



Gold Coast Waterways
Management Strategy
2021–2030

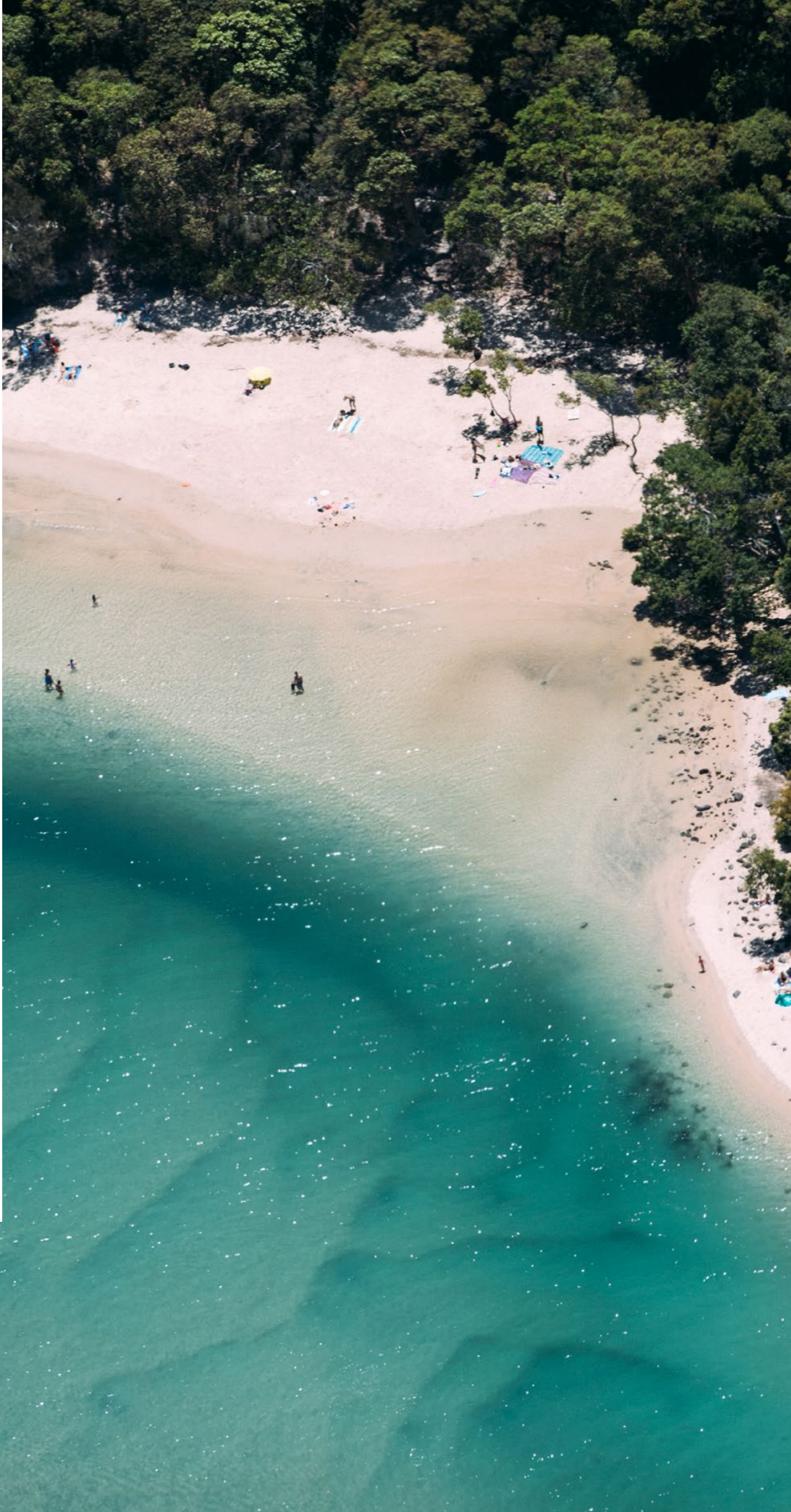
OUR WATERWAYS CITY



Queensland
Government

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Gold Coast Waterways Authority acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional custodians, the Yugambeh peoples of South East Queensland, including the Kombumerri, Mununjali, Wangerriburra, Bullongin and other clans, and their Elders past present and emerging. We recognise their unique and ongoing spiritual and cultural connection with the land and waters of the Gold Coast area.

We also acknowledge the many Aboriginal people from other regions, as well as Torres Strait and South Sea Islander people, who now live in the local area and who have made an important contribution to the community.

Aboriginal people have called this area home for thousands of years, travelling up and down the Gold Coast's rivers and creeks, the coastline and into Moreton Bay (Quandamooka) – island-hopping, food gathering, trading and visiting friends and family. The waterways environment has been, and continues to be, interwoven with all aspects of social, cultural, spiritual and economic life.

Coastal resources continue to be important to today's communities. Cultural responsibilities and rights to harvest remain an integral part of ongoing connection to country and culture as it always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land and water.

Message from the Minister

The Gold Coast's waterways are not only a natural asset for our community, they're a major contributor to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of Queensland's second-largest city.

They support thousands of jobs in the marine, tourism and recreational and boating industries, people live alongside them and play in them, and they are home to diverse animal and plant species.

The Gold Coast Waterways Strategy 2021-2030 will ensure the ongoing, sustainable management of this important natural asset through integrated planning and ongoing engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community.

It builds on the Queensland Government's \$130 million investment in the Gold Coast Waterways Authority since 2015 to upgrade and maintain our waterways, as well as create jobs at a time when we need them most: during Queensland's economic recovery from COVID-19.

It helps deliver on the Palaszczuk Government's long-term objectives for the community which are built around Unite and Recover – Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan. That includes supporting jobs, growing our regions, building Queensland, investing in skills, and protecting our environment.

The Strategy focuses on three themes for our city's waterways being Access, Connections and Destinations.

These three focus areas aim to ensure the Gold Coast continues to embrace our waterways as it transitions to a waterways city.

This will support the expansion and diversification of the Gold Coast's economy.

