

# Ipswich & West Moreton: A connected and productive region

March 2013

This strategy has been prepared by Explor Consulting Pty Ltd for Regional Development Australia Ipswich & West Moreton Inc.

Explor Consulting is the leader in digital futures consulting.

We help communities and their governments to plan and build better futures, taking advantage of the opportunities of digital technologies and broadband services.

Explor works with governments and organisations at all levels: local, regional, state, territory, provincial and national.

We provide advice, we help develop digital strategies, we facilitate the funding and initiation of projects and we provide management assistance.

Explor's people have unique insights into how digital technologies and broadband services can be exploited to support economic, social and environmental development.



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# Executive summary

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Ipswich & West Moreton's four councils of Scenic Rim, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley and Somerset are pursuing better futures for the region's diverse communities, built on productivity improvement, social inclusion and sustainability.

They are also seeking to add to the region's vibrancy while preserving its unique regional identity.

Broadband services and other digital technologies can help the region's communities to create their better futures but the most successful communities are those which adopt a strategic approach, with projects and actions that match the distinct characteristics and opportunities of the communities.

RDA Ipswich & West Moreton commissioned this digital futures strategy as a planning resource to help each of Ipswich & West Moreton's four local government authorities to pursue strategies that match the opportunities

of their localities. This is also a plan to guide collective action by the local government authorities and the regional development organisations.

The strategy offers a vision of a better future for the region, enabled by digital technologies and a set of proposed strategies to achieve that vision.

This plan has been prepared by Explor, a consulting firm that specialises in helping communities and their governments to plan and build better futures, taking advantage of the opportunities of digital technologies and broadband services. It was prepared from December 2012 to March 2013 through research and consultations with many members of the community and the staff of the local councils and regional development organisations. It also built on earlier work to prepare and implement a digital futures strategy by the City of Ipswich.

This strategy is broken down into the strategic drivers of change and strategic action areas, which lead to priority actions.

## Strategic drivers of change:

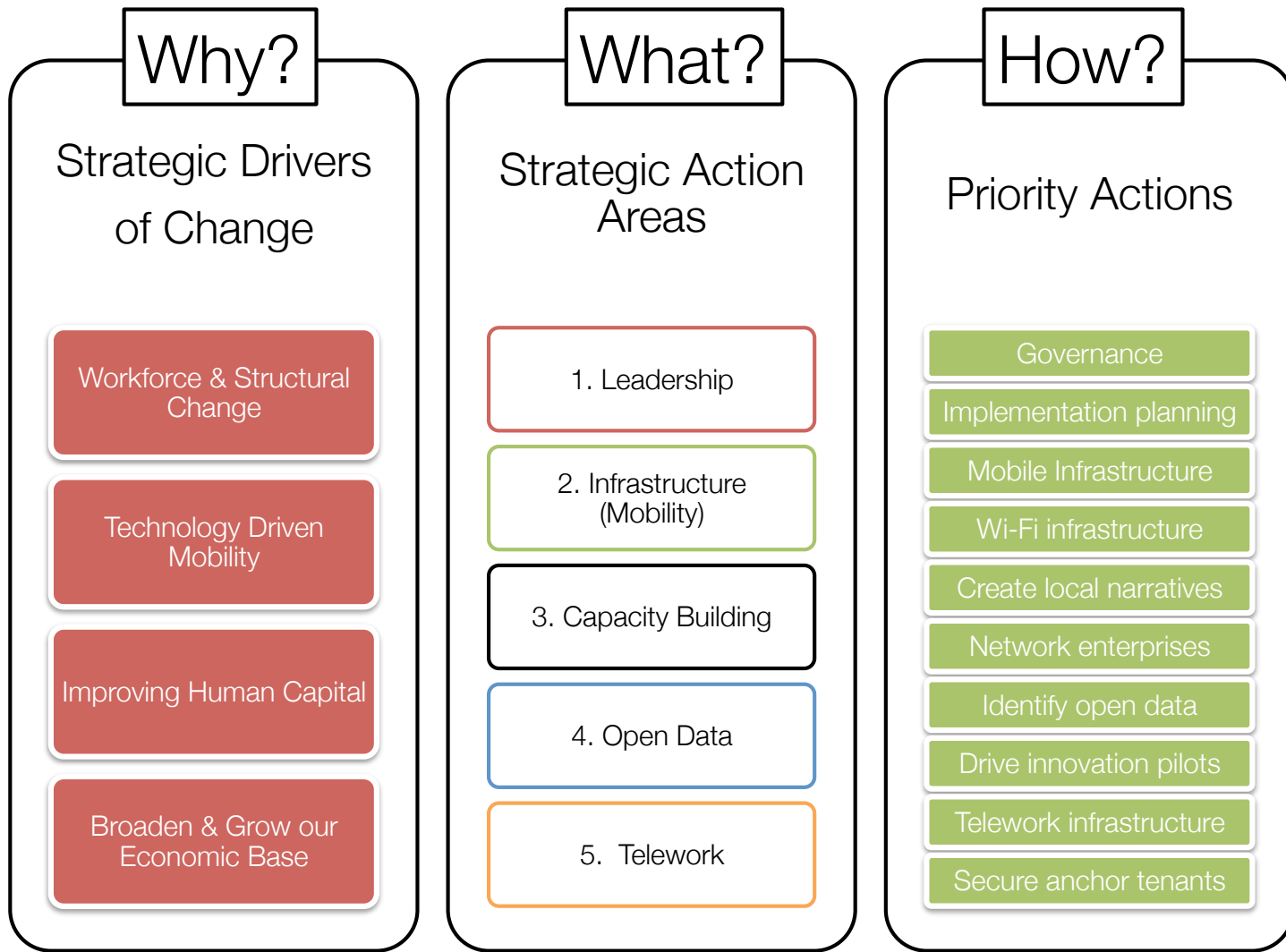
- Workforce and structural changes.

- Technology-driven mobility.
- Improving human capital.
- Broaden and grow economic base.

The threats and opportunities that are characterised in these drivers can, we believe, be addressed through the following **strategic action areas**:

1. Leadership: Lead and collaborate on regional digital futures.
2. Infrastructure (mobility): Extend access to digital infrastructure – with a focus on mobility.
3. Capacity building: Align key industry sector digital capacity building effort to well articulated goals.
4. Open data: Accelerate efforts to make Ipswich & West Moreton an 'Open Data' leader in Australia.
5. Telework: Accelerate efforts to make Ipswich & West Moreton a 'telework' leader.

Under each of the Strategic Action Areas this report proposes a number of Priority Actions that could be taken by Ipswich & West Moreton authorities and organisations to begin to realise this digital strategy.



## About this document

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This digital futures strategy has been prepared to enable the communities of Ipswich & West Moreton to capitalise on the benefits of broadband and digital technologies, with a particular focus on key sectors of the economy as requested in the project brief.

Explor Consulting was commissioned by Regional Development Australia Ipswich & West Moreton Incorporated (RDA Ipswich & West Moreton – RDAIWM)) to prepare this strategy, building on the strong leadership, strategy and action of the City of Ipswich over many years. This strategy has been developed through research and consultation with many people from Ipswich & West Moreton's different communities, local government authorities and key regional organisations.

Explor acknowledges the time, advice and insights provided by those community members, council staff and regional development organisation staff,

all of which was of great value. Explor particularly appreciated the support provided by the staff of RDA Ipswich & West Moreton.

