



LIMESTONE COAST REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

JUNE 2018



**REGIONAL
AUSTRALIA
INSTITUTE**

**PATHFINDER
INITIATIVE**

Navigating opportunities for growth



LCLGA
Limestone Coast
Local Government
Association



**Regional
Development
Australia**
LIMESTONE COAST



City of
Mount Gambier



Naracoorte Lucindale Council
Better by Nature

District Council of
ROBE



FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

This document is the Action Plan that supports implementation of the Limestone Coast Regional Growth Strategy. It provides the foundations for regional leaders to prioritise and deliver projects that will make a significant impact creating a stronger, more vibrant regional economy.

The Regional Growth Strategy's six priority areas and associated strategic directions are expected to remain quite stable over the coming decade. In contrast, Action Plan projects should shift and evolve over time. This is to ensure the region can best position its self to respond effectively to new and emerging challenges and opportunities, while not losing sight of its overall strategic goals.

As a 'living' document, this Action Plan provides an opportunity for people in the Limestone Coast to submit new projects on an ongoing basis for consideration by the Limestone Coast Local Government Association (LCLGA) as a project of regional significance, particularly when it is designed to have an impact lifting economic performance in the region as a whole.

In this respect, this Action Plan does not limit the number, scale and scope of regional projects that can be included. However, it does provide an important frame for considering what constitutes a project of regional significance, by testing for:

- Alignment with the Regional Growth Strategy priority areas and strategic directions;
- Scale and distribution of regional economic benefits;
- Need for multi-agency, multi-government and industry support or collaboration; and
- Likelihood of success.

PRIORITY AREAS AND SUPPORTING ACTIONS

The Limestone Coast Regional Growth Strategy defines six priority areas for focus. They are:

1. Increase the working age population, by attracting and retaining more people across the region to fill key skills gaps and support vibrant and sustainable regional communities;
2. Building on the region's competitive advantage in agribusiness;
3. Capturing employment opportunities in growing sectors like healthcare and social assistance;
4. Supporting the development of a vibrant business ecosystem;
5. Region-wide collaboration to develop a more coordinated tourism market; and
6. Securing investment to deliver regional infrastructure priorities enabling growth.



1. INCREASE THE WORKING AGE POPULATION

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 1.1 Collaborate across the region to develop a targeted migration strategy that includes:**
- Addressing labour shortages and skill needs across the region;
 - Establishing a matching system creating direct links between employers and potential migrant workers;
 - Developing a systematic and integrated approach to settlement taking into account the needs for initial and ongoing settlement support; and
 - Advocating for additional resources to build local capacity and support services for settlement communities and new arrivals.
- 1.2 Support the development of social infrastructure** including hard (eg. health, education, arts and culture, sports and recreation facilities) and soft (eg. child care, community networks, cultural and arts activities), to maintain and improve the liveability of the Limestone Coast.
- 1.3 Enable greater retention of the region's youth** by fostering stronger links and partnerships between local industries and regional students, exposing them early in their career decision making processes to local pathways.
- 1.4 Encourage older workers to remain active in the workforce** beyond traditional retirement age to mitigate increasing workforce and skills shortages. This may include encouraging transitional arrangements such as moving to part time, casual work and volunteering activities that sustain and build the regions social and human capital.

| Strategic Direction | Action | Project Leader(s) |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 | PRIORITY PROJECT: Develop and implement a migration program to attract new people into the region, targeting immediate labour and skills shortage opportunities, as well as a larger regionally planned and coordinated program at scale over the medium to longer term. | LCLGA and its seven member councils |
| 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4 | Deliver a Workforce Development Plan, detailing current and emerging workforce gaps, and use it to support regionally coordinated, proactive migration, skills and labour supply programs at scale - targeting priority needs across the region. | RDALC |
| 1.1 and 1.3 | Proactively identify immediate skills and labour shortages in the region, and then specifically target them with labour attraction initiatives that promote regional employment and workforce participation opportunities. | RDALC |