It will do this by supporting the growth of marine industries and a skilled workforce, improving access to the waterways through integrated planning and the provision of infrastructure aligned to community needs, encouraging innovation in planning and management, and promoting the waterways as a destination to locals and visitors.

The Strategy will be delivered through the Gold Coast Waterways Management Program and will align with other Queensland Government initiatives including The Spit Master Plan and the Queensland Superyacht Strategy.

I look forward to seeing GCWA's progress in delivering on this Strategy and to seeing the community truly embrace the Gold Coast as a waterways city.



Hon. Mark Bailey MP
Minister for Transport & Main Roads

Message from the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Board

The Gold Coast is a spectacular place to live, work and play with an inland waterways network that stretches from Jumpinpin in the north, to Tallebudgera and Currumbin Creeks in the south.

As a Board, we are committed to setting and leading priorities. With an emphasis on community input, we seek to guide waterways planning now, and into the future.

The Gold Coast Waterways Management Strategy 2021-2030 celebrates the Gold Coast's status as a waterways city and encourages locals and visitors to make the most of all it has to offer.

This Strategy builds on the Gold Coast Waterways Strategy 2014-2023 which established GCWA's responsibilities to sustainably manage the waterways and improve their quality into the future. This Strategy takes those foundations to the next level by establishing world-class principles for management of the waterways and GCWA's land-based reserves as required by the Gold Coast Waterways Act 2012.

The Strategy creates a blueprint for the future management of the waterways. It reflects the community's vision for the waterways, and acknowledges their cultural, social, economic and environmental values. These values make the waterways special and set the Gold Coast apart from every other community in Australia.

Since the first Strategy was developed, the GCWA Board has identified two additional significant imperatives which will shape the Authority's long-term program and planning approach. These are increasing waterways use and congestion as population grows, and the intensifying impacts of climate change. This Strategy addresses the need for an informed and well-managed response to these imperatives.

The Gold Coast Waterways Strategy has been designed to encourage and support our people as they make decisions about the best ways to manage the Gold Coast waterways.

With our ongoing desire for involving industry and local residents in our decision making, the Strategy has been co-designed with the community. The Board was pleased to see so many people from diverse backgrounds who were eager to devote their time and contribute their insights and expertise to the development of this Strategy. We thank them for their contributions.

GCWA will continue to work with the community and our partner agencies to deliver on this Strategy, realise their vision for the waterways, and ensure ongoing enjoyment by locals and visitors alike.

Mara Bún

Chair | Gold Coast Waterways Authority



1.0 Executive Summary

The Gold Coast Waterways Management Strategy 2021-2030 (the Strategy) is the second 10 year Strategy prepared by the Gold Coast Waterways Authority (GCWA) to guide the responsible and sustainable management of the waterways and GCWA’s land-based reserves.

Since the first Strategy was published in 2014, the Gold Coast waterways and the GCWA have undergone significant changes. With population increases, changes in use and the addition of responsibilities under the Implementation of the Spit Master Plan Act 2020, there was a clear need to refresh the Strategy and align the direction of the GCWA towards the opportunities and challenges of today.

The Strategy outlines the collective vision of the GCWA, our agency partners, the City of Gold Coast, the community and industry for the future of the waterways. It provides clear guidance on the development and implementation of the waterways management plan whilst ensuring alignment with other plans such as The Spit Master Plan and the Queensland Government’s objectives for the community.

The Strategy also describes the institutional arrangements for waterways management in Gold Coast waterways.

This Strategy will guide the GCWA in applying carefully thought-out planning and management to the waterways. This will enable GCWA to respond to challenges and to deliver what the community has told us it wants to see – improved Access, Connections and Destinations.

This Strategy provides the foundations to ensure that locals and visitors can continue to enjoy, and thrive in our waterways city now, and into the future.

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

Under the *Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 2012* (the Act,) the purposes of a waterways management Strategy are to:

- (a) establish a clear direction for the sustainable use, management, and development of the Gold Coast waterways for a 10 year period; and
- (b) identify the needs and priorities for the sustainable use, management, and development of the Gold Coast waterways into the future, having regard to the benefits for and impacts on the community, environment and economy of the Gold Coast City.

The Strategy is intended for state government, waterways managers, land managers, local government, other regional agencies or authorities and management partners, as well as Traditional Owners, landholders, and community groups who are involved in waterway management or activities that may affect waterway conditions.

The Implementation of *The Spit Master Plan Act 2020* introduced amendments to the Act which provide for GCWA to facilitate the implementation of The Spit Master Plan through the development and delivery of a program of community infrastructure and public realm works.

1.2 Implementation and governance

The Strategy is implemented and delivered by the GCWA through two separate delivery programs, the Gold Coast Waterways Management Program (the Program), and the Spit Works Program. These are rolling four-year delivery Programs that are reviewed quarterly and approved by the Ministers annually. These delivery programs highlight the detailed actions the GCWA will undertake to deliver on the Strategy.



Figure 1: Implementation and Governance

1.2.1 The Gold Coast Waterways Management Program

The Gold Coast Waterways Management Program provides an investment plan for a four-year period. The program is the primary delivery plan for the Strategy. In line with requirements under the GCWA Act, the Program must include:

- The policies and financial measures for implementing the waterways management Strategy
- The performance targets to be achieved
- Details of the projects to improve and maintain navigational access to Gold Coast waters and to develop and improve public marine facilities and
- Details of measures to be taken to implement and monitor compliance with waterway management regulation made under the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994* to the extent the regulation applies to Gold Coast waters.

1.2.2 The Spit Works Program

The Implementation of the Spit Master Plan Act 2020 introduced amendments to the Act which provide for GCWA to facilitate the implementation of The Spit Master Plan. This will be achieved through the development and delivery of a program of community infrastructure and public realm works.

Specifically, the Program must include:

- Details of the community infrastructure and public realm works to be delivered
- A separate program for each item of community infrastructure and public realm works to be delivered
- Details of the activities relating to community and stakeholder engagement, planning, innovation and scientific research
- The performance targets to be achieved and
- An estimate of the cost of delivering the community infrastructure and public realm works.

1.2.3 Ongoing Engagement

As the implementation of the Strategy progresses, GCWA will continue to engage with the community and key stakeholders to ensure the delivery of waterways management captures the cultural, social, environmental and economic values of the waterways.

