AUSTRALIA
Inspired by lifestyle, driven by opportunity.

The Gold Coast’s iconic beaches, world heritage-listed rainforests and climate set the scene for a lifestyle unrivalled the world over.

We are already Australia’s sixth-largest city and one of its number one tourism destinations, but the Gold Coast is destined for greater things.

Ours is a city rising to emerging opportunities, pushing the boundaries of its past and reaching for all the future holds.

Major preparations for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™ are redefining our economy and creating new investment opportunities.

Our forward-thinking attitude and significant investment attraction program – the first of its kind in Australia – make the Gold Coast the right place, at the right time, to live, work, study, visit and invest.

This is the Gold Coast. And there’s nowhere else like it.
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Welcome to the Gold Coast

As mayor of the Gold Coast I am honoured to introduce you to our great city.

It’s a place where the ‘have-a-go’ spirit is strong and people are proud to live; work; study; start and grow a business; and raise a family.

In the lead-up to the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth we are embracing change and dreaming big.

We are taking advantage of our opportunity to shine on the world stage. And the work we’re doing now will transform the Gold Coast from a city with potential to a truly world class global centre.

I encourage you to find out more about our city. The information we’ve provided in this book is just the beginning of the Gold Coast story.

As a relatively young city, the best is yet to come.

Be part of our future.

MAYOR TOM TATE
Australia’s Gold Coast

The Gold Coast is a city coming of age. It is a place of opportunity that, over the next decade, will transform into a globally-recognised city while retaining its enviable lifestyle and stunning natural environment.

Strategically located on the edge of the Asia-Pacific rim, with access to two international airports, the Gold Coast is perfectly positioned as a destination for business, investment, study, sport, events, tourism and lifestyle.

The Gold Coast stretches along 57 kilometres of coastline and is home to more than half a million people.

Beyond the city’s beautiful beaches are vast, sub-tropical rainforests with breathtaking scenery.

The city enjoys a five-year average annual growth rate of two per cent and has access to an economic catchment of 3.6 million people.

Welcoming more than 11 million visitors each year, the Gold Coast is one of Australia’s premier tourist destinations, offering a vibrant mix of shopping, accommodation, theme parks, restaurants, entertainment and an abundance of natural attractions.

With a robust economy valued at over $25 billion, and an ambitious strategy that encourages innovation and sustainable growth, the Gold Coast’s future is full of promise. Ours is an economy of opportunity that has grown from its basis in tourism and construction to a diverse, knowledge-based economic environment.
New infrastructure and innovation in the Information Technology (IT), health, education and advanced manufacturing sectors are redefining the Gold Coast’s economic profile and creating opportunities in education, research, employment, enterprise and investment.

A city that encourages forward-thinking, is strong in its support of new and creative solutions and is bold in its attitude to growth and development, it’s easy to see why the Gold Coast is home to a dynamic combination of start-ups, co-working spaces and research and education institutions, including three universities.

As host city for the Commonwealth Games in 2018, the Gold Coast is embracing transformative civic projects like never before, with close to $13 billion in major infrastructure projects planned or underway that will change the face of our city in a way that is distinctly our own.

This positive attitude towards growth, combined with competitive residential, commercial and retail real estate markets; the lowest rate of payroll tax in Australia; and support from our business and investment team, is why now is the time to invest in the Gold Coast.
A CITY INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Close to $13 billion in major infrastructure projects are planned, underway or recently completed including the G:Link Light Rail network; an integrated health and knowledge precinct; and sporting infrastructure in preparation for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™ (GC2018).

Approximately $200 million in new world class sporting infrastructure is being constructed in readiness for GC2018, building on the city’s existing high performance sports facilities.

This includes the redeveloped Gold Coast Aquatic Centre – the centrepiece for the swimming and diving competition for GC2018, the construction of the Commonwealth Games Athletes Village and renovation of the existing Carrara Sport Precinct.

The revitalisation of Southport – the Gold Coast Central Business District (CBD) – is changing the face of the city. Delivering a dynamic and unique CBD with a quality urban environment recognised for local and international commerce as well as investment and ideas will pave the way for significant business and development opportunities.

At the heart of the CBD is the $1.6 billion light rail, linking the city’s knowledge, business, tourism and cultural precincts.

Stage one links business, health, education, tourism and cultural centres; providing new opportunities for development around any one of the 16 stations along the 13-kilometre corridor.

Within the CBD, Chinatown is currently under construction. The $6.8 million project is bringing a sense of home and community to locals and thousands of international students and tourists who come to the city each year. It is providing new opportunities for cultural exchange, trade and investment between Australian and Asian partners.

