

Griffith City Council BUSINESS AUDIT 2018



AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Prepared by

Leanne Austin, Economic Development Officer

Purpose of the Audit

The Griffith Business Audit was first conducted in 2012 to establish data in relation to the number of bricks-and-mortar businesses in Griffith and to track movement in and out of the various business precincts. This is the seventh successive year Griffith City Council's Economic Development Unit has undertaken a business audit. The data that informs this report was obtained during January 2018.

The Griffith Business Audit is one of Council's key economic development monitoring tools. This data will provide a wealth of information to assist Council to deliver the most appropriate development and growth strategies for the City as well as identifying challenges and opportunities for our local businesses.

Aims

The aims of the Griffith Business Audit are to:

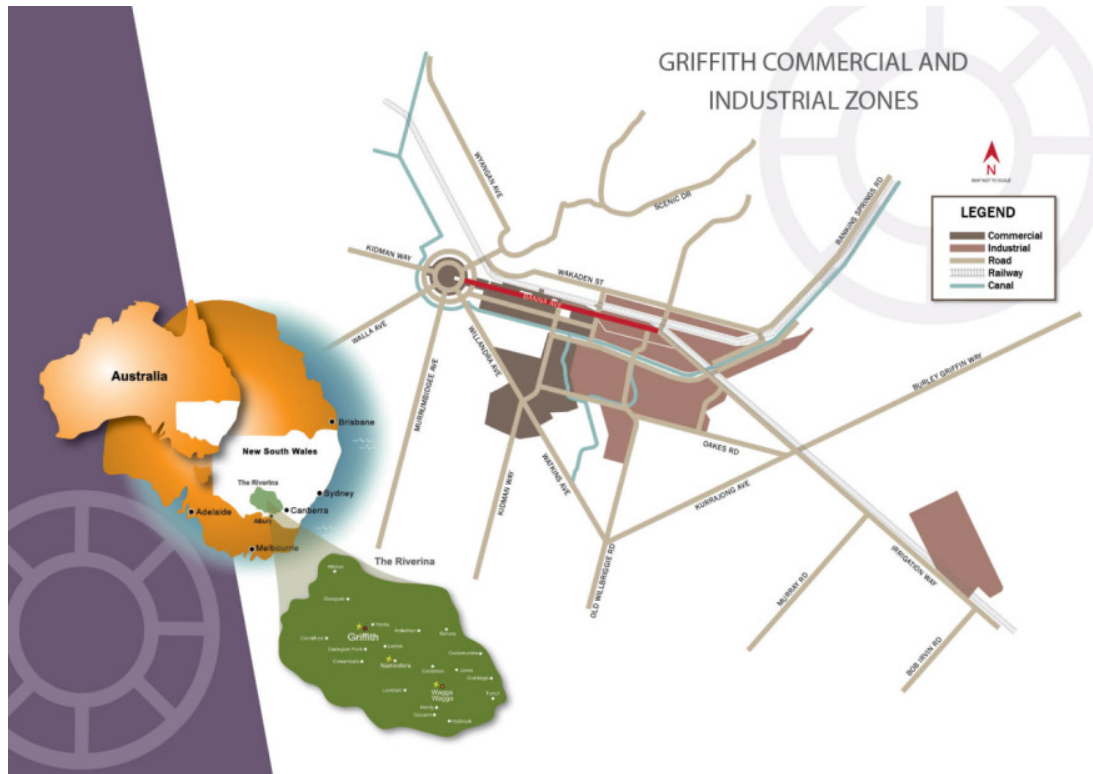
- Observe the diversity of retail and commercial activities which occupy bricks and mortar premises in the designated commercial zones.
- Observe the retail and commercial vacancy rates as one of many barometers of business health.
- Establish evidence to determine commercial trends and to identify commercial hubs.
- Create spatial mapping of industry sectors in the Griffith Local Government Area (LGA).
- Identify where retail and commercial activity is thriving, in decline, changing /not changing, by undertaking trend analysis.
- Undertake comprehensive, accurate and annual data to assist in informing assumptions about the retail and commercial status of the Griffith business precincts.

