportunities into realised gains in the form of business income and wage increases.

# Specialisation

A simple form of analysis that can be used to gain an understanding of a region's competitive advantages is the Location Quotient (LQ) which measures the employment concentration in industry sectors within a regional economy, compared with the same sectors across NSW. The higher the LQ, the more specialised a region is in that industry relative to the rest of NSW. For the purpose of this analysis, specialisations as defined by LQs, are in turn used as a proxy measure for those sectors and industries that represent a region's true competitive advantages.\*

Importantly, while LQs are used in this document for that purpose, they are only a partial measure of those competitive advantages. Hence, they have been considered alongside additional qualitative evaluations and data analysis, such as Input-Output analysis, to arrive at the findings for the Region's Strategies.

The bubble chart selected industries in the regional economy in 2016, where:

- Industries with a larger 'bubble' employed more people
- Industries further above the horizontal line are more specialised when compared to NSW (LQ greater than 1.25), industries below the line are less specialised when compared to NSW
- Industries to the right of the vertical line grew faster between 2011 and 2016 than comparable industries across NSW; industries on the left grew more slowly. This value is calculated as the Region's industry growth rate less than the NSW growth rate for that industry, and is expressed in percentage points (ppts).

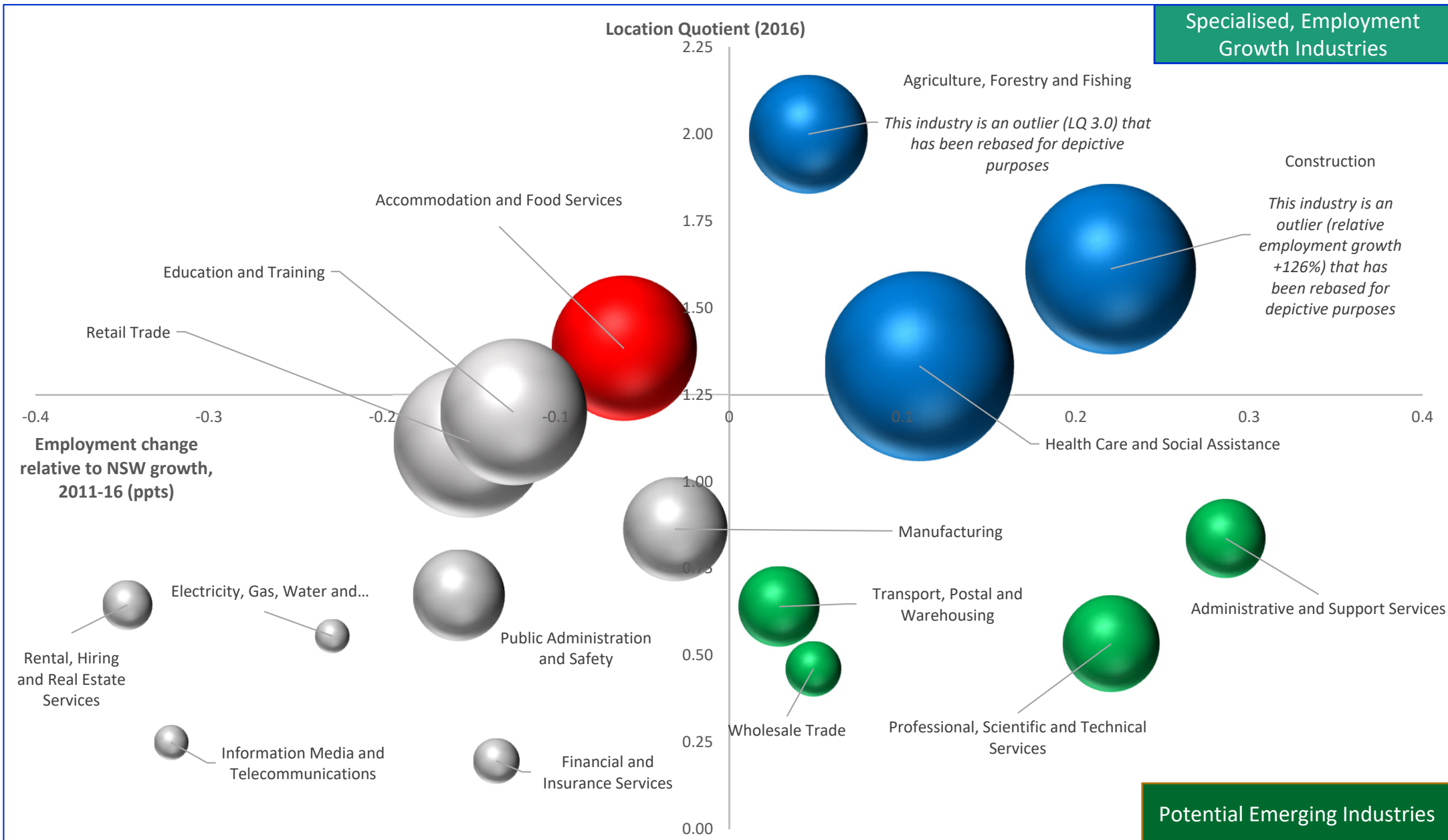
Compared to general trends for NSW, the largest localised employment changes were in activities like Construction, Administrative Services, Health Care and Professional and Technical Services. While changes in these activities reflect a number of different factors, in large part they reflect developments in the dynamics of the Region's internal markets.