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| 1.1 | Continue to implement the 'Your Professional Network' pilot program encouraging greater population retention across the region. | RDALC |
| 1.1 | Implement the 'Regional Issues, Problems, and Ideas Taskforce' pilot program (RIPIT) to cultivate greater awareness of what the region has to offer, supporting population retention and attraction. | PIRSA, supported by DE and LCEDG |
| 1.2 | Redevelopment and upgrade the Mount Gambier Airport to improve landside and airside infrastructure, as well as the quality and variety of the region's air transport services available. | District Council of Grant |
| 1.2 | Promote the 'Naracoorte Driving Growth Linking Industry' project to construct a community centre and develop a commercial/industrial hub. | Naracoorte-Lucindale Council |
| 1.2 | Redevelop the Naracoorte Sports Centre to improve social infrastructure, increase community participation, health and wellbeing. | Naracoorte-Lucindale Council |
| 1.2 | Collaborate to secure funding for implementation of the Limestone Coast Regional Academy. | LCLGA in partnership with its seven member councils |
| 1.2 | Collaborate to secure funding for detailed planning and implementation of the Mt Gambier Indoor Aquatic and Recreation Centre project. | City of Mt Gambier |



2. BUILD ON COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN AGRIBUSINESS

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 2.1 Lift SME capability throughout the region** with an emphasis on value-adding and small business skilling. With the vast majority of businesses in the region family operated or small to medium in size, it is critical they have the tools and skills to explore new opportunities, adapt to changing circumstances and reach their full potential.
- 2.2 Foster greater collaboration along the supply chain** to support diversification, research and development, and innovation in the agribusiness industry. This includes building stronger networks and industry clusters to improve the capability of agribusiness SMEs across the Limestone Coast region.
- 2.3 Partner with industry and regional agribusinesses** to investigate and implement industry led approaches to addressing skills and training needs. With a gap in the provision of quality, locally available training options, creative approaches are needed to meet existing and new demand for industry skills and education programs in the region.
- 2.4 Collaborate to increase awareness of the region’s quality agricultural produce** by delivering coordinated, strategically focused marketing and regional branding of locally made value added produce. This includes building and applying brand management frameworks to ensure ‘clean, green, high quality’ brand values are consistently strengthened and clearly differentiate the Limestone Coast’s value added produce in domestic and international markets.

| Strategic Direction | Action | Project Leader(s) |
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| 2.1, 2.2 and 2.4 | PRIORITY PROJECT: Develop an agribusiness SME focused innovation network and ‘hub’ to support collaboration on value-adding activities, cluster development, collaborative marketing, supply chain opportunities, knowledge sharing and information exchange. | Wattle Range Council in partnership with the Naracoorte-Lucindale, Grant, Tatiara, Kingston and Robe councils |
| 2.1 and 2.2 | Deliver ‘On-Farm Dairy Business Assessments’ to inform production capacity growth and investment opportunities. | District Council of Grant, Wattle Range Council |
| 2.2 | Region-wide collaboration to support successful implementation of the ‘Limestone Coast Red Meat Cluster’ project priorities. | Red Meat Cluster, Naracoorte-Lucindale Council, and LCLGA |
| 2.2 | Support the Mount Gambier ‘Forest Products Innovation Hub’ to expand research and development opportunities in the forestry sector. | City of Mount Gambier |

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| 2.2 | Advocate and lobby for the consistent supply of locally grown commodity based forestry products to be made available for local value adding timber product industry development and growth. | LCLGA and its seven member councils |
| 2.3 | Support the 'Forestry Industry Employment Project' to provide subsidised training for those wanting to upskill. | RDALC |
| 2.3 | Re-develop and upgrade competitive regional live stock exchange sale yard infrastructure and associated services, with an emphasis on enhanced safety, efficiency and primary production outcomes | Naracoorte-Lucindale Council and District Council of Grant |
| 2.3 | Implement the 'Driving Growth, Linking Industry' project to create a linkages across the heavy vehicle network and support the region's agricultural sector. | Naracoorte-Lucindale Council |
| 2.3 | Continue development of the 'Bioenergy Roadmap' project to explore feasibility and implementation of biomass energy options across the region. | RDALC in partnership with Renewables SA |
| 2.4 | Initiate the 'Global Market Analysis' project to quantify and qualify the opportunity and value of potential export markets for agribusiness in the Limestone Coast, including the actions and investments required to convert these opportunities into tangible economic outcomes. | RDALC in collaboration with TradeStart |
| 2.4 | Continue development of the Limestone Coast Brand and the brand management framework required for its appropriate application to value added agricultural produce; and work with agribusiness SMEs to systematically implement it. | LCLGA in partnership with its seven member councils |