This digital strategy document begins by highlighting the aspirations of the communities of Ipswich and West Moreton and summarises the region's strengths and challenges. It explains why Ipswich and West Moreton must invest in a digital future. The document outlines the digital future that could be achieved through a set of strategies and actions. The document concludes with suggested next steps.

# About Ipswich & West Moreton

## Ipswich & West Moreton is a strong, unique and diverse region

Ipswich & West Moreton is a geographically diverse, steadily and in part, rapidly growing region offering a great lifestyle, that is located about 40 km south west of Brisbane. It covers 13,000 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of around 270,000 people, growing at over 2.6% per annum compared with a state growth rate of 1.7%.

The region is home to Australia's two largest master-planned communities at Springfield and Ripley Valley – two areas that will grow very rapidly over the coming decade. Key industry sectors include food, construction, tourism, manufacturing, education, health and community services, aerospace and defence. Amberley is home to Australia's largest defence base with 3,134 Air Force personnel and 700 Army personnel. Regionally, significant industrial parks are prevalent throughout.

Significant areas of the region are devoted to agriculture and horticulture, with the Lockyer Valley food bowl regarded as one of the ten most fertile valleys in the world.

The City of Ipswich, being the major population centre of the region, has long been regarded nationally and internationally as a leader among digital and online communities.

The four councils of Ipswich & West Moreton, shown in diagram, are Scenic Rim, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley and Somerset.

## Then and now - Ipswich & West Moreton

Ipswich was first established in 1827 as a convict outstation supplying labour to the nearby limestone quarries. It attracted free settlers and rapidly established itself as a significant regional settlement, made prosperous through railways and coal mining. Understanding the long and rich history of Ipswich and its role as a major economic hub in South East Queensland is important in contextualising the current challenges of the region.



The region is still experiencing above State average employment growth but the economic profile of the Region is changing, with the need to transition traditional businesses such as low cost manufacturing into high value-added manufacturing, as well as the establishment of new businesses and industries that are demanded by a 21st century global economy. Establishing a strong aerospace industry linked to the large defence facility at Amberley is one example of the type of industry that the

region wants to encourage into the future.

The Office of Economic and Statistical Research forecasted in 2010 that the population in the Western Corridor Region (including Toowoomba) will double by 2031. Strong growth in population places additional emphasis on the need to develop sustainable practices, economically, environmentally and socially, to ensure a population in harmony with its surroundings. A distinct advantage of the region is that it attracts a younger population base compared with other parts of the state and the nation, and this is something that must be capitalised on.

### **Ipswich & West Moreton aspires to a great future**

Ipswich & West Moreton's councils and communities of Scenic Rim, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley and Somerset have been working to identify their aspirations and preferred futures through strategic community plans and other plans. The councils and regional development organisations have worked collectively to identify the preferred futures for the whole region.

The aspirations that have been identified through desktop research and community engagement for Ipswich & West Moreton include:

**Place & identity:** The population of Ipswich & West Moreton will have grown, but the region and its different districts will have retained their own unique and highly regarded identities and lifestyle opportunities in scenic locations. The region will be seen as being distinct from the Brisbane metropolitan area.

**Quality of life:** Ipswich & West Moreton will be a great place to live for people of different age groups and backgrounds. There will be vibrant communities of different sizes ranging from a dynamic city and charming towns through to small hamlets and agricultural districts. The region will be recognised as a lifestyle destination.

**Economy and employment:** Ipswich & West Moreton's economic base will have broadened, its business productivity will have increased and the levels of innovation will have expanded. The region will have built on its advantages and strengths in agriculture, manufacturing and food

processing, education, tourism, logistics related to the resources sector, construction and other sectors. There will be more sustainable employment, particularly for professionals, for creative people and for young people.

**Sustainability:** Lifestyles, industries and developments will be sustainable. A high value will be placed on preserving natural ecosystems, landscapes and waterways. Climate change and other environmental threats will be proactively managed.

**Access to services:** There will be greater access to government, commercial, retail and community services for the different communities of Ipswich & West Moreton.

**Education:** There will be an increase in the levels of educational attainment and qualifications and an expanded skill base in Ipswich & West Moreton. There will be expanded access and more course options available throughout the whole region for all levels of education, including VET and university education.

**Health and wellbeing:** The people of Ipswich & West Moreton will lead healthy and active lives. People with



special needs, including aged people and those with disabilities, will have good life quality. There will be good access to local health and related services.

**Social capital:** There will be a strong civil society with active community organisations throughout Ipswich & West Moreton. The level of social isolation will be reduced.

**Infrastructure:** Ipswich & West Moreton will have good infrastructure that meets community needs, supports environmental sustainability and is cost effective to maintain.

**Community safety:** Ipswich & West Moreton will be a safe region to live, work and visit.

**Transport:** There will be good transport links and less dependency on private cars throughout the region.

**Governance:** The people of Ipswich & West Moreton will be served by effective and responsive local government authorities and other government bodies, working collaboratively and co-operatively, and sharing appropriate services.

*Australia's CSIRO regularly publishes Our future world, a survey of the global megatrends that are changing the way we live and work. The 2012 edition identifies 6 megatrends, including a megatrend about the impact of digital technology. CSIRO highlights the way that technology and broadband connections are changing the nature of employment with a rapid growth in domestic and international freelancing. The "portfolio worker" chooses where they wish to live and provides services to many organisations. Regions such as Ipswich & West Moreton, with great lifestyles and good broadband connections, will see an influx of such workers.*

### Community aspirations and other plans

The people and organisations of Scenic Rim, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley and Somerset have been planning for their future and executing those plans for many years. At individual council level economic and community plans have documented the community's aspirations. Within the constraints of budget and capacity each of the region's councils are pursuing their own

strategic plans. The implementation of actions in the priority strategic areas of this plan must align with those well-documented aspirations.

The City of Ipswich has been nation leading in many aspects of supporting and promoting digital economy initiatives. Its *Infocity* plan, developed in 2009, remains relevant with its focus on smart communities, increased digital participation, city competitiveness and growth, and leadership. This thought leadership no doubt contributed in some way to the region being rewarded with second release NBN fibre rollout in Goodna, Ipswich and Withcott, and NBN first release fixed wireless rollout in Lockyer Valley. Ipswich has been recognised as a Smart 21 Worldwide Intelligent Community of 2011 and 2012 by the Intelligent Communities Forum.

The RDA Ipswich & West Moreton (RDAIWM) has developed a regional roadmap as a basis of input to the South East Queensland Regional Plan. The Roadmap also identifies Ipswich and West Moreton's unique characteristics and describes its sustainable regional development priorities. The Roadmap's future

development will address the region's need to:

- better understand the region's development challenges
- develop strategies to optimise competitive advantages
- develop strategies to manage risks so that the region's sustainability is not threatened.

The Roadmap sets out a number of priority initiatives that RDA Ipswich & West Moreton will either contribute to, or lead. Some of those initiatives involve regional competitive advantages like the Lockyer Valley Sustainable Food Bowl and the Amberley Aerospace and Defence Development, which are supported by several strategically located and regionally significant industrial parks.

The RDAIWM, through its Roadmap, has identified three key goals:

- Improve human capital
- Protect and enhance natural assets (through sustainable practices)
- Broaden and grow the economic base.

