

# BUSINESS BUILDING BLOCKS

FOR INNOVATION & TRANSFORMATION



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A BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY FOR  
THE MID WEST

# THE FUTURE OF MID WEST REGION

'The pursuit of a truly diversified regional economy (Mid West): The Mid West has the basic ingredients in place to be a truly diversified and hence economically stable region. The region has strengths in Primary Industries and mining; a well-functioning port; and a geographic location that makes

it well-suited to playing the role of a hub or stopover destination. Geraldton has the characteristics of a large regional city, within which education and retail trade are prominent (as they are in most cities). Development efforts should focus on the building of agglomeration and networks so that growth may become self-sustaining. The facilitation of innovation and deep pools of skilled labour is possible and would support the viability of industry in the region.'

**Regional Development Trust – 2015  
Collective Review of Regional  
Blueprints**



**AT THE HEART OF THE  
REGION'S ECONOMY  
ARE MORE THAN 5,000  
SMALL BUSINESSES.  
THEY REPRESENT  
OVER 96% OF MID WEST  
BUSINESSES AND EMPLOY  
APPROXIMATELY 45%  
OF ALL PRIVATE SECTOR  
WORKERS.**

Small Business Commissioner,  
information provided for Blueprint



# BUSINESS BUILDING BLOCKS FOR INNOVATION & TRANSFORMATION

A Business Development Strategy for the Mid West

“In 2050, the Mid West has an economically diverse and dynamic business sector that captures the productive capacity of the region and converts opportunity into employment.”

MID WEST REGIONAL BLUEPRINT

This Mid West Regional Blueprint vision for business and industry, highlights the outcomes required of “Business Building Blocks for Innovation & Transformation”, a business development strategy for the Mid West.

This Blueprint vision together with extensive regional stakeholder consultation is the foundation of this strategy aimed at guiding State Government investment in the Mid West Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) sector to deliver a strong and sustainable economy.

“Business Building Blocks for Innovation & Transformation” was developed under the leadership of the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry in partnership with industry and business leaders, Local Government Authorities, Mid West Development Commission, Business Local and Regional Development Australia Mid West Gascoyne.

The principles guiding this strategy include:

## 1.

### FOCUSING ON OUR STRENGTHS

The Mid West has competitive advantages that provide a strong basis for sustained economic growth.

## 2.

### THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Investment in areas where government intervention is required to produce optimal outcomes at the local level.

## 3.

### FILLING THE GAPS

Targeting programs that minimise duplication and fill the assistance gaps for the sector.

# 5

The strategy identifies five key priorities (Building Blocks) for investment required to enable the region's business sector to meet challenges and seize opportunities for growth, diversification and to create jobs.

Under each priority, a number of key actions were identified and tested with stakeholders. From the 33 actions featured in the strategy, the most effective and constructive "first step" actions were ranked, producing seven key initiatives that make up the "Building Blocks for Innovation & Transformation".

**DIAGRAM:**  
FIVE BUILDING BLOCKS  
FOR INVESTMENT





# KEY INITIATIVES

The strategy for investment includes seven key initiatives with a defined start and conclusion that have been identified as the most effective “first steps” to move the Mid West SME sector towards the desired future as mapped out in the Mid West Regional Blueprint. These initiatives should not be considered in isolation or as a prioritised list of actions but as a complete suite of transformational steps required to grow Mid West businesses.

**These initiatives were defined as critical first steps because they:**

- **Deliver distinct and lasting regional benefits**
- **Require regional collaboration and intervention**
- **Can lead to further direct investments**
- **Are propulsive in nature in their ability to deliver growth and activity for Mid West businesses**
- **Have the potential to articulate a positive message regarding the development and growth of the Mid West**
- **Promote awareness of the region**
- **Provide returns to the public over the longer term**
- **Benefit local businesses directly**
- **Require public sector investment**

“Business Building Blocks for Innovation & Transformation” aligns with the Mid West Regional Blueprint; Royalties for Regions Policy Objectives and the Greater Geraldton Growth Plan

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# 1.

## INVESTMENT IN LEADERSHIP

### INVEST MID WEST

The Mid West wants to retain and attract business to the region. This initiative involves the establishment of dedicated resources under the Mid West Development Commission Governance Model. Through this business concierge concept businesses/investors seeking to make informed location decisions for investment in the Mid West will have a clear “first entry point” into the Region. INVEST Mid West will target national and multinational companies, including finance and borrowing institutions, to invest and reinvest in the region and build their presence around the Region’s opportunities. Marketing and positioning of the Region’s investment ready projects, with targeted initiatives that showcase the region’s location advantages will also be a key function.

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# 2.

## INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE

### BUSH BUSINESS BUILDER PROGRAM

Sub regions within the Mid West region operate in unique and challenging environments with high costs, low revenue growth and cyclical industry impacts. This initiative has two parts:

1. A focused skills development program to support rural and remote enterprises to increase their competitiveness and profitability (with specific elements for Aboriginal Economic Development).
2. The development of a model to establish cooperative purchasing opportunities to overcome locational and isolation barriers.

The initiative complements the offerings provided through the Small Business Development Corporation’s Business Local program.