3. CAPTURE EXPECTED GAINS IN THE HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE SECTOR

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 3.1 Promote the value of Healthcare and Social Assistance as a high growth industry to the region.** As demand for different healthcare services change, it is critical to ensure the community understands and recognises the importance of these new opportunities as potential career paths.
- 3.2 Build stronger pathways** between schools, training organisations and the regional health and aged care industry to meet growing demand for health services skills across the industry. In addition, explore the potential for older workers in the region to retrain or upskill in the health services sector to meet growing regional demand.
- 3.3 Coordinate effort across the region to attract medical and allied health professionals** to overcome skills shortages. A whole of community approach from local leaders and businesses is required to support targeted recruitment and ensure positive experiences to encourage long-term retention.
- 3.4 Facilitate NDIS rollout initiatives** such as the NDIS Workforce Development Hub supporting service providers, stimulate local service provision across each LGA, and promote the disability (and aged care) sectors as rewarding career paths.
- 3.5 Support the attraction of retirees and investment in aged care infrastructure,** including marketing as an ‘age-friendly’ region with business opportunities available in a broad range of associated health, accommodation and recreation services.

| Strategic Direction | Action | Project Leader(s) |
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| 3.4 | PRIORITY PROJECT: Deliver the ‘NDIS Disability Workforce Hub’ to grow workforce capacity and capability in the Health and Social Assistance Sector across the region. | RDALC |
| 3.1, 3.3, 3.5 | Incorporate the attraction of retirees and investment in aged care infrastructure, health and recreation services as a specific opportunity in the Limestone Coast region Investment Prospectus. | RDALC in partnership with LCLGA and its seven member councils |
| 3.2, 3.3, and 3.5 | Develop a Healthcare Hub to foster growth in demand for healthcare and attract investment in aged care and allied health services. | Naracoorte-Lucindale Council |



4. SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VIBRANT BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 4.1 **Promote entrepreneurial activity in the region** by producing engaging stories about local businesses innovating, value-adding, or doing things differently to inspire a regional culture of entrepreneurship.
- 4.2 **Support region-wide access to business upskilling and mentoring for SMEs.** Ensuring that programs to lift business capability are delivered regionally and tackling connectivity constraints (both physical and digital) will be critical to lifting the region's 'business dynamo'.
- 4.3 **Encourage businesses across the region to position themselves as 'employers-of-choice';** for example - by developing training and career pathways for prospective employees and fostering an appealing workplace culture in order to retain regional talent.
- 4.4 **Raise the level of digital skilling across the region** to ensure businesses are able to take advantage of digital economy growth opportunities, respond to the challenges of increasing online competition globally, and emerging trends towards automation. While lack of digital connectivity can be a constraint, ensuring regional businesses have the technology and technological knowledge required to participate in the digital economy when they are connected (eg. online marketing, software as a service, and e-commerce) will be vital.
- 4.5 **Expand awareness and take-up of programs lifting business performance,** including those delivered by local, state and federal governments; such as grants, assistance packages, industry development and export programs throughout the Limestone Coast.

| Strategic Direction | Action | Project Leader(s) |
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| 4.1 and 4.5. | PRIORITY PROJECT: Develop and implement prestigious Limestone Coast Business Innovation Awards; calling out for entries right across the region, bringing innovators and entrepreneurs together, showcasing the 'top 10' at a regional, state and national level, role modelling their success, and inspiring others to also take action on innovation as an urgent business imperative that is valued and respected as a regional economic growth and development priority. | LCLGA in partnership with its seven member councils, State and Federal MPs, SA department of state development and RDALC |
| 4.1, 4.2, 4.4 and 4.5 | Lead discussions and forums with SMEs in the region on the importance of taking a proactive approach to not just taking up fast broadband technology, but also learning the new skills required to put it into action. This includes raising awareness of how businesses can create significant growth by enabling innovation in the | RDALC with support the from the Limestone Coast region's seven councils |