Methodology

1. The Business Audit is conducted on an annual basis, usually in January. Data is collected by driving through the various precincts and videoing the business frontages. Please note that while all due care has been taken to ensure the data included in the report is accurate and current, there may be errors or omissions in it as the information is reliant on physical factors such as the shop frontage and signage.
2. Following collection of data the information is transferred onto a spreadsheet to allow for review of any variations against the previous year's recordings.
3. The Business Audit document is then compiled using the collected data and any required research.
4. The following terms have been used in disseminating and reviewing the data:
 - **New** refers to a new business (including the changeover of a business) establishing itself in the location.
 - **Closed** refers to a business that has completely closed. A name change and movement to an alternate location is not considered a closure.
 - A **vacant** building refers to a building that does not house an operating business. Storage of the leaseholder's belongings is not included as a bricks and mortar business.
 - **Movement outwards** refers to a business which has relocated its bricks and mortar shop front to an alternate location.
 - **Multiple** businesses operating from the same bricks and mortar shop front are counted as one.
 - As of the 2017 Audit, if a business **expands** into a neighbouring lot it is only counted as one bricks and mortar business.
 - **Bricks and mortar** refers to the physical presence of a business in a building or other structure. The term brick-and-mortar business is often used to refer to a company that possesses or leases retail stores, factory production facilities, or warehouses for its operations as opposed to an e-commerce business.
 - **Vacancy rate** is calculated by dividing the total number of vacancies by total number of businesses.
 - **Total number of businesses** is calculated by adding the total number of bricks and mortar businesses and the total number of vacancies.

Please note that while all due care has been taken to ensure the data included in this report is accurate and current, there may be errors or omissions in it. Griffith City Council and its employees accept no responsibility for the completeness, accuracy or reliability of the data.

Griffith Business Targeted Areas



The business and commercial precincts targeted as part of the Griffith Business Audit include:

- Airport
- Banna Avenue (BA)
- Battista Industrial Area
- Beelbanger
- Benerembah Street
- Bilbul
- Bonegilla Road
- Canal Street
- Driver
- East Griffith
- Favell Street
- Gateway Megacentre
- Hanwood
- Hillston Road
- Hometown Centre
- Jondaryan Avenue
- Kooyoo Street
- Mackay Avenue
- Mooreville Industrial Area
- Murray Road
- Oakes Road
- Olympic Street
- North Griffith
- Palla Street
- Railway Street
- Tharbogang
- Ulone Street
- Wakaden Street
- West Griffith
- Wickhams Hill Industrial Area
- Willandra Avenue
- Yambil Street
- Yenda
- Yoogali

Summary of Audit

Griffith City Council local government area (LGA) has a resident population of 26,422 (ABS ERP 2016) and a retail catchment of over 55,000. There are 3,184 registered businesses (Australian Bureau Statistics Counts of Australian Businesses June 2017) and of this number, the Griffith Business Audit 2018 has recorded approximately 970 bricks and mortar businesses. Griffith City's Gross Regional Product was \$1.39 billion in the year ending June 2016, declining -1.3% since the previous year. The 2016/17 figure with the NIEIR data update is due to be released end of March.

The 2018 business audit results demonstrate a minimal decrease of 0.4% in the total number of bricks and mortar businesses since 2017 (see table below). There has been a 4.8% decrease in new businesses since the same period last year. With around 45 new businesses opening in the last 12 months, it is pleasing to see such a variety of new business types including fuel outlets, food, clothing, hair and beauty, car wash, funeral services, finance, recreation and agriculture.

The audit has recorded an increase in the number closures since 2017, going from 19 to 29 in the past year. According to the data, there were approximately 115 vacant buildings across the LGA of Griffith at the time of the audit. In 2017 this number was 86, 94 in 2016, 99 in 2015. The vacancy rate throughout the LGA is currently 10.5%. In previous years the rate was 8.1 % (2017), 10.2% (2016) and 10.3% (2015). Vacancies across Australia appear to becoming a systemic trend and do not seem to be isolated only to Griffith. According to the Property Council of Australia's Office Market Report (2016), the average vacancy rate is 8.5%, meaning that Griffith LGA vacancy rates are slightly above average.