The region also recognises the relationship between this plan and other State and Federal strategies. The Queensland State Government has clearly renewed a focus on developing Queensland's strengths in tourism, agriculture, resources and construction. While these industry sectors are important to the Ipswich & West Moreton Region there are other priorities that the region and its stakeholders wish to pursue.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows that the top seven contributing sectors to the Gross Regional Product of the region are in order:

- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Education & Training
- Public Administration & Safety
- Wholesale Trade
- Transport Postal & Warehousing
- Retail Trade.

With this in mind, in developing a clear implementation plan for this strategy stakeholders must consider which of these industries to focus effort on in the short, medium and longer term.

Industry sectors such as manufacturing are vital to the region and potentially face decline without innovation – making a strong argument to focus resources on building digital capacity in this area. The alignment of state goals in Agriculture with a clear regional reliance on that sector may mean energy and effort should be focused there first.

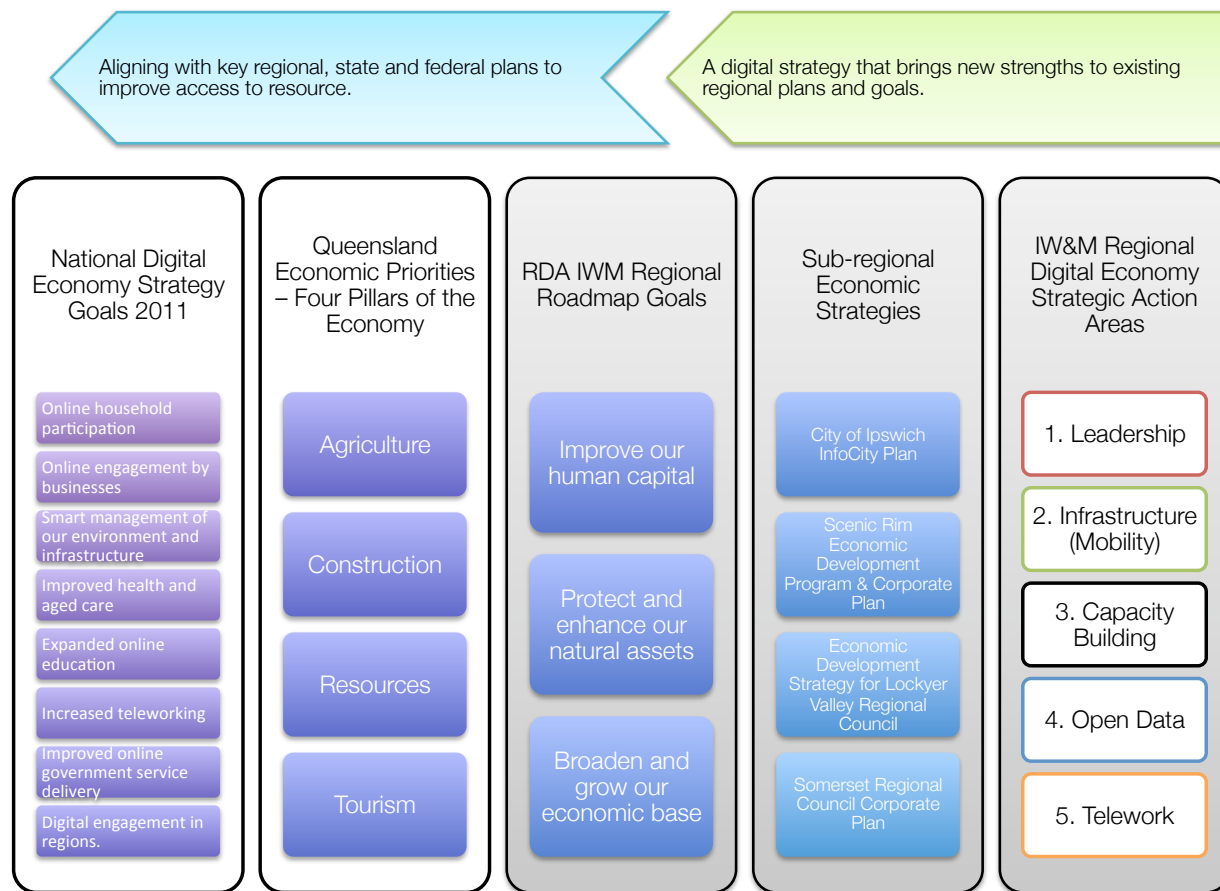
Also related to this strategy is the Australian Government's National Digital Economy Strategy. The Australian Government wants to ensure that Australia becomes a leading digital economy.

To measure progress in realising this vision, the government has set eight Digital Economy Goals that focus on the areas of:

- online participation by Australian households
- online engagement by Australian businesses and not-for-profit organisations
- smart management of our environment and infrastructure
- improved health and aged care expanded online education

- increased teleworking
- improved online government service delivery and engagement
- greater digital engagement in regional Australia.

The diagram illustrates the clear connections and relationships between this strategy and other plans and actions underway across the region, the state and the nation.



## Why should Ipswich & West Moreton's communities invest in their digital future?

A number of communities in Scenic Rim, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley and Somerset will be among the first in Australia to gain ultra-speed broadband connections through the NBN, but this is only one element in the array of digital technologies that are transforming the way citizens live and work. Over recent decades there have been dramatic developments in these digital technologies:

- High speed computing
- The miniaturisation of electronic equipment
- Mobile phones and mobile devices
- The internet
- The digitisation of information and audio-visual materials.

We now regularly use email, the web, social media (such as Facebook and Twitter), Smartphones and iPads. Importantly, these technologies have become affordable, pervasive and inter-connected.

However, the changes are not only in the availability of the new technologies: the significant changes are in the way we are using the technologies to do things very differently. Individuals of all ages have changed the way they work, relax, communicate, learn and shop. Many businesses have changed the way they interact with their customers, their suppliers and their staff. Governments have changed the way they deliver their services and engage with their citizens.

Digital technologies are both disruptive and transformative. For example:

- Online services are displacing face-to-face services, with huge impacts on sectors such as retail, banking and education.
- Broadband services and digital tools are enabling new patterns of work such as telecommuting for individuals and new forms of relationships between businesses including offshore outsourcing.
- Digitisation of information and entertainment resources is destroying the market for many traditional products such as

books, newspapers and music on physical media such as CDs.

- Online media is changing the way people find out about the places they want to visit, the experiences they want to have and the products they want to purchase.
- Smart technologies are creating new opportunities for energy saving through efficiencies in our buildings and our energy grids.
- People and businesses are becoming more demanding about how and when they interact with their governments, for both decision-making and service delivery.