Two activities that showed negative localised employment changes were Education and Training and Retail Trade. This could be taken to suggest a high degree of integration with similar activities in Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie.



\*A regions competitive advantage for an industry includes its ability to produce goods and services at a lower cost or differentiate its products from other regions, along with access to external factors which enhance business and operations/minimize risk (Stimson, Stough and Roberts, 2006).

# Specialisations and Shifts in Employment Over Time



# Specialisations

The primary industry specialisations of Nambucca Shire across the 'Engines of Growth', Enabling Industry and Population Serving Groupings are summarised below.

Nambucca Shire's '**Engines of Growth**' account for about \$125 million of regional output. Output from this grouping makes up about a quarter of the economy, which is about two-thirds of what is typical for regional NSW.

Nambucca Shire's key "Engines of Growth" specialisations are in vehicle manufacturing, tourism (accommodation & food services) and agriculture.

The Region's significant sub-industry specialisations in this grouping include:

1. Clubs (Hospitality) Pubs, Taverns & Bars, and Cafes, Restaurants and Takeaway Food Services, Accommodation, Road Passenger Transport (Tourism industries)
2. Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Part Manufacturing and Wholesaling
3. Log Sawmilling & Timber Dressing
4. Dairy Cattle Farming
5. Fruit & Tree Nut Growing

Nambucca Shire's '**Enabling Industries**' make up about \$80 million of regional output. The share of output from this grouping is about 85 per cent of the share typical across regional NSW economies.

Nambucca Shire's key "Enabling Industries" specialisations include tourism-connected services, commercial construction and financial, professional and technical services.

The Region's significant sub-industry specialisations in this grouping include:

1. Building Cleaning, Pest Control and Gardening
2. Real Estate Services
3. Legal and Accounting Services
4. Employment Services
5. Architectural, Engineering and Technical Services
6. Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction
7. Depository Financial Intermediation

Nambucca Shire's '**Population Serving Industries**' account for about \$274 million, or about 55 per cent, of regional output. The share of output from this grouping is about 40 per cent greater than is typical for regional NSW economies.

Nambucca Shire's key "Population Serving Industries" specialisations are in residential construction and residential care, as well as aspects of education.

The Region's significant sub-industry specialisations in this grouping include:

1. Land Development and Site Preparation Services and Building Structure Services
2. Residential Building Construction and Non-Residential Building Construction
3. Building Completion Services and Building Installation Services
4. Residential Care Services, Social Assistance Services, and Other Social Assistance Services

# Risk

Through consultation, the community contributed to the Strategy development process, including by identifying the issues today that may be central to the economic future. This included a range of risks that may impede the Nambucca Shire from achieving to its economic potential.

Addressing these risks is essential to realising this Strategy's economic Vision for the Region.

## *Connectivity risks:*

- First and last mile upgrades are required to enhance the network producers rely on to get to market.
- Digital connectivity needs to be addressed to support developing professional services and connect its residents.
- Poor communication connectivity is limiting the ability of business to implement web based technologies, effectively market their products and connecting with suppliers.
- Public and community transport services may not keep pace with intensification of Nambucca's relationship to the neighbouring economies centred on the regional cities of Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour.

## *Resources risks:*

- There is a limited supply of zoned and serviced industrial land.

- Job seekers are having to travel outside Nambucca to attend training. There are relatively few local certified training providers.
- Limited local training provision may compromise the development of the vehicle body manufacturing cluster.
- Skills and training mismatches may sustain relatively high unemployment, even as local production is hampered by a lack of sufficiently skilled labour.
- Businesses in the region's specialised sectors may be lured away by investment incentives elsewhere.
- The region's relatively high age dependency ratio is projected to increase over time in relative terms unless a younger age profile of workers is attracted to the region.