It is clear that the retail sector in Griffith is changing as more businesses begin to look further than the traditional shop fronts. For example many businesses are sharing office spaces with 2 or more other businesses. More retailers also appear to be expanding and moving to alternative precincts with 34 businesses relocating to another area within the LGA in 2018 compared to 9 in 2017 and 10 in 2016. This is a positive reflection of Griffith's economy while demonstrating how various precincts including villages are evolving and bringing in new clientele.

Business owners are shifting towards alternative retail business models in order to build creative businesses from home, online or in pop-up spaces. An increasing number of local businesses are operating from mobile vans, particularly food vans. This could be due to reduced costs compared to setting up a brick-and-mortar retail location while providing the opportunity for face-to-face interaction with customers and flexibility of being able to try different locations on different days and special events.

Summary	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
New + movement in	79	83	94	47	44	30	37
Closed	29	19	26	26	10	29	48
Vacant buildings	115	86	94	99	48	73	98
Movement out	34	9	10	47	14	30	86
Vacancy rate (%)	10.5	8.1	10.2	10.3	5.1	7.5	13.1
Total bricks and mortar	970	974	922	860	895	904	650
Total no. of businesses	1085	1060	1016	959	943	977	748

Banna Avenue

Banna Avenue is Griffith City's main retail precinct which is characterised by the long avenue of shady London Plane trees, a mix of retail stores including clothing, homewares, footwear, al fresco cafes and restaurants, accommodation, banking, real estate agencies, home appliances, hair and beauty, butchers, greengrocer, toy and speciality stores.

The 2018 audit revealed an increase in shopfront vacancies, a decrease of new businesses (24 in 2017 compared to 12 at the time of the 2018 audit) and minimal outward movement of businesses. New businesses include fuel outlets, Ji Yun Chinese Restaurant, Cartel, Mass Nutrition and Café 2sixty2. Some of the shops that closed in the last twelve months include Toptown Video, Moreens Lingerie, Harlem & Rose, Taineys, From St Jude and the Roastery, the majority of these being clothing retail outlets. The increase in these types of business closures could be a result of increased ecommerce retail transactions which is consistent with the current marketplace trends.

Similar to previous years, shopfronts/land remaining vacant including the old Murrumbidgee Irrigation depot site at the corner of Banna Avenue and Crossing Street, the Rice Growers site and Penfold's Winery.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
237	23	17	9	3	Banna Jondaryan Griffith Central	12

Ulong Street, Kooyoo Street, Bonegilla Road and Canal Street - CBD

This area encompasses Ulong Street, Kooyoo Street, Bonegilla Road and Canal Street which are all streets that connect Banna Avenue and Yambil Street. These precincts are predominately home to community services, cafes and restaurants, accommodation, solicitors and accountants, lending brokers, hairdressers, clothing, giftware, car sales and homewares. Although there have been a number of movements in and out as well as new businesses established the overall number of bricks and mortar businesses has remained stable (increase of 1 overall).

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
37	4	4	2	1	Yambil	8

Yambil Street

Yambil Street is parallel to Banna Avenue and is divided by Jondaryan Avenue which separates the professional precinct from the multi-complex shopping centres.

On the northern end, the type of services you can expect include; financial services, accountants, solicitors, consultants, hair and beauty, surveyors, furniture and office, hardware and department stores such as The Area Builders, GB's Sports, accommodation, job network, conveyancers, real estate agents, health and government and community services. The Griffith Fire Station, Griffith Central and Griffin Plaza are located at the southern end of Yambil Street where Jondaryan Avenue bisects Jondaryan Avenue.

In 2018, Yambil Street had a considerable number of new businesses (21) which were predominantly located within the two plazas; Griffith Central and Griffin Plaza. A number of businesses are sharing larger premises such as the Griffith Aged Support Service and Dyrri Bang Gu Aboriginal Aged Care now located in the Yambil Hub and the RMS closed with services now provided by Service NSW. The majority of the closures over the 12 month period were a result of changeover businesses in the two plazas.