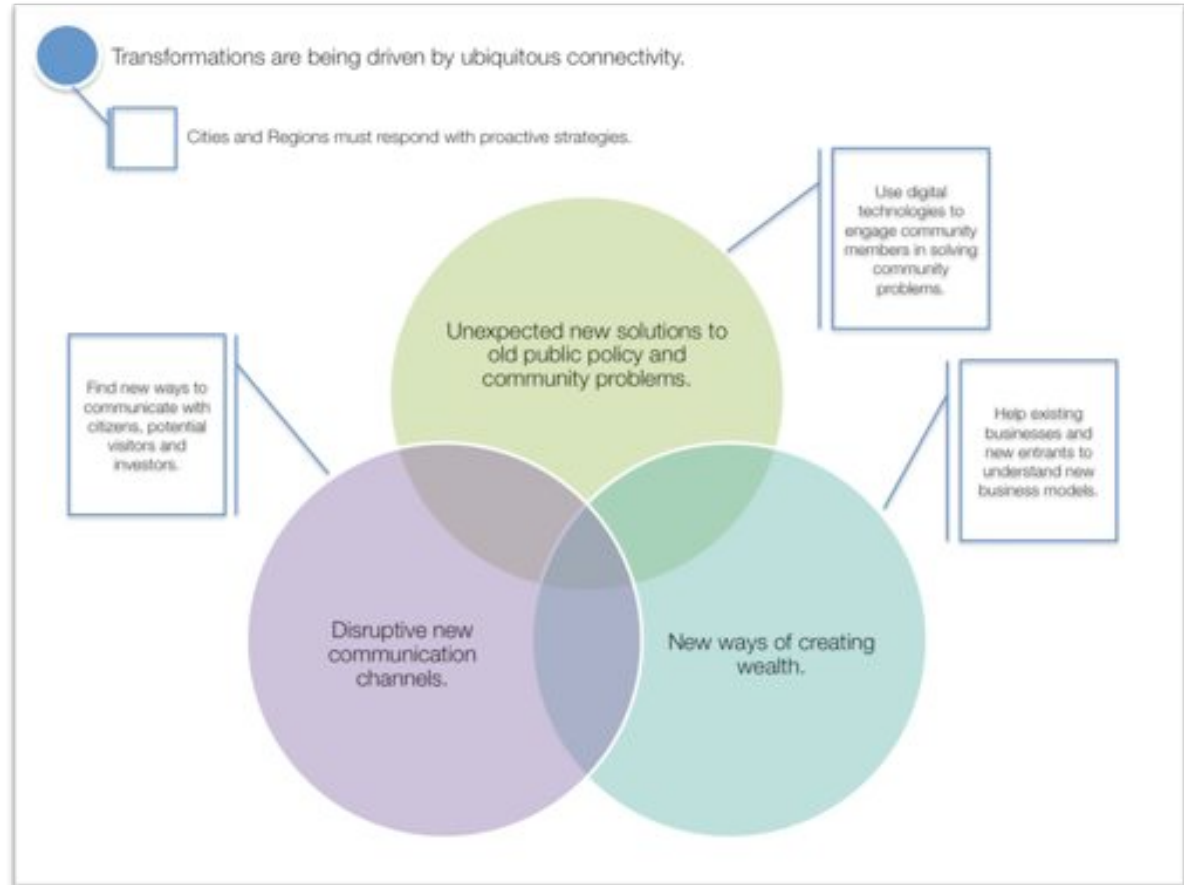
*One third of the Australian economy faces imminent and substantial disruption by digital technologies and business models.*

*- Deloitte Australia, 2012*

Digital technologies also offer opportunities for communities to thrive. They can provide:

- New solutions to old problems
- New ways of creating wealth
- New communication channels and greater accessibility.

Forward thinking and practical planning helps communities to deal with the disruptions that new technologies can create and to build on the opportunities that are available. The digital future is a key pillar in creating a vibrant community future.



## Goals for Ipswich & West Moreton's digital future

The advent of the National Broadband Network (NBN) and the potential of other digital technologies present new opportunities for economic, social and environmental development in the region.

Many communities in Ipswich & West Moreton such as Lockyer Valley, Grantham, Goodna, Ipswich and Withcott will be among the first in Australia to gain ultra-speed broadband connections through the NBN.

This plan proposes a vision and broad over-arching goals for Ipswich & West Moreton's future, enhanced by broadband and digital technologies

### Vision

*Ipswich & West Moreton will be a prosperous, sustainable and socially inclusive region, made up of many distinct communities, where people and businesses confidently use digital technology to enrich the way they live, work, learn, create and connect.*

### Economic and business goals

*A diverse and resilient economic base, with a variety of different businesses:*

- able to survive and thrive in the region through access to broadband services and appropriate digital technologies*
- supporting an improved level of employment sustainability and a greater range of employment occupations*
- using digital technologies to grow their market shares, to improve productivity, to enhance their knowledge resources and to build new networks of suppliers and partners.*

*The region will support the establishment of new businesses of all sizes by offering digitally enabled facilities, comprehensive online information, access to advice and responsive online government services.*

*Ipswich & West Moreton will build on its telecommunications infrastructure strengths with a focus on delivering and exploiting greater mobile connectivity and capacity for*

*key industry sectors, enterprises and individuals.*

### Local government goals

*Ipswich & West Moreton will be served by councils that use digital technologies to provide:*

- effective and efficient local services based on local innovation and the sharing of resources with other authorities.*
- better access to government and commercial services for all communities, but particularly for the smaller communities that are some distance from major population centres*

### Community goals

*People of all backgrounds and ages in Ipswich & West Moreton will have the confidence, capability and access to use digital technologies to support fulfilling, creative and healthy lives which enable them to be safe and socially connected.*

*Online services available for Ipswich & West Moreton's residents and visitors will be rich, extensive and easy to use.*

# Strategic drivers of this strategy: Mobility, changing work patterns, capacity building and open data

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A number of key drivers have informed the prioritisation of the strategic action areas in this report. Those drivers are a synthesis of global technology trends and local community aspiration.

## Technology driven mobility

Ubiquitous mobile connectivity is driving change to the way we work, the way we communicate with customers and the way we solve old problems faster than any other technology ever – it will lead to more efficient business models and improved lifestyles for individuals and society.

As wireless capabilities become increasingly integrated within computer

chips, the benefits of the computing world – innovation, short development cycles and low cost – are extending into mobile communications. As a result, traditionally unconnected devices are becoming connected – varying from smartphones, to cars and industrial machinery to farmland equipment. Increasingly the geo-spatial data that can be associated with a mobile device will drive changing business models in many sectors.

Ubiquitous mobile connectivity is becoming increasingly important in tourism, hospitality, agribusiness and education.

It is those regions who understand this global mobility trend and build appropriate infrastructures and applications to support and augment mobility that will most benefit over the next decade.

## Workforce and structural change

A recent report by the Telework Research Network found that part-time telecommuting by the 4.3 million Canadians with compatible jobs and a desire to work from home could have a bottom line impact of over \$53 billion

per year. An employer with 250 telecommuters, for example, would save over \$3 million per year.

It is this potential significant saving to major employers, particularly Government located in Brisbane that forms the cornerstone of a business case for telework infrastructure in the Ipswich & West Moreton region. The Queensland State Government's stated decentralisation aspirations that will potentially see more state public servants located in centres like Ipswich, provide an 'anchor tenancy' for a major telework centre located in the City.

Smaller centres in the region will take advantage of a large telework centre in Ipswich by promoting the major lifestyle advantage of living locally and working more often locally as opposed to the commute to Brisbane. As cultural change takes hold smaller centres will also be able to offer sustainable telework centres, which will provide further productivity improvement.

Thanks to advances in technology, work no longer needs to be tethered to time or place. Commonly known as telework – any substitution of technology for business travel, or

telecommuting—substitution of technology for commuter travel, employers, employees and communities are slowly learning that they are not constrained by where and when work is done.