## *Liveability risks:*

- Limitations in housing supply may drive up the costs of living and the region's capacity to attract 'footloose' workers.
- The Region's growth requires an appropriate supply of housing, schools, health and community services.
- Insufficient capacity of schools may limit the Region's attractiveness to young workers and their families.

- Healthcare upgrades will be required to service a growing aging population in Nambucca.
- Limited employment opportunities and social services and amenities may limit the Shire's ability to attract young workers.

## *Governance Risks:*

- The Region faces employment diversification challenges as the Pacific Highway program comes to completion.
- There are a lack of tourism opportunities in the region to new attract visitors.
- Marketing of Nambucca's agribusinesses fails to leverage the Region's "Clean and Green" image.
- Supporting and promoting the Region's industries could compromise its natural endowments and liveability.
- Overly restrictive environmental regulations excessively safeguard the environment and impede the economic potential and prospects of the Region.

# Strategy

The four Strategy elements for the Region link directly to the opportunities presented by the Region's endowments and specialisations and also aim to address some key regional risks.

The Strategy elements were derived from an analysis of the endowments that underpin the Region's specialisations, followed by examination of current industry specialisations and emerging specialisations, identified in consultation with the community and Council.

Each element is accompanied by a set of early actions, which should be interpreted simply as example actions derived from a preliminary application of the Strategy framework. It is therefore expected that there will be other actions capable of contributing to the attainment of the Region's Vision that are yet to be identified. Consequently, an action's alignment with the Strategy is the primary strategic consideration, rather than it being listed in this document, and all proposed actions will be subject to further qualitative and quantitative evaluative processes.

Nambucca's key specialisations lie in:

Engines of Growth such as vehicle manufacturing, tourism (accommodation & food services) and agriculture.

Enabling Industries such as tourism-connected services, commercial construction and financial, professional and technical services

Population Serving activities such as residential construction, heavy construction, residential care and education.

These specialisations suggest some key imperatives:

1. enable growth of the manufacturing cluster by increasing the supply of zoned and serviced industrial land
2. develop a Vehicle Body Manufacturing Cluster Plan, potentially including a SkillsPoint partnership in Nambucca Shire
3. protect and enhance the region's endowments supporting tourism and agriculture
4. grow the Shire's internal markets and support increases in labour supply, specialisation and productivity

Over time, other actions can contribute to attaining the Region's Vision. Consequently, an action's alignment with the Strategy is the primary strategic consideration. All proposed actions will be subject to further qualitative and quantitative evaluation processes.



# 1. Enable the Growth of the Manufacturing Cluster by Increasing the Supply of Industrial Land

## Strategic Context

Over the past two decades, Nambucca Shire has enjoyed considerable economic success in actively developing a manufacturing cluster, focused on the Macksville Industrial Estate. One of the initial considerations for that approach included that the Region at that time had an ample supply of land and a surplus supply of labour from the closure of the meat-works to support investment in manufacturing activity.

Over time, the ongoing successes of the Region’s manufacturers has absorbed almost all the land suitable for industrial production, and this is presently proving to be a binding constraint on the Region’s employment and production opportunities.

Land acquired by Council at Valla adjoins the re-aligned, duplicated Pacific Highway. This is a key potential site, with 8 hectares of land available to support industrial development. It is expected that developing the Valla site will not only increase the Region’s production opportunities, but also create knock-on benefits for a broader range of businesses by freeing up land in the Macksville Industrial Estate. High land prices in adjoining regions has led a number of businesses from across the North Coast inquiring about forthcoming industrial land investment opportunities in Nambucca, suggesting the rate of uptake may be rapid and help relieve economic constraints beyond the Region.

## Infrastructure Priorities

Connect Agriculture and Manufacturing producers to their supply chains and external markets.

## Opportunities

### Early Stage Actions

### Candidate Programs / Projects

- | Opportunities  | Early Stage Actions   | Candidate Programs / Projects   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate new serviced industrial land.</li> <li>• Increase employment opportunities in the region.</li> <li>• Sustain new approaches to partnership with the private sector.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a business case for developing serviced Employment Lands (Industrial Precinct) in Valla Growth Area.</li> <li>• Continue to engage and work with industry in developing proposals for new industrial land (such as Valla Employment Lands).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valla Growth Area Employment Lands.</li> </ul> |



## 2. Develop a Vehicle Body Manufacturing Cluster Plan

### Strategic Context

A broad range of manufacturing businesses have relocated to or been created in Nambucca Shire since Council began to actively develop an industry cluster. A review of the Cluster today reflects that the businesses that have been most successful are in vehicle body manufacturing.