Works are expected to commence during 2018 on the Yambil Street upgrade which include replacing infrastructure, pavement repairs and rejuvenation, establishment of street trees, installation of street furniture, and the construction of a new footpath. This will greatly improve the business and shopping experience in this precinct.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
158	24	17	7	10	Banna, Kooyoo, Ulong, Yambil	21

Benerembah precinct

Benerembah Street is the centre of town and part of Walter Burley Griffin's vision was to house local government here. This area encompasses a wide circular road which accommodates a diverse mix of businesses from upholstery, hair and beauty, tile shop, professional services, engineering, civil construction and architectural as well as a supermarket and training services. The audit data also includes businesses located in Kookora Street and Griffin Avenue.

This area has remained relatively stable in the last 12 months with two new businesses establishing and one business relocating to the area.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
38	3	3	0	3	Banna Griffin Benerembah Jondaryan	4

Wakaden Street

Wakaden Street has a diverse mix of service-type industries, agricultural, retail and construction, mixed with high-density and single-dwelling housing. In 2018, Wakaden Street remained relatively consistent with the previous year in regards to total number of businesses, vacant shopfronts, and minimal business movement. Of note, the new Ambulance Station is currently under construction on the corner of Wakaden Street and Crossing Street.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
51	4	4	0	3	Lenehan Whybrow Altin	5

Railway Street / Olympic Street

Railway/Olympic Street is often referred to as the back street of Griffith and runs parallel to Banna Avenue. It is identifiable by large concrete and corrugated iron sheds in one section and a mixture of backend shops and flats. It also houses the Police Station, PCYC and vacant Area News building.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
15	3	4	-	-	-	1

Jondaryn Avenue (including Favell Street)

Lined by date palm trees, this major thoroughfare into the City of Griffith has been included independently of the Wickhams Hill precinct. This strip has a mixture of accommodation, fast food, services, agricultural and hardware supplies. Since the previous audit, a new car wash has been constructed and opened near Aldi and KFC.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
28	1	1	-	1	Banna	2

Willandra Avenue / Gateway Mega centre

Willandra Avenue is made up of a mix of businesses including a tyre retailer, sign writer, caravan and boating (leisure) and a seed cleaning business. This strip also incorporates the Gateway Mega centre which includes Harvey Norman, Supercheap Auto, Knock on Wood, Anytime Fitness and BCF. There were very few changes this year with one vacancy in this area.

No. of Businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
15	1	1	-	-	-	-

Griffith Hometown Centre

Griffith Hometown Centre is located on the outskirts of Griffith on the Kidman Way. The centre features Bunnings, Griffith City Cinema Complex, Star City Ten Pin Bowling, Family Funland, Repco, Fantastic Furniture and Spotlight.

The opening of Family Funland in the Griffith Hometown Centre has created a great attraction for Griffith's youth. It features a Soft Play arena, Boulderling course, Laser Tag, arcade style games, XD Dark Ride, along with Park Central Café and function rooms.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
8	-	-	1	-	-	1

Wickhams Hill Industrial Area

Wickhams Hill Industrial Area is the longest standing Industrial Area in Griffith and is predominantly agricultural machinery, grain services, engineering, packaging, landscaping, concreting and other various industrial users such as a winery, pallets and commercial waste management services.

It is a very stable industrial precinct with minimal changes in the last few years.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
76	10	8	1	3	Collier Lenahan	3

Homemakers Centre/Mooreville Industrial Area

The Homemakers Centre is one of the oldest industrial estates in Griffith and encompasses Altin Street, Blumer Avenue, Collier Street, Donaldson Street, Ebert Street, Hams Street and Whybrow Street. The area is defined by a mix of mechanical, irrigation, printing, trades, steel manufacturing, bulky goods, and furniture outlets. This estate is demonstrating that it has opportunities to cater for a mix of small and large frontage premises and a diverse range of business owners and consumers.