With Brisbane and its surrounding cities and regions struggling to keep up with infrastructure costs, now is the time to consider innovative and modern approaches to addressing road and transport issues. The potential benefit for the region will be many more workers working within the region, providing the obvious flow-on economic effects to the retail and services sector.

Further to this, Australian businesses are starting to consider ‘near-shoring’ as an alternative to off-shoring. The term near-shoring refers to enterprises outsourcing parts of their operations such as call centres, para-legal, financial, secretarial or other services to geographically close locations with relatively lower costs. Ipswich is ideally positioned, with appropriate teleworking infrastructure and culture, to provide near-shore services to businesses in Brisbane who are facing

increasing staff- and property-related costs.

Home-based businesses are also effectively engaged in telework. By building the capacity of home-based businesses to reach new markets and networks the region will see more businesses establish and grow.

### **Improving human capital**

Economic growth will ultimately be driven in the digital economy at the enterprise level. On a practical level that might be a business able to reach new markets, build new products, communicate with customers in new ways, reduce costs or improve productivity. However without the capacity, skills and human capital individual enterprises in the Ipswich West Moreton region will struggle to take full advantage and mitigate some of the threats that the digital economy will drive.

Recent funding available through the Australian Government’s Digital Enterprise Program the Ipswich & West Moreton region has made some progress towards building digital awareness and capacity in key industry

sectors at enterprise level. The Digital Enterprise Program, despite best efforts and quality execution, is only likely to directly impact between 2% and 3% of enterprises registered in the region.

The long-term challenge for Ipswich & West Moreton is to build self-sustaining programs that are seeded by regional bodies but which significantly exceed previous programs' inroads into enterprise and sector level digital capacity building.

### **Broaden & grow our economic base - Open Data as a tool.**

Open data is a potential resource for the Ipswich & West Moreton region to broaden and grown the economic base that is, as yet, largely untapped. Many individuals and organisations collect a broad range of different types of data in order to perform their tasks.

Government, at all levels, is particularly significant in this respect, both because of the quantity and centrality of the data it collects, but also because much of that government data is public data by law, and therefore could be made open and available for others to use.



There are many different groups of people and organisations that could benefit from the availability of open data, including government agencies themselves. At the same time it is impossible to predict precisely how and where value will be created in the future. The nature of open data innovation is that developments often come from unlikely places.

Open government data can create value in many ways, including:

- Transparency and democratic control
- Participation and self-empowerment of citizens
- Improved or new private products and services
- Innovation
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness of government services
- Measurement of the effect of policies
- New knowledge from combined data sources and patterns in large data volumes.

Projects such as the Finnish ‘tax tree’ and British ‘where does my money go’ (<http://wheredoesmymoneygo.org/>) show citizens how their tax money is being spent by the government.

Open government data can help residents of the region to make better decisions in their own lives, enable them to be more active in society, and to solve their own problems. A woman

in Denmark built [findtoilet.dk](http://findtoilet.dk), which showed all the Danish public toilets. A similar project in Australia is the National Public Toilet Map: <http://www.toiletmap.gov.au/>

In the Netherlands a service, [vervuilingsalarm.nl](http://vervuilingsalarm.nl), warns you with a message if the air-quality in your vicinity is going to reach a self-defined threshold tomorrow. In New York there

#### *Floodwatch: New Zealand's Marlborough District Council's Open Data project*

In 2011 New Zealand's Marlborough District Council (MDC) embarked on an Open Data project called Floodwatch, providing real-time rainfall and river condition data in an easy-to-read map format to the public, council and contractors. It uses three datasets:

- river flows – measured in cubic feet/metre, includes information on the flow rate of the region's rivers, both actual (last 24 hours) and forecast (future 6 hours).
- river levels – measured in metres, includes the current height of the region's rivers.
- rainfall – measured in millimetres, includes rainfall totals for user-designated hourly timeframes.

The project took six months, leveraged existing MDC software and hardware solutions and had minimal implementation costs.

The public and businesses in the Marlborough region can use Floodwatch data and resultant flood risk analysis for their properties to inform their interactions with other government departments.

Members of the public can actively monitor real-time data and thresholds from Floodwatch during flooding events, to take proactive and efficient actions to protect lives and property.

Taken over time, Floodwatch data can reveal flood risk in the region, which can be used to guide smart planning and development in the area.

Floodwatch data provides the public with a clearer picture of the spatial distribution of flood events and risk. This encourages informed and active participation in government policy development, particularly disaster management.

The success of Floodwatch and its use of existing technology solutions have spurred planning for similar online data delivery systems. An application using river flow and aquifer data is being planned to support water takes and entitlement management in the region. This could generate greater public involvement in this policy area.

is an application that show you where you can walk your dog, as well as to find other people who use the same parks.

Economically, open data is of great importance as well. Several studies have estimated the economic value of open data at several tens of billions of Euros annually in the EU alone. New products and companies are re-using open data to access new markets and create new products.

Connecting open data to the people most able to economically exploit is potentially the seed for innovative new business streams in Ipswich & West Moreton.

Open data is also of value for government itself. For example, it can increase government efficiency. The Dutch Ministry of Education has published all of their education-related data online for re-use. This resulted in a significant drop in the number of questions they receive, reducing workload and costs. Open data is also making government more effective, which ultimately also reduces costs.

## Getting folks in a room: Unconferences, Meetups and Barcamps

Face-to-face events can be a very effective way to encourage others to use your data. Reasons that you may consider putting on an event include:

- Finding out more about prospective reusers
- Finding out more about demand for different datasets
- Finding out more about how people want to reuse your data
- Enabling prospective reusers to find out more about what data you have
- Enabling prospective users to meet each other (e.g. so they can collaborate)
- Exposing your data to a wider audience (e.g. from blog posts or media coverage that the event may help to generate)

There are many ways of running events, and different types of events, depending on what you want to achieve. As well as more traditional conference models, (pre-prepared formal talks, presentations and demonstrations etc), there are also various kinds of participant driven events, where those who turn up may:

- Guide or define the agenda for the event
- Introduce themselves, talk about what they're interested in and what they're working on, on an ad hoc basis
- Give impromptu micro-short presentations on something they are working on
- Lead sessions on something they are interested in

There is plenty of documentation online about how to run these kinds of events, which you can find by searching for things like: 'unconference', 'barcamp', 'meetup', 'speedgeek', 'lightning talk', and so on. You may also find it worthwhile to contact people who have run these kinds of events in other countries, who will most likely be keen to help you out and to advise you on your event. It may be valuable to partner with another organisation (e.g. a civic society organisation, a news organisation or an educational institution) to broaden your base participants and to increase your exposure.

Open Data Handbook Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution (Unported) v3.0 License.

## Digital strategies and actions to build a great future

Explor Consulting has identified five strategies that should be pursued by Ipswich & West Moreton's key regional bodies, local government authorities, industry, community and other stakeholders to create a better future using digital technologies:

Each of these strategies is important and each should be implemented through a series of projects and actions (all described with detailed actions in the following section):

### **1. Lead and collaborate on regional digital futures.**

Ipswich & West Moreton has four separate local government authorities that serve different communities with different needs and each community will face its own journey towards its digital future. Individual communities and the region as a whole will achieve more if regional government and other leading bodies collaborate and share appropriate resources. This will require region-wide leadership.

The local government authorities and the key regional bodies should commit to a digital strategy and establish sound arrangements for leadership, collaboration and the management of agreed actions. They should promote the strategy and become good exemplars of modern digitally enabled organisations.