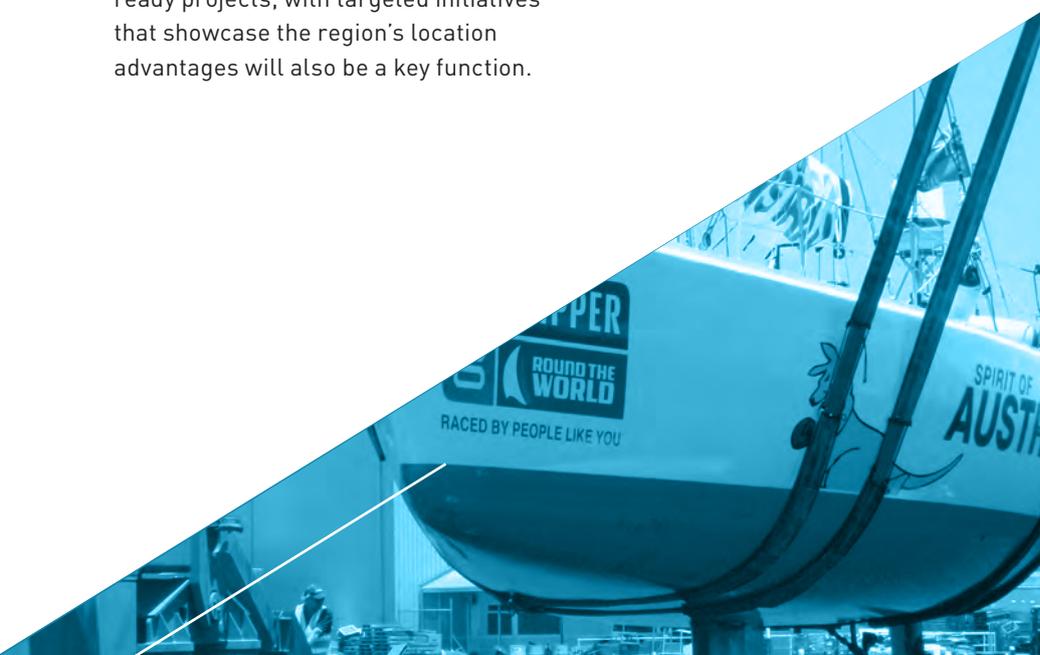
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# 3.

## INVESTMENT IN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### GROUNDWELL ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

The Mid West Region has a range of businesses with high-growth potential constrained in their ability to deliver this growth through capability shortcomings, lack of locally sourced equity capital (and debt finance) and accompanying advice. This program is designed to assist in overcoming these hurdles by improving a business’s prospects of enhanced growth by being properly prepared to discuss equity investment in their businesses. The initiative also contributes to increasing awareness of the Region and its investment potential. The program is contestable and designed to cater for 30 high growth potential innovative enterprises.





## CLUSTERING FOR GROWTH

Geraldton has long been a service centre for the mining, agricultural and fishing Industries. The establishment of a 200 tonne heavy boat lifter has reinvigorated Geraldton's maritime services industry. This initiative proposes the establishment of a **maritime industries cluster** that builds on this to align cooperative effort, create jobs, skills and become a renowned centre for maritime and related industries. This project will also act as a pilot for the support of further potential regional industry clusters being developed.

## GROW MID WEST BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

The Mid West has an emerging visitor economy. This program has been designed to maximise the growth potential of tourism businesses, particularly in the retail sector. It provides access to skills development and mentoring services tailored to the specific needs of tourism operators and associated service providers to enhance the quality, value, range and appeal of experiences for visitors to the region. The initiative complements the offerings provided through the Small Business Development Corporation's Business Local program.

# 4. INVESTMENT IN PLACES

## INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM

The establishment of appropriate industrial and commercial facilities is essential for the development of profitable and competitive businesses, industries and regions, however the capital costs of establishing enabling infrastructure (headworks) can make a project unviable. This competitive funding program proposes support for innovative infrastructure solutions that demonstrate significant business and sustainable environmental outcomes and create or enhance the conditions for growth.

# 5. INVESTMENT IN MARKETING

## NORTH BY MID WEST

An initiative designed to increase awareness, access and connectivity to Northern Australian markets (North West and East) for Mid West businesses. It proposes the establishment of business development model to support the Mid West Region and its businesses to take advantage of their location and infrastructures through greater access, awareness and connectivity to the North.

“BUSINESS BUILDING BLOCKS FOR INNOVATION & TRANSFORMATION” CAN ACCELERATE THE REAL GROWTH RATE OF AFFECTED MID WEST BUSINESSES. THE BEST CASE SCENARIO IS A REAL NET STIMULUS OF

➔ **\$21 MILLION**

➔ OR A COST BENEFIT RATIO

**2.90**

ACIL ALLEN CONSULTING



Business Building Blocks for Innovation & Transformation is the direct result of the Mid West Regional Blueprint process undertaken in 2013/14 and launched in 2015. The Mid West Regional Blueprint is this region's growth and development plan that proposes a number of high level goals and strategies. It identified five key pillars through which targeted development strategies and subsequent investments would be made to grow the region for a population scenario of 190,000 by 2050. A critical element identified in the Economic Development Pillar was "Business and Industry Development", as one of the key focus areas that would drive the region's long term economic growth.



## STRATEGY PARTNERS