GCWA recognises the dynamic nature of our waterways and the changing needs of users and will continue to place an emphasis on engagement that reflects the diversity of our community.



2.0 Our Waterways, Our Future

Our beautiful waterways are what set us apart from other Australian cities. They are the ‘Blue behind the Gold’ forming vital links connecting people and destinations and supporting ecologically rich and diverse species of plants and animals.

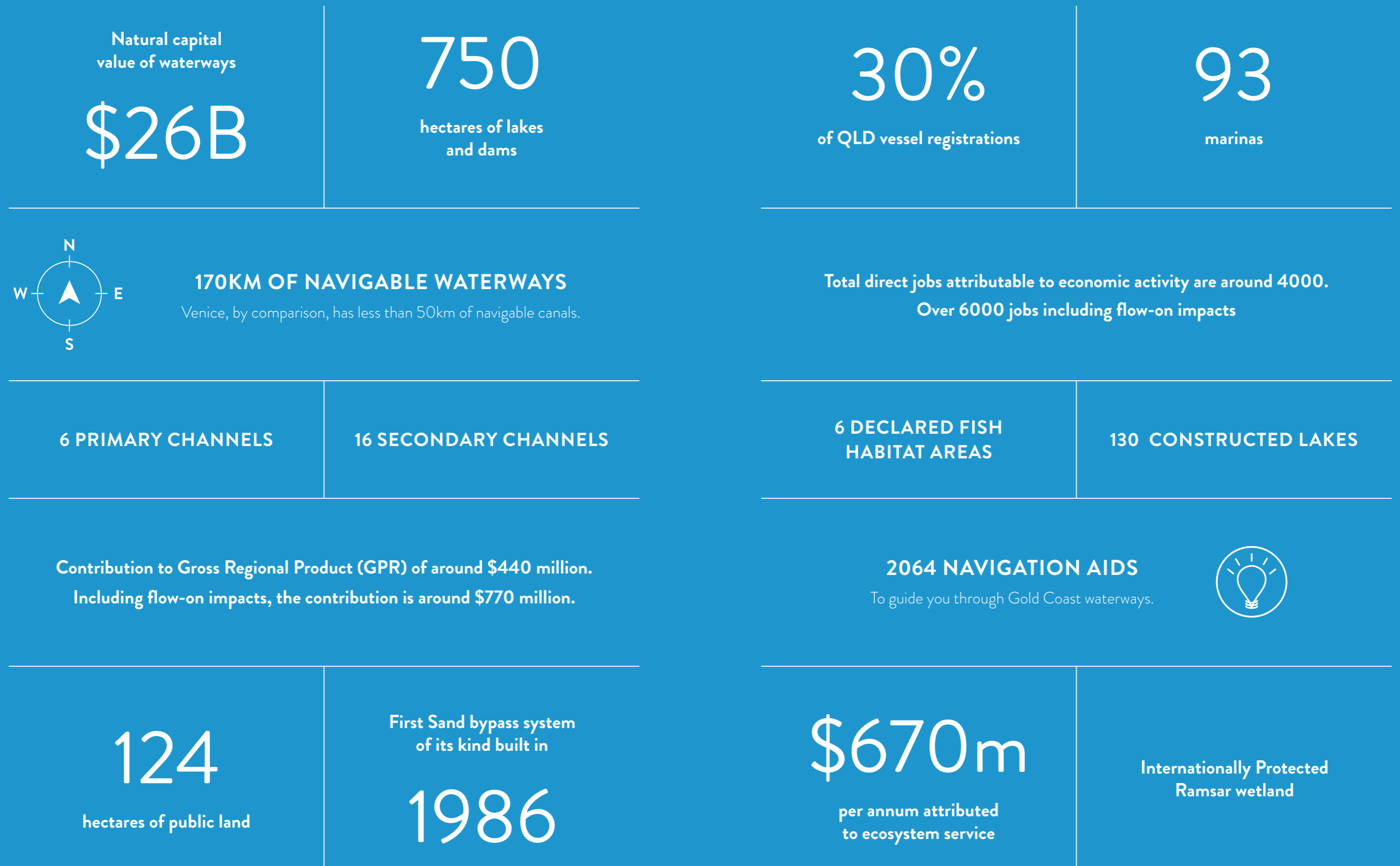
The Gold Coast waterways provide recreation and amenity for the enjoyment of all. They’re an important part of the fabric that has established the Gold Coast as a significant social and cultural destination nationally and internationally.

As the organisation entrusted with the responsibility of caring for the Gold Coast’s waterways, the work of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority is founded on the belief that leadership and community involvement are key to ensuring that the waterways and their essential purpose endure. Since the GCWA was established in 2012, it has worked with the community, local businesses, and partner agencies to sustainably manage this wonderful cultural, economic, and environmental asset.