### **2. Extend access to digital infrastructure – with a focus on mobility.**

Through past leadership and effort of the City of Ipswich in planning for digital infrastructure the region currently enjoys a distinct competitive advantage. The region should actively build on and exploit this advantage in order to maximise the benefits and leverage increased productivity improvement. Digital infrastructure should be extended so that there are more public outdoor spaces and shared indoor spaces where people who are working, learning or enjoying their leisure time can access broadband services, particularly through mobile devices. Further, all regional bodies should align their lobbying and planning efforts towards extending wireless and mobile infrastructure across the region for the benefit of key industry sectors such as agriculture.

### **3. Align key industry sector digital capacity building effort to well articulated goals.**

Through long-term effort and more recent funding available through the Digital Enterprise Program the Ipswich & West Moreton region has made some progress towards building digital awareness and capacity in key industry sectors at enterprise level. The Digital Enterprise Program, despite best efforts and quality execution is only likely to directly impact between 2% and 4% of enterprises registered in the region. The long-term challenge for Ipswich & West Moreton is to build self sustaining programs that are seeded by regional bodies but significantly exceed previous programs' inroad into enterprise and sector level digital capacity

building. Through a range of integrated approaches Ipswich & West Moreton should build self-referential, sustainable industry led networks, events and knowledge sharing and align those efforts to a bold set of five-year goals.

#### **4. Accelerate efforts to make Ipswich & West Moreton an 'Open Data' leader in Australia.**

Open data often refers to government information that has been made available for free for anyone to use. Sharing of government information as open data without cost will benefit individuals, communities, companies and the whole region. Giving access to government data for free will be good for the regions enterprises. It will breed new markets and support innovation. Increasing data openness will make it easier to use for other government and regional agencies in planning for the future. Open data may also help in finding practices where the potential of digital information hasn't yet been realised. Some effort has already been committed to better sharing and openness of data across the region's public sector bodies. The RDA should lead in the acceleration of effort to see Ipswich & West Moreton recognised as an Australian leader in open data.

#### **5. Accelerate efforts to make Ipswich & West Moreton a 'telework' leader.**

A significant number of employed people in Ipswich & West Moreton leave the region each day to attend a workplace in greater Brisbane. By building infrastructure and affecting cultural change a greater proportion of these people would work from home, in the smaller centres of Scenic Rim, Somerset and the Lockyer Valley, or commute to the centre of the City of Ipswich. A greater number of people teleworking for a greater number of days will drive growth in the local economy, ease the pressure on transport infrastructure, improve the 'lifestyle' attraction of the region and reduce costs for Government and industry. The region should set a bold target to increase numbers of teleworkers in the region and partner with Government and industry to build infrastructure that would support that goal.

## 1. Lead and collaborate on digital futures.

Ipswich & West Moreton comprises four separate local government authorities that serve different communities with different needs. Each community will face its own journey towards its digital future. Individual communities and the region as a whole will achieve more if regional government and other leading bodies collaborate and share appropriate resources. This will require region-wide leadership.

The local government authorities and the key regional bodies should commit to a digital strategy and establish sound arrangements for leadership, collaboration and the management of agreed actions. They should promote the strategy and become good exemplars of modern digitally enabled organisations.

These actions prepare the way for the government authorities to meet the goals for **Ipswich & West Moreton's digital future**.

	Project/Action	Scope & Approach
1.1	<b>Commit to the strategy</b>	<p>Ipswich &amp; West Moreton's individual local government authorities and the key regional bodies should collectively and individually agree to a clear digital futures strategy for the region and then provide active ongoing support for its promotion and implementation. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alignment of their individual strategies with the regional digital strategy where required</li><li>• Promotion to residents and other key community stakeholders</li><li>• Regionally consistent advocacy to potential partners and funders including State and Federal governments</li><li>• Firm implementation management including clear accountabilities and effective project management.</li></ul>
1.2	<b>Allocate responsibility for leadership</b>	<p>An appropriate regional body should be given responsibility for leading the governance, implementation, monitoring and regular revision of the digital strategy. Resources should be made available to facilitate and co-ordinate this work.</p>
1.3	<b>Convene a regional digital leadership forum</b>	<p>The region should convene a region-wide digital leadership forum that regularly brings together key stakeholders and local champions in implementing the digital futures strategy. The forum should assist in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Digital advocacy for the region</li><li>• Building networks and partnerships</li><li>• Identifying new opportunities</li><li>• Operational planning</li><li>• Monitoring implementation progress.</li></ul>
1.4	<b>Agree on an annual operational plan</b>	<p>An annual operational plan should be prepared, setting out the agreed practical actions to be undertaken for implementing the digital strategy. The plan should also define relevant targets to be achieved.</p>

Project/Action	Scope & Approach
1.5 <b>Create a regional digital futures website</b>	A website should be created to describe and promote Ipswich & West Moreton's vision of its digital future to its residents, visitors, potential investors and other stakeholders and funders. The website should be engaging, consistent and regularly updated.
1.6 <b>Build councils' digital capacities</b>	<p>Each local authority should seek to become an exemplar of a modern digitally enabled organisation and should build its own internal digital capacities, sharing relevant approaches with other authorities. Local authorities should focus on their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacities for managing digital programs</li> <li>• Strategic plans, adopting 'digital' as a planning pillar</li> <li>• Online delivery of services</li> <li>• Internal work practices, with opportunities to adopt digitally enabled improvements</li> <li>• Underpinning technology systems and infrastructure.</li> </ul>

## 2. Extend access to digital infrastructure - with a focus on mobility.

The Ipswich & West Moreton region, through planning for digital infrastructure, currently enjoys a distinct competitive advantage. The region should actively build on and exploit this advantage in order to maximise the benefits.

Digital infrastructure should be extended so that there are more public outdoor spaces and shared indoor spaces where people who are working, learning or enjoying their leisure time can access broadband services, particularly through mobile devices. Further, all regional bodies should align their lobbying and planning efforts towards extending wireless and mobile infrastructure across the region for the benefit of key industry sectors such as agriculture and improved crisis management.

These actions will meet the Economic and business, Local Government and Community goals described in the **Goals for Ipswich & West Moreton's digital futures** section of this document.

Project/Action	Scope & Approach
2.1 <b>Mobile black-spots and capacity report card</b>	Build on the work previously undertaken by RDAIWM to identify mobile black-spots and capacity issues across the region by investing in an annual or bi-annual study and publicly reporting on the results. The data sets attained through this process should be made available publicly and for free as per Strategic Actions group 4 below.  The RDA and councils should co-invest in this regular update and use the data strategically to positively affect telecommunications providers to partner with the region to provide better and faster mobile coverage over time.
2.2 <b>Mobile Towers Community Engagement &amp; Planning</b>	The councils should research, develop and implement a best practice approach for planning scheme code development and community engagement in the establishment of locations of mobile tower infrastructure. This will ensure the growing demand for mobility and mobile infrastructure is facilitated by effective engagement with mobile network providers.