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| | development of new products and services, achieving efficiency gains, and new ways to reach, engage and stay connected with customers. | |
| 4.1 | Implement the Limestone Coast Leadership Program (LCLP) to establish an emerging and existing leaders' program supported by an active alumni network and regional businesses. | LCEDG |
| 4.1 | Develop an innovative approach to waste management within the region to attract investment and new business ventures. | LCLGA |
| 4.2 and 4.5 | Implement the 'eNVision Incubator' to deliver business skilling and mentoring programs region-wide; providing services to a pipeline of enterprises that are well positioned to stimulate new growth and jobs. | Flinders University, City of Mount Gambier, AusIndustry |
| 4.2 and 4.5 | Take action to proactively identify and enrol eligible businesses with growth potential across the region in the 'Small Business Support Services Program', including measuring the impact of this work by benchmarking change in participating businesses performance over time. | RDALC |
| 4.3 and 4.4 | Engage with the retail sector to conduct an internal and external analysis of the competitive environment, specifically identifying the challenges and opportunities for retail in the Limestone Coast, and the priorities for action required to ensure ongoing sustainability and growth. | RDALC |



5. COLLABORATE TO BUILD TOURISM CAPACITY IN THE REGION

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 5.1 **Resource and strengthen the capability of the Limestone Coast's regional tourism organisational framework (RTO)**, enabling strong leadership, management, coordination and delivery of regional tourism activities lifting visitor numbers, length of stay and spend per head.
- 5.2 **Through the RTO, deliver regionally coordinated destination marketing activities**, clearly targeting highest priority domestic and international opportunities for growth, aligned with well-defined regional 'hero experiences' and associated high quality local tourism offerings.
- 5.3 **Deliver regionally coordinated tourism destination and industry development activities**, through the RTO, in partnership with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), Limestone Coast region councils and local tourism businesses.
- 5.4 **Seek investment in regional tourism infrastructure, marketing, destination and industry development activities** that are aligned to strategic goals and lift the overall quality, variety and packaging of offerings available to visitors in domestic and international markets.

| Strategic Direction | Action | Project Leader(s) |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 5.1 | PRIORITY PROJECT: Resource and implement the LCLGA regional tourism framework to create a coordinated, strategically focused, high impact Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO), able to effectively lead, manage and deliver regional tourism marketing, destination and industry development priorities in partnership with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), Limestone Coast councils, and local tourism businesses. | LCLGA in partnership with its seven member councils and the South Australian Tourism Commission |
| 5.2 | Develop and implement a Destination Marketing Strategy (DMS) for the region defining: current tourism visitor numbers, length of stay and spend per head performance measures, including future stretch targets; quantified and qualified target markets as priority areas for growth; the region's market positioning, differentiation and core brand promise as it relates to key markets; hero experiences and supporting offerings aligned with key markets; supporting visitor information services, retail and trade sales channels to market; and tactical plans for action. | LCLGA in partnership with its seven member councils and the South Australian Tourism Commission |

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| 5.2 and 5.4 | Implement the Limestone Coast 'Mixed Dozen' interactive wine trails project to grow self-drive tourism visitor numbers, length of stay and spend per head. | Coonawarra Grape and Wine Incorporated |
| 5.2 and 5.4 | Implement priorities identified in the 'Limestone Coast Regional Trails Implementation Feasibility Study' including the Coastal Trail, Rail Trail and Mackillop/Woods (Aussie Camino) Trail. | LCLGA in partnership with its seven member councils and the South Australian Tourism Commission |
| 5.2 | Develop and implement highly marketable nature based tourism experiences by capitalising on the Limestone Coast's World Heritage listed cave and fossil assets. This includes implementation of the 'Naracoorte Caves Connection' and Australian Research Centre (ARC) linkage projects, | LCLGA and Naracoorte-Lucindale Council |
| 5.3 and 5.4 | Develop and implement a Destination Tourism Plan (DTP) for the region defining: priorities for new tourism product and experience development; packaging and bundling opportunities; tourism infrastructure needs; priorities for tourism industry skills development; trade and market ready program priorities; and tactical plans for action. | LCLGA in partnership with its seven member councils and the South Australian Tourism Commission |