The number of businesses has remained consistent with previous years.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
90	17	13	3	5	Leeton Gateway Centre Yoogali Wakaden Lk Wyangan	4

Battista Estate

Battista Estate is one of the newer industrial areas with frontage to major arterial roads and heavy vehicle user routes. This area houses irrigation, construction, self-store and security services. There have been very few changes with one business relocating to Wakaden Street. There are still vacant land parcels available which would be an attractive lure for businesses wishing to establish or relocate to this area.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
16	1	-	-	1	Wakaden	0

Oakes Road

Oakes Road is made up of a mixture of businesses including KFC, Aldi, Hartwigs, Milbrae, Veritech, Enviroform, Swift Metals, MIA Plumbing as well as storage sheds, glass services, computing and other agricultural based businesses. This precinct was relatively stable in the past 12 months.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2016)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
15	3	3	1	-	-	-

Mackay Avenue

A major entrance into the City of Griffith, Mackay Avenue has a mixture of nurseries, freight and logistics, accommodation and car yards. Notably, in the past 12 months there have been 3 new businesses established: Green Gecko (Premier Nursery site), J&J Farm Equipment (D&D Machinery site) and The Flowering Zucchini Food Van (Bidgee Studio site). There are many lots of land still available providing opportunities for business in this area.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
17	7	6	-	1	Jensen	3

Murray Road/Yoogali

Yoogali is a village south of Griffith on the entrance into Griffith from Leeton. The audit encompasses Murray Road west of Yoogali, the Yoogali village and Research Station Road. It is predominantly a rural business and industry precinct and features large companies including Murrumbidgee Irrigation and Essential Energy. The 2018 audit shows an increase in businesses with the completion of the solar farm under development in Yoogali and new businesses established along Research Road.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
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20	1	-	-	-	-	3
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Yenda / Bilbul / Beelbangera

The villages of Yenda, Bilbul and Beelbangera are vitally important villages to the Griffith economy in terms of the businesses that are represented and the scale of large industries that reside there.

Yenda is the second largest town in our local government area and is home to one of our major employers: Casella Family Brands. This area has a number of wineries and Yenda is very nearly self-sufficient with its own independent supermarket, pub, chemist and agricultural merchandise stores.

The 2018 Audit showed few changes apart from the relocation of the Three Brothers to Yenda Diggers Club.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
22	5	3	1	1	Yenda	1

Hanwood

Hanwood is a village south west of Griffith on the main route into town on the Kidman Way from Melbourne. Hanwood is one of the largest villages and features a diverse mix of large industries from chicken processing, juicing, cherry /orange packing houses and wineries, agricultural mechanical repairs and service station.

The 2018 Audit showed a slight increase in bricks and mortar businesses demonstrating relative stability. As one of the busiest entrances to Griffith, shift workers and locals consistently support the local businesses.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
34	2	-	1	-	-	3

Driver/Collina Precinct

The Driver shopping centre services the Collina and East Griffith areas. This area encompasses Driver Shopping Centre, Sanders Street, Poole Street, Clifton Boulevard and Madden Drive. The precinct is underpinned by a supermarket, cafe, bakery, fitness centre, a number of childcare centres, hairdresser, beautician and General Practitioner. The number of businesses has remained stable - there were no movements in the past 12 months.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2017)	Vacancies (2016)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
17	-	-	-	-	-	-

North Griffith (Palla Street and surrounds)

North Griffith is a residential area of Griffith, which is seeing increased commercial blend, particularly accountancy, medical, dental and therapeutic. This could be due to the wide, tree-lined streets and older style homes which make great offices. The number of businesses has slightly decreased in 2018 but as many businesses are located within residential areas it is difficult to accurately audit the precinct.

The main changes in the last 12 months were the opening of the new specialist consulting rooms and Regional Imaging in Palla Street and the closure of Betty Boo on Wyangan Avenue.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/moved in
24	1	1	1	-	-	2

East Griffith

East Griffith shopping centre is located close to town and has experienced relative stability over the past few years. It is an important shopping centre for its area, which houses many aged residents, two major schools and lots of passing trade. The centre contains a bakery, post office, dental clinic, hairdresser, childcare services offices, a fitness centre and takeaway. Changes include Searle's Newsagency having re-located to Griffith Central and Vaccari's Bakery expanded their business into the newsagency shopfront.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/moved in
9	1	-	1	1	Central Plaza	1

West Griffith / Tharbogang

This is a growing area for larger businesses and industries located on the northern entrance to Griffith on the Kidman Way and encompasses Coolah Street, Murrumbidgee Avenue, Griffin Avenue, Harward Road, Brayne Road, Merrigal Street, Mallinson Road, Druitt Road, Smeeth Road, Merrowie Street, Hillston Road and Tharbogang.