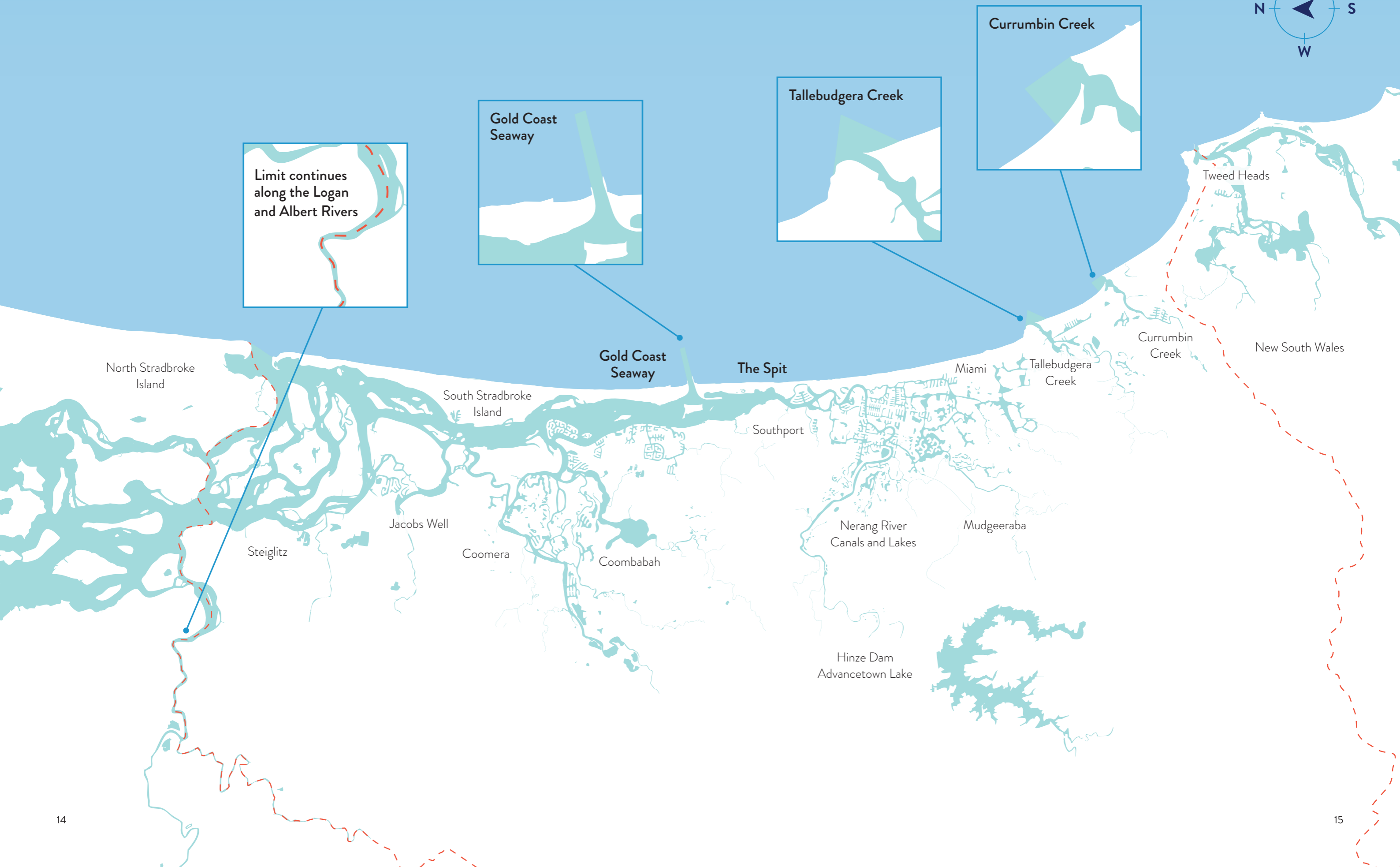
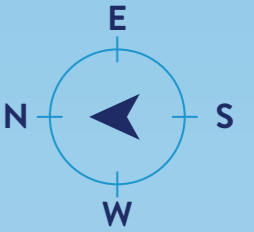
During this time, the Gold Coast’s population has grown by more than 30% and boating registrations have risen by more than 24%. The Gold Coast has seen its economy diversify through the creation of more jobs in the marine industry and specialisation into sectors such as superyacht servicing and maintenance. The flow on effect of these positive impacts on associated businesses and the region in general is significant.

Our waterways city has an exciting future ahead. We will face challenges, not the least of which are climate change and population growth. With responsible management, an educated approach and genuine partnerships, the GCWA will find sensible solutions to these and other adversities. We will embrace, protect and enhance the waterways and the surrounding land we care for.

Figure 2: Waterways in Numbers



Gold Coast Waters



3.0 Challenges and Opportunities

As the City grows and changes, management of the Gold Coast Waterways continues to be influenced by external pressures. These pressures exert a decisive influence over the future success of waterways management. In the context of the Strategy, these pressures are presented below as strategic challenges and opportunities.

Table 1: Trends, issues, and opportunities of the Gold Coast waterways

Trends	Issues	Strategic Opportunities
Congestion	<p>Popularity of waterways and improvements in access means that growth in use has continued.</p> <p>As the waterways city becomes more and more popular, there is an increasing need to manage congestion and the demand for space, balance competing needs of users, ensure safety and increase capacity.</p>	<p>Over the next 10 years there is an opportunity to set in place integrated, place-based management practises.</p> <p>Management must include adaptive monitoring and data gathering to identify and mitigate potential conflicts.</p> <p>Opportunities to improve the planning and management of existing and new facilities will help meet future demand.</p>
Conflict and changes in use	<p>A broad mix of uses takes place within the waterways. While there are known hotspots, in number of incidents, accidents and injuries, when compared to the number of users this is relatively low. Set against the backdrop of increasing population, and concurrent rises in registrations of smaller vessels, there is a significant opportunity to identify and mitigate potential conflicts.</p>	<p>There is an opportunity to make better use of the waterways while continuing to protect their environmental values and ensure that the individuals and groups who use the waterways do so safely.</p> <p>A need to accurately predict the likelihood of users visiting certain areas within waterways may help managers anticipate emerging conflicts and plan for conflict mitigation.</p>
Changing climate	<p>Our climate is changing, which has future consequences for our marine ecosystems and the industries and communities that use them.</p> <p>The Gold Coast is expected to experience higher sea levels in the future, as well as increased frequency and intensity of storm events, higher sea surface temperatures and rainfall changes.</p>	<p>There is an opportunity for our waterways to become an asset capable of reducing these risks for the broader community, through adaptive infrastructure solutions including green infrastructure that seeks to increase the area of natural buffers. Examples such as wetlands or utilising dredge materials to build resilience to rising seas or to create new habitat may be considered.</p> <p>The use of green infrastructure is growing both internationally and across Australia as a cost effective and appropriate way to enhance resilience and address other urban challenges like water quality and amenity.</p>