6 SECURING INVESTMENT TO DELIVER REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES ENABLING GROWTH

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 6.1 **Ensure delivery of the Regional Infrastructure Audit** identifies and prioritises the hard (physical) and soft (social) infrastructure needs of the Limestone Coast, enabling a regionally coordinated approach to securing the investment required for implementation.
- 6.2 **Ensure the development and launch of the Regional Investment Prospectus** is responsive to the priorities identified in the Limestone Coast Regional Growth Strategy and Infrastructure Audit, and takes a regionally coordinated, market focused approach to investment prospecting, promotion and implementation.
- 6.3 **Coordinate regional advocacy and lobbying efforts** to speak with one voice in pursuit of highest priority 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure investment needs.
- 6.4 **Leverage State and Federal Government initiatives** to secure the investment required to maintain and upgrade existing regional infrastructure facilitating economic growth.

| Strategic Direction | Action | Project Leader(s) |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|
| 6.1 | PRIORITY PROJECT: Undertake a regional infrastructure audit to identify and consolidate key infrastructure gaps across the region and prioritise needs. | RDALC |
| 6.2 | Develop the regional investment prospectus to showcase priority investment opportunities across the Limestone Coast. | RDALC |

IMPLEMENTATION

This Action Plan, combined with the LCLGA's more detailed project assessment and prioritisation processes, focuses effort and resources on the things most likely to deliver a win of strategic significance for the region.

Working through the existing LCLGA governance structure, the Limestone Coast Regional Economic Development Group (EDG) and Regional Tourism Organisational Framework (RTO) will work together as the 'engine room' taking action on implementation.

The Regional Growth Strategy and this Action Plan make up an important part of the LCLGA's Strategic Plan and Work Plan, and by embracing the processes these implementation groups already use, set their agenda for action. This includes working together to prioritise and confirm leadership and resources required to successfully implement each specific item identified.

This Action Plan also focuses the region's attention on the 'top six' Priority Projects requiring the majority of effort and support from regional business, government and community leaders.

These are the 'big game' items on the 'must do' list and require the majority of regional leadership and resources to successfully implement them. Working through the LCLGA, planning and action to deliver these Priority Projects must be a central focus, drawing on the resources of member organisations and those in the wider community, business and government network to get them done.

- At the time of finalising this Growth Strategy (June 2018), the 'Top 6' Priority Projects for the Limestone Coast Region include:

PRIORITY AREA 1

Invigorate the working age population, by attracting and retaining more people across the region to fill key skills gaps and support vibrant and sustainable regional communities.

Priority Project: 'Limestone Coast Population Growth Strategy' delivering a migration program to attract new people into the region, targeting immediate labour and skills shortage opportunities, as well as a larger regionally planned and coordinated program at scale over the medium to longer term.

PRIORITY AREA 2

Building on the region's competitive advantage in agribusiness.

Priority Project: 'Limestone Coast Agribusiness Innovation Hub' to support collaboration on value-adding activities, cluster development, collaborative marketing, supply chain opportunities, knowledge sharing and information exchange.

PRIORITY AREA 3

Capturing employment opportunities in growing sectors like healthcare and social assistance.

Priority Project: **'Limestone Coast NDIS Workforce Hub'** to grow workforce capacity and capability in the Health and Social Assistance Sector across the region.

PRIORITY AREA 4

Supporting the development of a vibrant business ecosystem.

Priority Project: **'Limestone Coast Business Innovation Awards'** calling out for entries right across the region, bringing innovators and entrepreneurs together, showcasing the 'top 10' at a regional, state and national level, role modelling their success, and inspiring others to also take action on innovation as an urgent business imperative that is valued and respected as a regional economic growth and development priority.

PRIORITY AREA 5

Region-wide collaboration to develop a more coordinated tourism market.

Priority Project: **'Limestone Coast Regional Tourism Framework'** creating a coordinated, strategically focused, high impact Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO), able to effectively lead, manage and deliver regional tourism marketing, destination and industry development priorities in partnership with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), Limestone Coast councils, and local tourism businesses.

PRIORITY AREA 6

Secure investment to deliver regional infrastructure priorities enabling growth.

Priority Project: **'Limestone Coast Regional Infrastructure Audit'** identifying and prioritising key infrastructure gaps across the region, enabling an informed, focused and coordinated regional advocacy and lobbying effort to secure infrastructure investment and implementation.

To read the Regional Growth Strategy in full, get Action Plan implementation and project progress updates, please go to the LCLGA website at www.lclga.sa.gov.au