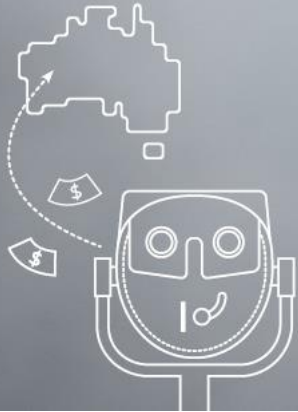


# The **2030** Big Picture Series

Mid West Economic Summit



## PERSPECTIVES ON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE MID WEST

# Opportunities in the face of challenges

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**Restrictions introduced due to COVID-19 may be temporary but the knock on effects will be lasting.**

A post GFC decline in mining activities and the resulting population exodus has impacted a number of industries.

Organisations should consider investing in the areas of tourism and hospitality, agriculture, transportation, and renewable energy production.

The **success** of all industries will depend, at least in part, on efficient and affordable air transport.



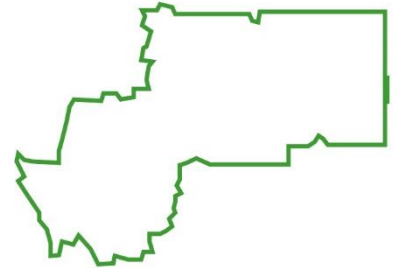
Organisations need to consider different opportunities, different ways of marketing the organisation, and different ways of doing business to become more efficient and attractive to customers and investors.

# The Mid West Region

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## The Region

- Midwest region covers 478,000 square km
- Diversified economy due to differences in climate
  - Reliable annual rainfall – broadacre farming
  - Water supply – horticulture
  - Inland – mining
  - High value fishing industry (Western Rock Lobster, Kingfish farm)
- Highly connected NBN
- Education institutions – TAFE & Geraldton University Centre
- Parts of the region are not well connected and these areas can be disadvantaged due to shift in digital economy
- Tourism sector is starting to show signs of growth
  - Abrolhos Adventures, Abrolhos Islands, fishing, Aboriginal heritage, arts and culture, camping, wildflowers, developing foreshore and inner city



# The Mid West Region

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## Population

- Population more than 50,000 and made up of 17 local government authorities
- MWDC managed \$220 million of funding over 7 years for infrastructure projects and initiatives in the region
- Mid West region is attractive for temperate climate, housing affordability and general liveability
- With sustained focus on jobs program and speeding up travel between Perth and Geraldton, the Mid West could become an attractive location for tourists and residents
- COVID-19 will have an effect moving forward and how will it affect the Mid West?

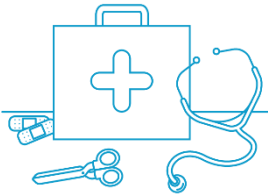


# The Mid West Region

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## Health

- Remote and not all have access to medical services
- 11 hospitals, 59 general practices and two Aboriginal medical services
- Mid West residents suffer from a number of health issues:
  - 35% over age 16 characterised as obese
  - 1.4 times higher rate for alcohol-related hospitalisations
  - 1.4 times higher rate of lung cancer
  - 2.4 times the death rate for transport accidents
  - More than half (53%) of deaths under 75 were avoidable
  - 74% of the population was able to receive hospital care

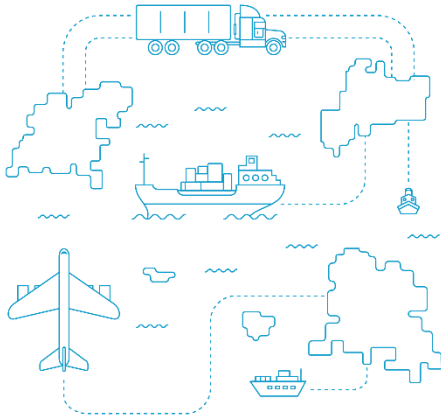


# The Mid West Region

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## Transport

- Relatively remote geography of the Mid West necessitates a reliance on a mix of personal transport, coach and airline
- Road haulage for many products in agriculture, mining and freight
- Virgin Australia has pulled out of servicing Geraldton (COVID-19 related), which means there is little competition and very few flight options



# Tourism



THE MID WEST TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY HAS IDENTIFIED NUMEROUS GAPS THAT CAN BE ADDRESSED IN THE MID WEST'S TOURISM, POTENTIALLY CREATING **STRONG OPPORTUNITIES** FOR SAVVY BUSINESSES.

- COVID-19 stop to tourism around the world
- State Government funded \$12.85 million to support the tourism industry and regional aviation
- Tours & Accommodation businesses were shut down due to COVID-19 with knock on effect for hospitality and retail
- Tourism will be heavily affected for some time as the Mid West was predominantly relying on Chinese and European tourists



# Tourism



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- Opening of the borders had a positive effect on the Mid West
- West Australians are exploring the regions as they are locked into Western Australia
- The tourism industry picked up boosting accommodation, retail and hospitality
- Many initiatives have been offered to boost our economy promoting many more tourism options
- Abrolhos Islands, Kalbarri Skywalk & Geraldton Conference Centre

# Transport



THE NEW GERALDTON AIRPORT  
**UPGRADE** WILL PROVIDE AN  
ALTERNATIVE LANDING AIRPORT &  
**COST EFFECTIVE** SOLUTION FOR  
PASSENGERS & CARGO PLANES.