Population growth	<p>By 2036, the population of the Gold Coast is projected to almost double, from its existing population of 512,200 residents to between 788,300 and 949,300 residents. At the same time, areas surrounding the Gold Coast (e.g. Logan, Brisbane) where regular users of Gold Coast waterways reside will also see significant population growth.</p>	<p>Hard infrastructure may also be anticipated in the future as potential changes are better known and understood.</p> <p>A Climate Critical Infrastructure initiative in partnership with City of Gold Coast aims to explore climate adaptation options that improve insurability of infrastructure and ecosystem resilience, building on Gold Coast historical storm resilience infrastructure including the Seaway, Wavebreak Island and the A-line rock wall.</p> <p>Management of the Gold Coast waterways needs to be able to anticipate and respond to population growth and changes in waterways users and uses, as well as improved use of waterside land to accommodate future needs.</p>
Environmental pressures	<p>Gold Coast Waterways contain extensive marine habitats including seagrass meadows, mangroves, and saltmarsh communities.</p> <p>These environments support a range of ecosystem services that underpin the social and economic values of the waterways such as shoreline stability, good water quality, fishing and boating, carbon sequestration, visual amenity, and habitat for protected species.</p> <p>These values are increasingly under pressure from urban development, waterways use and pollution.</p>	<p>It is important that the planning and management of the waterways network seeks to, wherever possible, protect our environment. Opportunities must be sought to enhance the environment and the connectivity of the system through beneficial re-use and green infrastructure.</p> <p>Management of the waterways must seek to maintain the natural values that our waterways provide. At the same time, they must also support the environmental, social and economic needs of our waterways users.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to value the natural capital of our waterways environments and explore the opportunities associated with Blue Carbon - (carbon storage within these aquatic environments.)</p>
Complex jurisdiction	<p>Waterways management, planning and regulation is complex with a diverse range of jurisdictions and interests.</p>	<p>The Gold Coast Waterways Authority will continue to play an important role as a central point of coordination to solve issues locally by improving agency alignment and efficiently planning and delivering waterways outcomes.</p>



4.0 Our Shared Vision for A Waterways City

4.1 Focus areas

With a vision of A Waterways City, the Strategy focuses on three themes for our city's waterways being Access, Connections and Destinations.

These three focus areas aim to ensure the Gold Coast continues to embrace our waterways as it embraces the opportunities of being a waterways city.



Access

The ability to get out onto the water quickly from a launching point such as a boat ramp, jetty or pontoon.



Connections

A navigable channel network supported by infrastructure needed to access it.



Destinations

Locations promoted for a variety of uses including recreation, events and industry activities such as shipbuilding and maintenance, tourism, film and television production.

4.2 Strategic outcomes

In supporting a future-focused waterways city, GCWA have developed three strategic outcomes:

1. Integrated, place-based management

Land and Waterways network planning and management are integrated and centred around local needs and local solutions.

2. Sustainable and resilient waterways

Waterways and land are sustainably managed and are resilient to the impacts of population growth, economic and environmental challenges, and climate change.

3. Engaged users and communities

Residents of the Gold Coast and surrounding areas value, use, understand, protect, respect, enhance and enjoy the waterways.

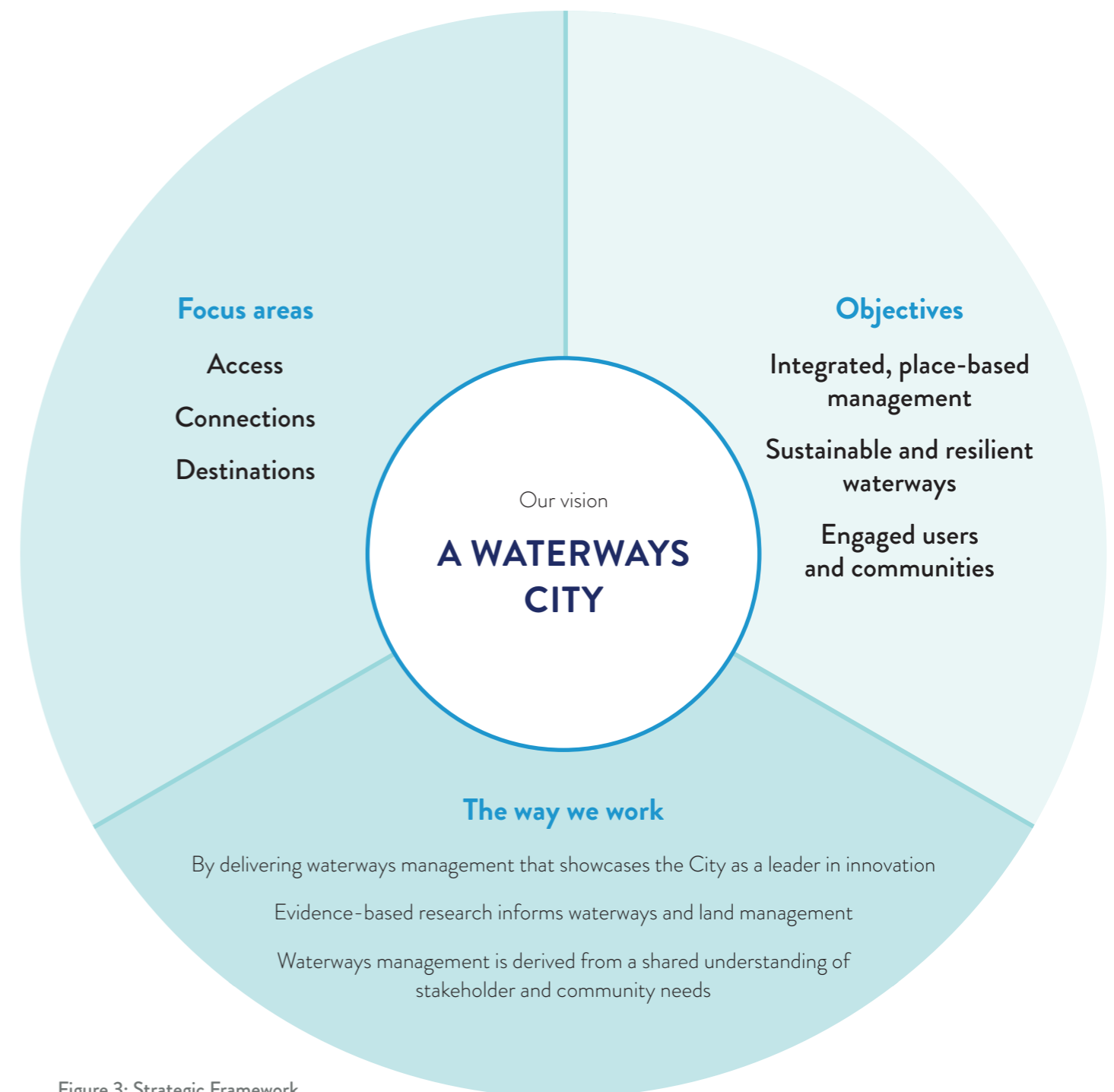


Figure 3: Strategic Framework



4.3 Integrated, place-based management

Waterways network planning and management are integrated and centred around local needs and local solutions.