Consultation with many of these businesses revealed that they now have to pass up contracts because of constraints imposed by their existing production facilities. If this the Valla site is developed as intended, the primary challenge for these businesses will be sourcing and developing the labour required to enable them to meet market demand for their products, with projections suggesting an additional 50 - 100 workers may be required.

Relationships within the Region and this Cluster are already strong. Developing a Cluster Plan for Vehicle Body Manufacturing, focused on skills development but also considering broader interests in common, can further enhance the institutional relationships and enhance the Region's key emerging cluster. Particular opportunities for investigation should include:

- a SkillsPoint for Vehicle Body Manufacturing in Nambucca (SkillsPoints are dedicated industry hubs for skills and training innovation that see TAFE work in close partnership with industry to design training that responds to emerging trends)
- common-use infrastructure that would benefit the cluster's members.

### Infrastructure Priorities

Potential common-use infrastructure investments

### Opportunities

#### Early Stage Actions

#### Candidate Programs / Projects

- Leverage Nambucca's vehicle body manufacturing cluster to train local job seekers.
- Align training courses to meet local industry needs and increase investment.

- Develop the supply chain network to support local manufacturing industries.
- Partner with local industries and training providers to review training gaps and align training courses to local industry needs.

- Vehicle Body Manufacturing Cluster Plan.
- Joint Nambucca Shire, education provider, and private industry Taskforce to identify skills needs and training facilities.

### 3. Protect and Enhance the Region's Endowments Supporting Tourism and Agriculture

#### Strategic Context

A broad range of manufacturing businesses have relocated to or been created in Nambucca Shire since Council began to actively develop an industry cluster. A review of the Cluster today reflects that the businesses that have been most successful are in vehicle body manufacturing.

Consultation with many of these businesses revealed that they now have to pass up contracts because of constraints imposed by their existing production facilities. If this the Valla site is developed as intended, the primary challenge for these businesses will be sourcing and developing the labour required to enable them to meet market demand for their products, with projections suggesting an additional 50 - 100 workers may be required.

Relationships within the Region and this Cluster are already strong. Developing a Cluster Plan for Vehicle Body Manufacturing, focused on skills development but also considering broader interests in common, can further enhance the institutional relationships and enhance the Region's key emerging cluster. Particular opportunities for investigation should include:

- a SkillsPoint for Vehicle Body Manufacturing in Nambucca (SkillsPoints are dedicated industry hubs for skills and training innovation that see TAFE work in close partnership with industry to design training that responds to emerging trends)
- common-use infrastructure that would benefit the cluster's members.

#### Infrastructure Priorities

Nambucca Riverfront Development

#### Opportunities

- Derive economic benefits from Nambucca's proximity to markets north and south.
- Improve mobility and reduce transport costs through an integrated local road network within Nambucca Shire.
- Further develop the regions "Clean and Green" image for the agribusiness and tourism sectors.
- Leverage Nambucca River's amenity.
- Engage with the Aboriginal community to improve access to economic opportunity.

#### Early Stage Actions

- Advocate for service improvements to improve connectivity between Regional Cities and Centres (Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie).
- Identify, cost and prioritise options for 'first mile' and 'last mile' connections to arterial roads.
- Leverage Nambucca Shire's "Clean and Green" brand image to enhance its visitor economy.
- Review and determine the next steps for the Nambucca River Master Plan and develop a program business case.
- Provide greater access to and awareness of indigenous and environmental heritage.
- Identify indigenous business and employment opportunities in consultation with the Aboriginal community and industry leaders.

#### Candidate Programs / Projects

- Business Case for 'First Mile' and 'Last Mile' Local Roads Network Integration.
- Lanes Bridge, Bowraville Replacement.
- Nambucca Tourism and Agribusiness Branding Strategy.
- Nambucca River investment program.
- Community Events Festival Strategy.
- Macksville CBD Beautification Plan.
- New Macksville Hospital.
- Implementation of foreshore and public art projects in Nambucca Heads.

## 4. Facilitate Population Growth to Expand the Shire's Internal Markets

### Strategic Context

Nambucca Shire has enjoyed steady population growth since 2001, which has expanded the internal markets of the Region for population and business enabling services. Consistent with a greater population, jobs growth over that period reflects substantial increases in health care, professional services, administration, education and arts and recreation.

The sector with the greater increase in employment was construction, in large part reflecting the ramp up of the Pacific Highway program. However, in the period ahead, construction jobs are at risk of declining as the Pacific Highway program winds down.

To offset the risks of this contraction in this sector, the Region should look to alternative activities to fuel the next wave of growth. While the 'Engines of Growth' have capacity to support more jobs, so too can the Region further develop its internal markets and the employment opportunities they support.