- Geraldton Airport has been upgraded to accommodate larger aircraft providing alternative landing airport for passenger jets diverted from Perth
- This capability will reduce costs for passenger and cargo planes
- Brings in new capabilities for the region in terms of transport
- Could unlock the Mid West to other regions within Western Australia

# Aquaculture



**THE EVER-GROWING DEMAND FOR AUSTRALIAN FRESH SEAFOOD WILL SEE THE SECTOR BOUNCE BACK AS RESTAURANTS & HOTELS REOPEN BOTH LOCALLY & INTERNATIONALLY.**

- Fishing industry has been impacted by COVID-19 as vast majority of crayfish were exported to China
- Impact of social distancing and closure of food service industry caused price of crayfish to decline
- The ban by China on importing of Crayfish has caused a further decline in the value of crayfish
- It is expected that this industry will bounce back as there has always been a demand for Australian fresh seafood

# Aquaculture



**THE EVER-GROWING DEMAND FOR AUSTRALIAN FRESH SEAFOOD WILL SEE THE SECTOR BOUNCE BACK AS RESTAURANTS & HOTELS REOPEN BOTH LOCALLY & INTERNATIONALLY.**

- In 2016 Aquaculture operations started in the Mid West to create more opportunities for the West Australian fisheries market
- In 2018 Huon secured a lease for 2,200 ha to establish a farming zone for Yellowtail Kingfish
- The program is expected to create 3,000 direct and indirect jobs when fully operational
- Currently the program is still in development with plans and other activities being finalised

# Agriculture



MID WEST FARMS & FARM WORKER ISOLATION HAS ALLOWED WA AGRICULTURE TO REMAIN **LARGELY UNAFFECTED** BY DIRECT IMPACTS OF COVID-19.

- Because of relative isolation of farms and farm workers agriculture is likely to remain unaffected by COVID-19.
- Farming operations continued and workers are generally safe from COVID-19 infection
- With less backpackers it has been difficult to find help during the busy times
- The Horticultural Industry has been more impacted by the backpacker shortage, rather than broad-acre farming

# Renewable Energy



THE MID WEST IS AN EMERGING FRONTRUNNER AS A CENTRE FOR DEVELOPING **HYDROGEN POWER**, WHICH REQUIRES WATER, POWER & LAND - ALL OF WHICH CAN BE PROVIDED IN THE MID WEST.

- This is a great new initiative which has been explored by the State government and fits in with renewable energy targets
- This is the kind of innovation that will take the Mid West forward
- Leading to the creation of many new industries

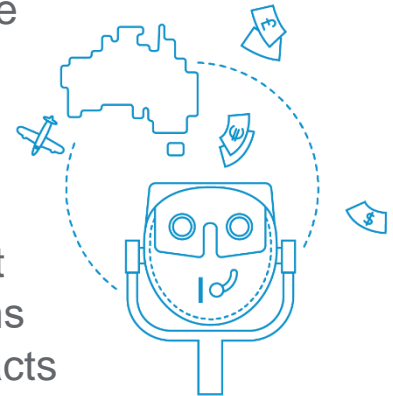
Where to from here?

# Focus on **local** rather than international

**Australia's recovery from COVID-19 will be driven largely by local rather than international demand.**

Invest in **Australian products** as the weak Australian dollar begins to encourage overseas investors to buy key Australian exports.

COVID-19 has clearly illustrated that Australia's international supply chains are highly vulnerable to market impacts – local supply chains will be **essential**.



Where to from here?

# The start of a new normal

The outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic will be a new normal for businesses.

Those that are prepared to **innovate** and think **creatively** will come out on top.

Many businesses were struggling before COVID-19, so they can now either seize the **opportunity** to reshape for the **future**, or accept the reality that their business model is unsustainable.

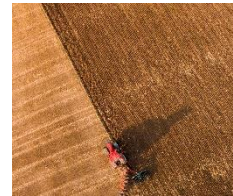




# Charting a course for 2030

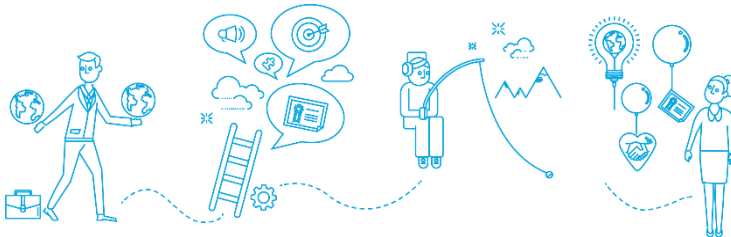
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- Innovation like the proposed hydrogen plant will bring new business to the Mid West and place us on the international map
- Getting good workers into the region has been a challenge. Improving transport, health facilities and education can attract more skilled workers to the Mid West.
- If the Education System can provide a pathway with the industry sectors this will help towards having a ready workforce
- We have so many diverse opportunities in the Mid West and it is time to embrace them and work together as a community to get the best for our region



# RSM in the local community

- RSM has taken the initiative to understand the Mid West region better and prepared the new **2030 Big Picture Series Publication**
- We are invested in the local community and we support the local community
- If we all have a spirit of supporting local and contributing to our local community we will become an even stronger region
- The Mid West is resilient and very diverse in its economic activity
- We need to improve certain areas as a collective and build an even better Mid West for the future





Questions  
and  
answers?

Thank you for your  
time and attention.

2030 Big Picture Series – Mid West Publication  
Now available online