Management of waterways and land is delivered through a framework that includes current and future planning decisions that consider economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors.

The focus is on local needs, local solutions, and the unique attributes of the waterways and surrounding land. By focusing on Gold Coast issues and opportunities, we can better respond to emerging challenges, future risks and opportunities for our Waterways City.

Table 2: Strategic Outcome 1

Objectives	What does this mean for the community
<p>Objective 1.1 Gold Coast waterways network is improved and maintained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term planning of waterways management reflects the needs of the Gold Coast region. • The Gold Coast waterways network continues to be cared for and improved- including the Seaway, channels, navigation aids and access facilities. • Waterways and foreshore destinations are enhanced and managed for current and future use. • Waterways and land management is continually improved by using latest available technology, improved processes, and new ideas.
<p>Objective 1.2 Place-based planning and investment activates Access, Connections, and Destinations</p>	
<p>Objective 1.3 Innovation is central to waterways and land management</p>	

Table 3: Strategic Outcome 1 Objectives and Outcomes

Objectives	Performance Indicators
<p>Objective 1.1 Gold Coast waterways network is improved and maintained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management maintains and improves waterways Access, Connections, and Destinations. • Management balances the needs of users to alleviate congestion and conflict in uses. • Management of waterways Access, Connections and Destinations is supported by long term planning that considers future use and emerging challenges. • Legislation, policy, and regulation is applied to better manage the waterways.
<p>Objective 1.2 Place-based planning and investment activates Access, Connections, and Destinations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and management of the waterways network and allocated land is underpinned by community engagement, data, and system understanding. • New and existing waterways and foreshores destinations are clean, accessible and open to more users. • Waterways and foreshores are globally recognised as film and event destinations. • Destination management plans are developed and implemented for areas with high or conflicting use.
<p>Objective 1.3 Innovation is central to waterways and land management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management of the waterways and allocated land is delivered through improved systems and procedures. • New technology is used to improve our management of waterways Access, Connections, and Destinations. • Integrated journey planning for waterways Access, Connections, and Destinations helps minimise congestion on the waterways, including boat ramp parking. • Partnerships and collaboration promote and support evidence-based decisions and innovation in waterways management.



4.4 Sustainable and resilient waterways

Waterways are sustainably managed and are resilient to the impacts of population growth, economic and environmental challenges, and climate change.

The management of the waterways network supports the economic growth of the City without compromising the social, cultural, and environmental values of the waterways.

Waterways network planning and management considers the users, trends and environmental pressures of the network to ensure the system is sustainable. The long-term sustainability of the waterways requires a balance between network needs (use and economic development), maintenance costs and conservation. It must also be able to respond to changes in the system such as shoaling and channel movement, and the impacts of climate change.

Table 4: Strategic outcome 2

Objectives	What does this mean for the community
<p>Objective 2.1 Waterways network is sustainable and resilient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways management is guided by planning with clear benefits that are reported to the community. • Waterways network supports the economic growth of the City. • The environment is valued and protected. • Our waterways help build the City's resilience to the impacts of climate change.
<p>Objective 2.2 Waterways and land management supports marine industry and tourism to drive economic growth</p>	
<p>Objective 2.3 Waterways and land management enhances environmental values</p>	

Table 5: Strategic outcome 2—objectives and outcomes

Objectives	Performance Indicators
<p>Objective 2.1 Waterways network is sustainable and resilient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways management supports the long-term provision of a sustainable network and enhances the social, environmental, and cultural values of the waterways. • Future planning for the waterways network considers local and global trends (including changes in use, population growth and climate change). • Prioritisation is given to business case development and implementation of adaptive green and grey infrastructure. • Waterways network planning and management considers the users, trends and environmental pressures on the to ensure the system is sustainable.
<p>Objective 2.2 Waterways and land management supports marine industry and tourism to drive economic growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders and agency partnerships help to realise the economic values of the waterways and the adjacent foreshores. • Management of the waterways network supports industries that rely on them to thrive. • Delivery of the Spit Works Program becomes a catalyst for economic growth. • Economic and tourism opportunities are facilitated through the delivery and ongoing management of Access, Connections, and Destinations.
<p>Objective 2.3 Waterways and land management enhances environmental values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment in, and surrounding the waterways, is protected. • Environmental management systems and science guide the management of land and waterways assets. • Management of the network minimises negative impacts and seeks to enhance environmental values and connectivity, including through beneficial re-use. • The natural capital of the waterways is valued and monitored.



4.5 Engaged users and communities

Residents of the Gold Coast and surrounding areas value, use, understand, protect, respect, enhance and enjoy the waterways.

Waterways planning and management promotes the natural, cultural, and experiential values of the waterways.

Gold Coast waterways users can readily access information to make informed decisions on how best to use our waterways and destinations.