This precinct is home to the Griffith Livestock Centre, Real Juice Company, Yenda Prods, Warburn Estate and Bruno Altin Co and Steel Tech as well as orange packing houses. The 2018 audit illustrated few changes to the precinct.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/moved in
26	3	-	1	1	-	1

Airport Precinct

There are many businesses which operate from the Griffith Airport that contribute enormously to the local economy. There is still great potential to attract new industries and services to this area. The audit encompasses the airport business precinct as well as Griffith Golf Club, Pioneer Park and this year we have added Avis, Hertz, REX and Thrifty to the audit data. Griffith Broadcast Centre which relocated to Jondaryan Avenue remains vacant.

No. of B&M businesses	Vacancies (2018)	Vacancies (2017)	Closed	Moved Out	To Where	New/ moved in
17	1	1	-	-	-	-

Conclusion

The 2018 Business Audit illustrates that there is relatively stable economic activity in all precincts and villages across the LGA. Whilst there have been increased closures and a high number of businesses relocating within the LGA in comparison to previous years, the number of bricks and mortar businesses remains fairly consistent. With that being said, the audit indicates that vacancy rates of the Banna Avenue retail precinct have increased in comparison to 2017 which is in line with current regional trends.

To encourage economic growth and activity, Council continues to progress with the implementation of the CBD Strategy which will see the upgrade and transformation of Yambil Street, greatly improving the business and shopping experience in this precinct. Following on from this, Council is planning to rejuvenate Banna Avenue and Kooyoo Street to ensure our city retains a robust contemporary business character. The construction of a new skate park in Olympic Street will also create an energised atmosphere in that precinct. Council is seeking grant funding to construct a new outdoor pool facility and for a major upgrade of our City's sporting facilities and ovals. These facilities would attract regional and state sports events which will in turn drive visitation to our City.

The Griffith Now Hiring campaign, which was driven and supported by Griffith City Council, together with local business partners, achieved excellent results. This marketing campaign addressed the difficulties faced by business owners in attracting skilled workers by inviting people and their families to live and work in Griffith. It aimed to draw attention to our progressive regional city and the diversity of skilled job vacancies across many industries. Council is working with local businesses to drive the continuation of this campaign to assist local businesses to grow.

To further assist economic growth, Council's Tourism & Economic Development team are working on enhancing visitor experiences by providing opportunities for local residents and visitors to experience the unique social, cultural and natural attractions of the region. We actively promote the City and its community as a place where people want to visit, live, work, and raise their families.

To ensure ongoing success and growth into the future it is essential that Council continues to integrate economic considerations into its planning and regulatory activities. Council is currently undertaking a review of its planning instruments and assessment processes to improve current planning practices. The Griffith Local Economic Development Assistance Program is available to developers to further stimulate activity in the construction and development sectors by removing the disincentive that section 94A monetary contributions might create. Council is also investigating opportunities for simplifying application processes through the Easy to do Business initiative. These are some of the measures in place to support local businesses and help attract investors to our region.

Council is continuing work on building efficient transport corridors with initiatives such as the Griffith Southern Industrial Link which will remove constraints on the local road network, improving access to markets for regional producers. The Bagtown roundabout opened in June and is the first part of Council's Southern Industrial Link Road. Construction on Thorne Road east is almost complete with construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Hanwood Road and Thorne Road underway. The upgrade, realignment and construction of Thorne Road-west, Bromley Road, Browne Road and MR80 Kidman Way is progressing with final designs and land acquisition negotiations taking place. When fully constructed the Griffith Southern Industrial Link will take all heavy traffic from the northwest of our local government area to the south allowing ease of access for industries to move freight around the outskirts of the City and connect with major transport routes.

The responsibility of driving economic development in our City through improved infrastructure and connectivity, education and a skilled workforce, business support, investment and attraction, liveability and tourism, is shared across many areas of Council and the community. A strong economy means more jobs and greater prosperity for the region.

Council will continue to monitor business activity across the City in order to further inform and develop Council's Economic Development policies and strategies in the future.

For further information please contact Council's Economic Development Officer, Leanne Austin on (02) 6962 8100 or 0419 445 748.