Project/Action	Scope & Approach
2.3 Create /Co-ordinate Wi-Fi hotspots	<p>Wi-Fi hotspots should be introduced in key locations of towns throughout the region.</p> <p>Actions should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and map existing Wi-Fi hotspots throughout the region. Publish locations on regional digital futures website</li> <li>• Develop a common brand to promote/publicise existing Wi-Fi hotspots or when creating new Wi-Fi hotspots</li> <li>• Investigate partnerships with telecommunications carriers for Wi-Fi hand-off and small cell creation</li> <li>• Investigate ability for Wi-Fi infrastructure to be installed on street lighting, street furniture or other council-owned facilities.</li> </ul> <p>The hotspots should be configured so as to support online activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing immediate and up to date information about the locality to visitors</li> <li>• Delivering immediate and up to date local information for the community</li> <li>• Widening access to online education resources by students of all ages</li> <li>• Providing access to other important government, community and commercial online services</li> <li>• Creating valuable mobile digital access for businesses and their employees.</li> </ul>
2.4 Extend the digital infrastructure of community use centres	<p>The region's community use centres, libraries and other community facilities should be given stronger roles in enabling all residents to have access to online services and digital resources. These stronger roles should be developed through measures including the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free W-Fi within each facility (if not already provided)</li> <li>• Mobile tablet devices for loan use within key facilities</li> <li>• Access to a rich array of online resources, particularly educational resources.</li> </ul> <p>Effective technical support should be provided for the facilities by councils.</p>
2.5 Extend access to video conferencing	<p>The region should work with local authorities and government funding bodies to provide better access to video conferencing and similar facilities in Ipswich &amp; West Moreton's more isolated towns. These facilities should be able to support better access to services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and training</li> <li>• Health and related services</li> <li>• Consultations with professional advisers</li> <li>• Business meetings.</li> </ul>



### 3. Align key industry sector digital capacity building effort to well articulated goals.

Through long-term effort and more recent funding available through the Digital Enterprise Program, the Ipswich & West Moreton region has made some progress towards building digital awareness and capacity in key industry sectors at enterprise level.

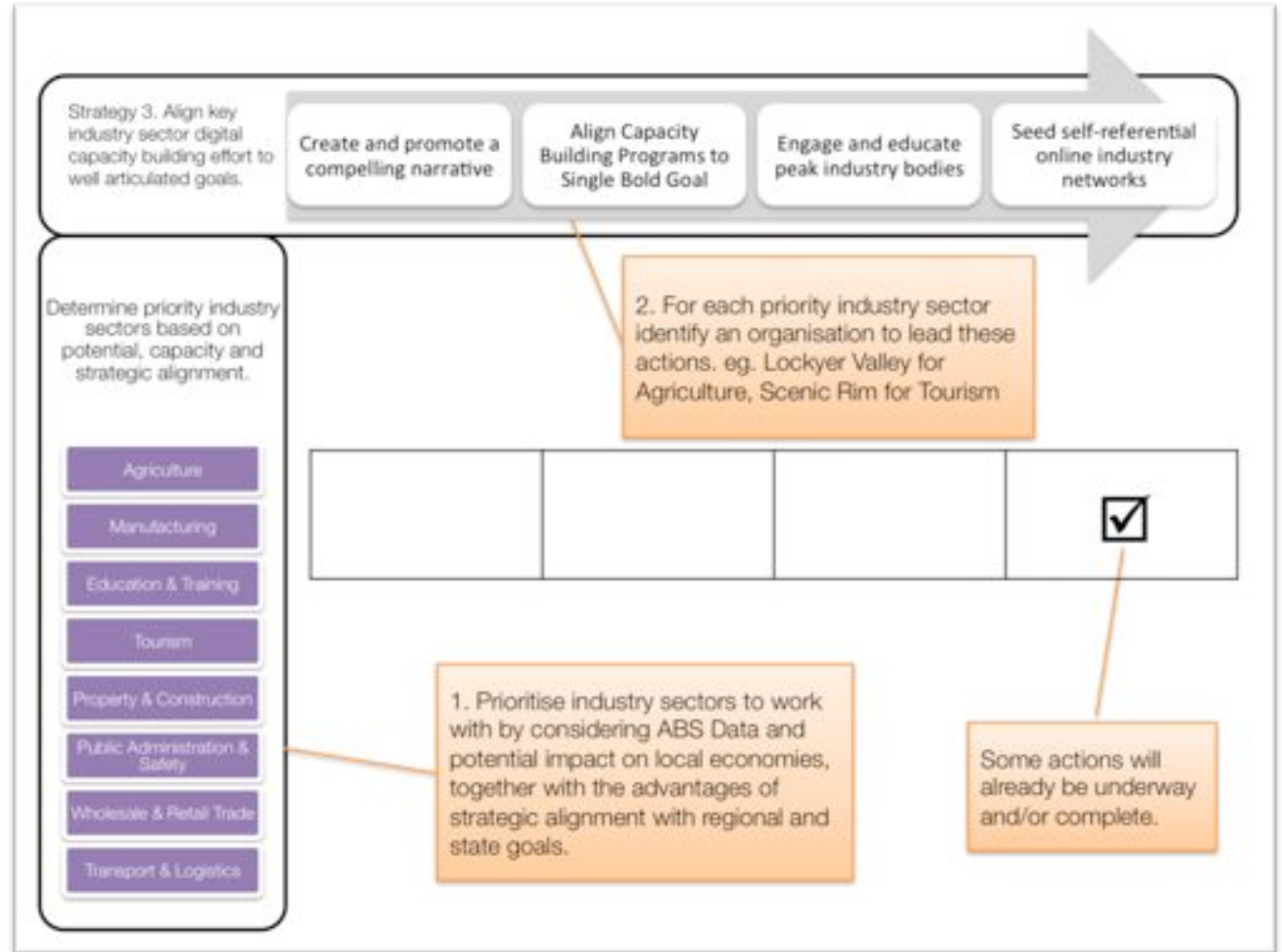
Long-term, Ipswich & West Moreton need to build self sustaining programs that are seeded by regional bodies but significantly exceed previous programs' inroad into enterprise and sector level digital capacity building. The adoption of a range of integrated approaches will allow Ipswich & West Moreton to build self-referential, sustainable industry led networks, events and knowledge sharing and align those efforts to a bold set of five-year goals.

These actions primarily address the Economic and business goals described in the **Goals for Ipswich & West Moreton's digital futures** section of this document.

Project/Action	Scope & Approach
3.1 Identify priority industry sectors regionally and sub-regionally	<p>While there is extensive ABS data related to the most significant industry sectors operating within the Ipswich West Moreton economy there are other factors that should be considered by stakeholders in determining the priority sectors. Sub-regional, regional and state alignment should be taken into account as well as capacity for councils and other regional bodies to act. Each priority sector identified should be assigned to a lead organisation to focus on capacity building activities over the medium to long term.</p> <p>Metrics should be developed to measure RDA IWM digital economy based on industry sector so it can be defined or monitored on a bi-annual basis.</p> <p>A Regional Digital Action Plan should be developed for key industry sectors (incorporating participation by SMEs) to determine digital capability and apply comparison metrics for best practice digital adoption leading to productivity gains and/or revenue growth.</p>
3.2 Align capacity-building programs to a single bold goal	<p>Ipswich and West Moreton should collectively establish and promote a single bold goal that current and future capacity building programs can align to. The region should take a baseline snapshot of the current measure of this goal and regularly report against it. For example, the region may adopt the following goal: That 75% of all Ipswich West Moreton businesses will have a clearly articulated digital strategy by 2018. All programs, activities and promotions over the next five years should align with that simple goal.</p>