Table 6: Strategic outcome 3

Objectives	What does this mean for the community
<p>Objective 3.1 Community knowledge of the Gold Coast waterways is enhanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locals and visitors can easily access information about the waterways. • The natural, cultural, and experiential values of the waterways are championed. • Deeper understanding of waterways users and their needs is achieved through research, collaboration, and communication. • Community stakeholders are involved in planning and regularly inform board and operational decision-making.
<p>Objective 3.2 Our waterways are treasured and celebrated as being core to Gold Coast lifestyle and tourism</p>	
<p>Objective 3.3 Waterways and land management are improved by collaboration across all levels of government</p>	

Table 7: Strategic outcome 3—objectives and outcomes

Objectives	Performance Indicators
<p>Objective 3.1 Community knowledge of the Gold Coast waterways is enhanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways network information is easily accessed by users and the community. • User understanding of our waterways history and the biocultural values the waterways hold is enhanced. • Partnerships and collaboration increase information sharing between agencies, users, and the community. • Data streams and analysis drive continuous improvement in user experience and understanding of waterways users' needs.
<p>Objective 3.2 Our waterways are treasured and celebrated as being core to Gold Coast lifestyle and tourism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration and partnerships promote the waterways. • Data informs patterns of use and visitor experience to build awareness of the waterways and the land that surrounds them. • Waterways support Gold Coast tourism and events. • The Gold Coast waterways are branded as the Blue Behind the Gold, becoming part of the Gold Coast's tourism and event promotion identity.
<p>Objective 3.3 Waterways and land management are improved by collaboration across all levels of government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User experience reflects the success of place-based management. • Community and key stakeholder needs inform waterways planning and management. • Collaboration and engagement activities promote the waterways history and the environment, cultural and social values. • Performance indicators support a better understanding of value that users place on the waterways.

5.0 Delivering Our 10 Year Waterways Strategy

The Strategy is delivered by the GCWA through the Gold Coast Waterways Management Program and the Spit Works Program. These are rolling four-year programs that are reviewed quarterly and approved by the Ministers annually.

These Programs outline the specific initiatives and projects the GCWA will undertake to deliver on the strategic objectives set out in this 10 year Strategy. Figure 2 outlines the operational delivery structure for the 10 year Strategy.



Figure 4: Operational delivery structure of the 10 year Strategy



5.1 Investment criteria

In implementing the Strategy, the Gold Coast Waterways Management Program will include an investment criteria. This criteria is for deciding priorities for improving and maintaining navigational access and for developing and improving public marine facilities. It will also be used to prioritise the order of delivering other waterways management initiatives as well as available options for financing the priorities.

The overarching investment criteria for deciding on priorities is provided below.

Table 7: Strategy—investment criteria

Criteria	Score
Alignment with Strategic Outcomes	/10
Delivering on Strategic Objectives	/10
Delivering on Performance indicators	/10
Community and stakeholder support	/10
Value for money	/10
Total	/50

Cost benefit analysis (when appropriate)	Compare cost and benefits
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Priority Score	0–20	21–40	40–50
Priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority



5.2 Measuring Performance

Each of the strategic outcomes includes several appropriate performance indicators against each objective. This is to assist with deciding whether, and to what extent, the objectives of the Strategy have been achieved (see tables 3, 5 and 7.)

In addition, a few of the parameters for measuring the progress of outcomes are listed in the table below. The GCWA will continue to monitor the performance indicators and the measures to ensure effective performance against the Strategy.

Table 8. Measures of performance for the delivery of the Strategy

Performance Measure	Measure	Target Direction
Delivery of Waterways Network	Delivery of Network in line with the Sand Management Plan	✓
	Network delivers co benefits to the community and waterways users (social, economic, environmental and cultural)	
Extent to which the outcome was achieved	Percentage (%)	↑
	Number of projects and initiatives	
Extent to which the performance indicator was met	Percentage (%)	↑
Community	Community Satisfaction (%)	↑
	Community access to information	
Natural capital value of waterways	\$ value	↑
Project delivery	Alignment to budget	✓
	Alignment to timeframes	
Waterways users	Local users (Gold Coast) Percentage (%)	↑
	SEQ visitors Percentage (%)	
	Domestic visitors Percentage (%)	
	International visitors Percentage (%)	
Availability of information	Website views	↑
	Social Media engagement	
	Customer Feedback (% positive vs negative)	
Promotion of waterways destinations	Alignment of aquatic events to the Strategy	✓
	Alignment of events in Doug Jennings Park to the Strategy	
	Local users Percentage (%)	
	Visitors Percentage (%)	
Innovation	Improved operational efficiency	✓
	Application of technology	
Cost benefit analysis	Comparison of calculated costs and benefits	✓

6.0 Appendix A: Co-designing the Strategy

6.1 Connecting with users of the waterways

The purpose of the Strategy update is to create a blueprint for the future management of the waterways which is aligned to the vision of the community.

As part of that vision, we want to celebrate the cultural, social, economic, and environmental values which make our waterways special and set us apart from every other community in Australia.

By co-designing the Strategy with the community, we've aimed to create a model for waterways management that other communities will want to follow, and which changes the way locals and visitors view and use our waterways.

GCWA established a Gold Coast Waterways Strategy Update Working Group to ensure the updated Strategy was co-designed with the community. Between September 2020 and March 2021, GCWA held consultation sessions with this Working Group and several other groups. As well as group consultations, a community survey was conducted, and community events were hosted to inform the preparation of a draft Strategy update.

6.1.1 Gold Coast waterways Strategy update working group

Workshop #1 September 2020

The Working Group was formed following an Expressions of Interest process undertaken by GCWA in August 2020. It comprised representatives of local businesses, City of Gold Coast, community organisations, universities, and individual citizens. Its work was being supported by Stakeholder and Agency Advisory Groups.

The Working Group participated in three workshops to inform the creation of the draft Strategy Update.

The first workshop took place on 10 September 2020. Participants were provided with a presentation which included a progress report on implementation of the Gold Coast Waterways Strategy 2014-2023 (figure 2.) Discussion at the workshop focused on three key themes:

- Our Waterways City – what we love?
- Future vision – our waterways in 2030 and
- What we'd keep, lose, and gain in the updated Strategy.

Workshop #2 October 2020

The second workshop was held on 14 October 2020. This workshop explored the evolution of the Gold Coast's waterways, current and emerging challenges, future planning options, setting priorities and measuring benefits.

Participants were asked to further explore key themes which had emerged from Workshop #1 - Access, Connections and Destinations.

Members participated in a mapping exercise to drill down into opportunities and challenges in four precincts linking to these key themes:

- Southern catchments
- Central - Broadwater and Nerang
- Northern Broadwater and Coomera and
- Far Northern – Currigee, Pimpama and Southern Moreton Bay.

Workshop #3 March 2021

The third workshop was held on 11 March 2021.

This workshop presented the Strategic framework to the working group and the alignment to key actions and priorities for the Waterways Management Program.