Enabling infrastructure for housing supply and critical population services are key constraints that should be priority measures to increase the population and enable growth in internal markets.

### Infrastructure Priorities

Bowraville sewerage and Nambucca water treatment plants

### Opportunities

- Attract and retain families and workers by:
  - Matching school infrastructure services to regional student needs
  - Offering a diverse and accessible supply of housing
  - Embracing and celebrating Nambucca's indigenous and environmental heritage.
- Accommodate and attract an aging population through an appropriately resourced Macksville hospital.
- Resolve "first mover" disadvantage of incurring enabling infrastructure costs.
- Improve the attractiveness of Nambucca to business through high capacity digital connections.
- Pursue new forms of partnership with the State and Federal Governments.

### Early Stage Actions

- Work with the Department of Education to identify school asset investment opportunities to provide contemporary, future focused learning spaces.
- Collaborate with NSW Health to prepare a Road Map to address regional health care service delivery gaps.
- Develop a First Mover Infrastructure Program to provide enabling greenfield (residential land) infrastructure.
- In collaboration with the private sector, audit digital connectivity blackspots across the region.
- Pursue a City Deal in partnership with neighbouring Regions.

### Candidate Programs / Projects

- First Mover Infrastructure Program.
- Secure an agreement to locate a Senior Technical College in the Valla Growth Area.
- Provision of infrastructure for new Macksville Hospital.
- Upgrade to Bowraville Sewerage Treatment Plant.
- Nambucca Water Treatment Plant.

# Implementation Plan

Strategy implementation will be overseen by the General Manager of Nambucca Shire Council, drawing on staff and broader stakeholders as appropriate.

The effective implementation of the Strategy will involve the key stakeholders and regional community that contributed to its development, including State Government agencies and local entities.

The completion of this document is intended to be the first stage of an ongoing process where new specific actions to further progress towards the Vision are identified through application of the framework.

The General Manager will meet regularly to track progress and liaise with the Regional Director, North Coast, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet. These meetings could also be used to check the Strategy's progress and review against current grant opportunities.

After two years, a formal review of the Action Plan and associated governance processes will be initiated, producing a brief report card to be published as an addendum to the Regional Economic Development Strategy.

This will also provide an opportunity to update the Action Plan for new or modified actions in view of key economic, social, environmental and policy changes.



# Nambucca Shire Enablers Table

Strategies and Early Stage Actions				
Enablers	Increase Supply of Industrial Land	Develop a Vehicle Body Manufacturing Cluster Plan	Enhance Tourism and Agricultural Endowments	Grow the Region's Population and Internal Markets
People and Skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the supply chain network to support local manufacturing industries</li> </ul>		

# Nambucca Shire Enablers Table

Strategies and Early Stage Actions				
Enablers	Increase Supply of Industrial Land	Develop a Vehicle Body Manufacturing Cluster Plan	Enhance Tourism and Agricultural Endowments	Grow the Region's Population and Internal Markets
Government, regulation, services and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to engage and work with industry in developing proposals for new industrial land (such as Valla Employment Lands)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with local industries and training providers to review training gaps and align training courses to local industry needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for service improvements to improve connectivity between Regional Cities and Centres (Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie)</li> <li>Leverage Nambucca Shire's "Clean and Green" brand image to enhance its visitor economy</li> <li>Provide greater access to and awareness of indigenous and environmental heritage.</li> <li>Identify indigenous business and employment opportunities in consultation with the Aboriginal community and industry leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Department of Education to identify school asset investment opportunities to provide contemporary, future focused learning spaces.</li> <li>Collaborate with NSW Health to prepare a Road Map to address regional health care service delivery gaps.</li> <li>Pursue a City Deal in partnership with neighbouring Regions.</li> </ul>

# Nambucca Shire Enablers Table

Strategies and Early Stage Actions				
Enablers	Increase Supply of Industrial Land	Develop a Vehicle Body Manufacturing Cluster Plan	Enhance Tourism and Agricultural Endowments	Grow the Region's Population and Internal Markets
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for developing serviced Employment Lands (Industrial Precinct) in Valla Growth Area</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and determine the next steps for the Nambucca River Master Plan and develop a program business case</li> <li>Identify, cost and prioritise options for 'first mile' and 'last mile' connections to arterial roads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In collaboration with the private sector, audit digital connectivity blackspots across the region.</li> </ul>
Utilities				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a First Mover Infrastructure Program to provide enabling greenfield (residential land) infrastructure.</li> </ul>



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