Project/Action	Scope & Approach
3.3 <b>Create and promote a compelling narrative for each priority sector.</b>	<p>For each priority industry sector the lead organisation should work with industry and government stakeholders to create a compelling narrative and digital vision for that sector. The lead organisation and other stakeholders should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire and distribute content relevant to the specific sector directly and via other capacity building programs</li> <li>• Organise and host an Annual or Bi-Annual Expo specifically focused on the sector and its digital needs</li> <li>• Identify local champions and develop and distribute their success stories to others in the sector</li> <li>• Work with RDA IWM to identify opportunities to seed enterprise level Lighthouse Projects that can inform and inspire other enterprises in the sector</li> </ul>
3.4 <b>Seed self-referential online industry networks</b>	<p>Using freely available wiki/social/knowledge sharing online software platforms the lead organisation should ‘seed and feed’ an online participatory sector based network for each priority sector. The network would be a way for enterprises to access knowledge, share information and find answers to key digital questions locally and with input from other sources. The network would also be used to promote the narrative and events such as expos.</p>
3.5 <b>Engage and educate peak industry bodies</b>	<p>Each lead organisation should engage the key local, regional, state and national industry bodies in the above goal setting and activities to support the sector.</p>

As part of developing an operational plan for this strategy Councils and the RDA should agree on a small number (3 or 4) of industry sectors to focus capacity building. When decided, a “matrix” similar to the one opposite could be developed for each sector to assign responsibility and more clearly define the actions required.



#### 4. Accelerate efforts to make Ipswich & West Moreton an 'Open Data' leader in Australia.

Open data often refers to government information that has been made available free for anyone to use. Sharing of government information as open data without cost will benefit individuals, communities, companies and the whole region. Giving access to government data for free will be good for the regions enterprises. It will breed new markets and support innovation. Increasing data openness will make it easier to use for other government and regional agencies in planning for the future. Open data may also help in finding practices where the potential of digital information hasn't yet been realised. Some effort has already been committed to better sharing and openness of data across the region's public sector bodies. The RDA should lead in the acceleration of effort to see Ipswich & West Moreton recognised as an Australian leader in open data.

These actions primarily address the Local Government goals, and also meet Community goals as described in the **Goals for Ipswich & West Moreton's digital futures** section of this document.

Project/Action	Scope & Approach
4.1 <b>Develop a shared business case for open data across councils and other Government agencies</b>	Councils should work with RDA IWM to develop a detailed business case (incorporating potential regional economic benefits) for moving to an open data regime across the region. The business case would include the case for creating a single online entry point and repository for the regions open data sets.
4.2 <b>Identify a single pilot regional data set to release and create an innovation opportunity</b>	In parallel with developing a more structured business case stakeholders should identify a small number of regional data set to release and promote to those most likely to innovate using those data.
4.3 <b>Drive data sharing and publication through events and networks</b>	RDA IWM should lead in bringing together regional organisations to share open data sets and at 'data party' events and networks that enhance the connectivity and collaboration of regional organisations.
4.4 <b>Drive and promote innovation through access to Open Data</b>	Through events like 'hackerthons' and 'coding parties' the RDA IWM should promote the use of open data and the potential impacts on driving innovation and creating new opportunities. This could be delivered in conjunction with local educational institutions and could offer small sums of prized money to build applications with local use at a low cost.

## 5. Accelerate efforts to make Ipswich & West Moreton a 'telework' leader.

A significant number of employed people in Ipswich & West Moreton leave the region each day to attend a workplace in greater Brisbane. By building infrastructure and affecting cultural change a greater proportion of these people would work from home, in the smaller centres of Scenic Rim, Somerset and the Lockyer Valley or would commute to the centre of the City of Ipswich.

A greater number of people teleworking for a greater number of days will drive growth in the local economy, ease the pressure on transport infrastructure, improve the 'lifestyle' attraction of the region and reduce costs for Government and industry. The region should set a bold target to increase numbers of teleworkers in the region and partner with Government and industry to build infrastructure that would support that goal.

*“In 2010, Access Economics found that if 10% of Australian employees were to telework 50% of the time, total annual productivity gains would be in the order of \$1.4bn to \$1.9bn per year by reducing commute times, office space and staff turnover.”*

These actions primarily address the Economic and business and Community goals described in the **Goals for Ipswich & West Moreton’s digital futures** section of this document.

	Project/Action	Scope & Approach
5.1	Measure a baseline and set a bold target for the region	Ipswich & West Moreton should rapidly collect data on current workforce mobility and telework activity as a baseline to measure progress over the medium to long term.
5.2	Consider working with other SEQ regions	RDA IWM should work with its counterparts in South East Queensland to develop a comprehensive understanding of the business case and sustainability for telework centres – particularly focused on telework centres located regionally with state government as an anchor tenant.
5.3	Actively plan for Government officers as an anchor tenant	RDA IWM and stakeholders should build a strategy to communicate with state government the opportunity available for a major telework centre to State Government.  A distributive business model should also be developed to allow work to be undertaken at, or closer to, home – for example, in Ipswich 1200 State Government employees (some of whom have been relocated within the Ipswich CBD) will soon be undertaking administrative and service roles away from their traditional head office arrangement in the congested Brisbane CBD.
5.4	Develop feasibility studies for smaller centres	While initial focus should be on building the case for a major regional telework centre in the City of Ipswich RDA IWM should lead studies in conjunction with councils for smaller telework centres in the key towns in the region.

**5.5 Actively promote teleworking to major employers in Brisbane**

While initial effort should focus on State Government as an anchor tenant data should be researched on other key employers in the Brisbane city that may consider teleworking, near-shoring or other forms of flexible working that could benefit Ipswich West Moreton. Communications material and marketing collateral should be developed in conjunction with a communications and promotion strategy.

**5.6 Develop networks for home-based businesses**

Home based businesses represent a growing sector of small to medium enterprises and microbusinesses in the Ipswich West Moreton region. Employing a similar set of actions to those described in Strategy Action Area 3 the RDA should lead capacity building and promotion of this sector.

**5.5 Councils develop telework policy for council officers**

Individual councils should lead in the region by developing and adopting their own telework policy for council officers.

# Setting out on the journey

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This plan has set out a vision for Ipswich & West Moreton's future, enhanced by broadband and digital technologies. It has also proposed strategies for achieving that future.

The first stage in implementing this plan is for Ipswich & West Moreton's individual local government authorities and the key regional bodies to address the proposed actions in the first of the five strategies: Lead and collaborate on digital futures. In particular, there must be a clear commitment to the strategy and clearly defined leadership responsibility.

There should be early work to

- 1.1 Commit to the strategy**
- 1.2 Allocate responsibility for leadership**
- 1.4 Agree on an annual operational plan**

When these foundations are in place, work should commence on two critical areas that will require careful consideration, planning and a significant period of implementation:

## **3.1 Identify priority industry sectors regionally and sub-regionally**

## **3.2 Align capacity-building programs to a single bold goal**

Many of the proposed actions in the remainder of the five strategies will require funding from outside of the region.

Explor is aware that there are a number of relevant funding programs that will be managed the Queensland Government due to be announced in the coming year.

The Australian Government funds many programs related to the NBN and regional development through the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy and the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport. Other Australian Government departments also provide funding to encourage the update of

digital services to improve service delivery.