6.2 Women on water roundtable

Following a discussion at a GCWA Board Strategy session in September 2020, GCWA undertook a desktop review of relevant organisations and businesses to identify female industry leaders to participate in the roundtable.

Invitations were sent out to potential participants in late September. The roundtable event was held on 6 October 2020 with representatives from local businesses, community organisations, events and creative industries and academia. Women who attended the roundtable were invited to join the second Working Group workshop on 14 October 2020.

The roundtable identified similar issues and themes to those which emerged during Working Group Workshop #1.

6.3 Agency workshop

Collaboration with other government agencies was identified as being key to successfully delivering and implementing the updated Strategy.

A workshop was held on 8 December 2020 with representatives from Maritime Safety Queensland, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Queensland Police Service, Healthy Land and Water, Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, City of Gold Coast and Major Events Gold Coast.

In addition to themes and issues discussed by the Working Group at Workshop #2, agencies were specifically asked to consider impacts relating to Access, Connections and Destinations and the ways in which they might respond. The agencies have agreed to reconvene to discuss the type of support required for successful delivery and implementation once the Strategy update is finalised and approved by the Minister.

6.4 Other consultation

To capture views from a wide cross-section of the community GCWA also undertook the following engagement activities:

- Conducting an online survey between 4-28 November 2020. The survey sought to gather information about specific destinations visited on the water, the types of aquatic activities respondents participated in, what they loved about the waterways and what they'd like to see in ten years' time. GCWA received over 160 responses to the survey.
- Participation in the Sanctuary Cove Boating Festival 13-15 November 2020. The Festival was a scaled-down version of the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show which was due to be held earlier in 2020 but was cancelled due to COVID-19. The Festival presented an opportunity for GCWA to engage with the public about boating issues and the Strategy update. GCWA estimates about 400 people came through its stand during the event and discussed waterways management and use.
- One-on-one meetings with City of Gold Coast Councillors between October and December 2020. These meetings enabled GCWA to brief Councillors on the Strategy update, the outcome of consultation undertaken to date and to explore issues and opportunities specific to their divisions.
- Meet the Board BBQ 16 November 2020. This event enabled GCWA and its Board to engage with community members on a range of waterways issues including the Strategy update.



Figure 5: Working Group Workshop #1 HOTA 10 September 2020

6.5 Appendix B: Alignment to other strategies and government priorities

The Authority does not have sole jurisdiction for management of Gold Coast waterways. GCWA works in partnership with other agencies including:

- City of Gold Coast
- Maritime Safety Queensland
- Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol
- Queensland Police Service
- Department of Environment and Science and
- Healthy Land and Water.

In particular, the City of Gold Coast takes a lead role in waterways health monitoring, water and sewage supply, disaster management and catchment management in Gold Coast waterways.

The Gold Coast's dynamic natural landscape is supported by a diverse set of government organisations, each with a unique role in our community. While this can be confusing for the public, it presents us with an

opportunity to rise above the pack by delivering clear communications through a distinct, engaging and authentic voice.

The documents below are references to state and local legislation, as well as strategies and plans that have been used to develop the Gold Coast Waterways Management Strategy 2021-2030.

Strategies and plans:

- Unite and Recover – Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan
- Queensland Transport Strategy, Transport and Main Roads
- The Spit Master Plan 2019
- City of Gold Coast Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013-2023
- City of Gold Coast Water Strategy 2019-2024
- City of Gold Coast Transport Strategy 2013-2023 City of Gold Coast
- City of Gold Coast Economic Development Strategy 2013-23

- City of Gold Coast Nature Conservation Strategy 2009-2019
- City of Gold Coast Gold Coast City Plan

Legislation:

- Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 2012
- Implementation of the Spit Master Plan Act 2020
- Transport Infrastructure Act 1994
- Transport Infrastructure (Waterways Management) Regulation 2012
- Maritime Safety Queensland Act 2002
- Maritime Safety Queensland Regulation 2002
- Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995

- Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Regulation 2008
- Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994
- Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation
- Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995
- Local Government Act 2009
- Sustainable Planning Act 2009
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 2004
- Fisheries Act 1994
- Marine Parks Act 2004
- Marine Parks (Moreton Bay) Zoning Plan 2008
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

7.0 Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Access	The ability to get out onto the water quickly from a launching point such as a boat ramp, jetty or pontoon.
Channel	Defined navigation channels.
Connections	A navigable channel network supported by infrastructure needed to access it.
CoGC	City of Gold Coast.
Dredging	Includes all activities associated with the dredging and disposal of material including: the excavation or dredging of the material, the loading and carriage of dredge spoil for the purpose of dumping and the dumping of the material at the approved location.
Destinations	Locations promoted for a variety of uses including recreation, events and industry activities such as shipbuilding and maintenance, tourism, film and television production.
GCWA	Gold Coast Waterways Authority – the Statutory Authority responsible for Gold Coast waterways.

Gold Coast waterways	Coastal inland waterways bounded by the Albert and Logan Rivers in the north and the Queensland-New South Wales border in the south.
Green infrastructure	Broadly defined as a strategically planned network of high quality natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services and protect biodiversity in rural and urban settings.
Grey infrastructure	Familiar urban infrastructure such as roads, sewage and stormwater systems.
Land	Refers to the land held in Trust by GCWA and/or managed by GCWA on behalf of the State of Queensland including Doug Jennings Park, Moondarewa Spit, Wavebreak Island and the southern tip of South Stradbroke Island.
Minister	Minister for Transport & Main Roads Minister SDLGIP – Minister for State Development, Local Government, Innovation and Planning
Natural capital value	That part of nature which directly or indirectly underpins value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, soils, minerals, the air and oceans, as well as natural processes and functions. Natural capital forms part of our wealth; that is, our ability to produce actual or potential goods and services into the future to support our wellbeing.
Network, the network	Assets which contribute to navigational access including defined navigation channels, infrastructure such as pontoons and destinations. The network also includes aids to navigation such as beacons, lights and buoys and charts, surveys and Notices to Mariners.
Primary channels	Primary channels refer to demand. These channels carry the most vessel traffic and are therefore viewed as having a higher priority for dredging.
Secondary channels	Secondary channels are important network channels but carry less traffic and are therefore viewed as having a lower dredging priority.



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