Enhancing our knowledge and creative industries is a key investment for the city. The Gold Coast Cultural Precinct will celebrate, reflect and build on our unique cultural identity and become a must-see visitor destination while supporting our arts and allied industries.

Our Health and Knowledge Precinct is home to a brand new teaching hospital, research and allied medical facilities, as well as a world class university, offering a dynamic location for a range of businesses to cluster and grow.
BEAUTY, LIFESTYLE AND LOCATION

The Gold Coast offers a work-life balance unachievable in most of the world’s major cities. The proximity of our professional environment to stunning beaches and lush rainforests enables a truly enviable lifestyle.

The city remains one of the most bio-diverse in Australia with natural habitats that are home to more than 700 animals and 1800 plant species. Our natural environment is an extraordinary asset and an integral part of our local identity and culture with 57 kilometres of coastline, 260 kilometres of navigable waterways, more than 2000 parks covering approximately 21,000 hectares and 4,500 hectares of world heritage-listed rainforests.

From beachfront esplanades, shopping precincts, exhilarating theme parks, relaxing restaurants and major events, Gold Coast attractions are diverse and colourful in nature.

We have an extensive range of restaurants and cafés serving an abundance of fresh, local produce to inspire dynamic menus. With a selection of cuisines far surpassing any other Australian regional city, the Gold Coast offers the finest in modern Australian dining and the flavours of many other regions including Asia, the Mediterranean and the Americas.
“One of the biggest advantages of being based here on the Gold Coast is lifestyle and what that means for our business. We have the perfect balance of a corporate environment with beautiful beaches and rainforests a short drive away.”

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Luke Hallday
Chief Executive Officer
Mercury IT
“The warm weather, beaches and parks, as well as top quality training facilities, provide real advantages for athletes looking to experience a world class event, or take in some off-season training in the perfect environment.”

Cameron Hart, Chief Executive Officer
Events Management Queensland
Gold Coast Airport Marathon
AN ECONOMY OF OPPORTUNITY

On the east coast of Australia, approximately 80 kilometres south of Brisbane, the Gold Coast is located within one of the country’s fastest growing regions.

Strong population growth, diversification of the economy and investment in strategic infrastructure are giving rise to new opportunities.

With an economy valued at close to $25 billion, the Gold Coast economy has diversified from a platform of tourism and construction into knowledge-based industries including health, ICT, advanced manufacturing, education and professional services. Over the next 10 years the city will grow to an employment base of almost 300,000 people.

As Australia’s sixth largest city, the Gold Coast is currently home to more than 546,000 people and has an economic catchment of 3.6 million people. Population within the region is forecast to grow at two per cent over the next 10 years, representing one of the fastest growing populations in Australia.

As a young city in transformation, the best is yet to come.
Industry summary

Health and Medical
We are creating new opportunities in the health and medical sectors, with the $1.7 billion university hospital and a unique health and knowledge precinct.

Information Communication Technology
Gold Coast has a varied ICT industry and is successful in attracting large corporates as well as nurturing small, innovative companies to export their products and services world-wide.

Our expanding digital infrastructure, progressive culture and networks help create digital-ready businesses and excellent opportunities in domestic and international markets.

Professional Services
We have a strong professional services industry comprising financial services, accountants, architects, town planners, engineers and event managers. Professional services contribute $1.3 billion to the local economy, with a total of 6700 businesses generating $2.8 billion in local sales. The industry continues to grow with more knowledge-based businesses – from architects to accountants and engineers – doing business globally.

Education
With three universities, a large institute of technology, private colleges, training providers, and leading private and public schools, the Gold Coast offers excellent education choices. The last decade has seen substantial growth in tertiary student numbers to more than 27,000; facilities including Australia’s fastest-growing campus; courses; and university research.

Sports
Gold Coast is a city purpose built for high performance sports and elite sporting events. As host of the Commonwealth Games in 2018, we offer facilities, man-made and natural, that cater to a wide variety of sports. Our three universities are leading the way, with Australia’s largest sports science research project, new university health facilities and Australia’s first Doctor of Physiotherapy program.

Marine
Australia’s premier location for recreational boat building, maintenance and refits, the Gold Coast is home to nine luxury marinas, with capabilities for superyachts as well as the most advanced and highly respected marine industry cluster development in the southern hemisphere. The annual boat show and marine export conference showcase local innovation, attracting international buyers and business.
Advanced Manufacturing
Gold Coast companies continue to innovate in the areas of advanced manufacturing across surfing products, interior design, marine, motorsport technology, food and beverage, health, IT, green building and technology, and engineering.

Construction
Gold Coast offers outstanding expertise in construction and built design across master planned communities, multi-storey residential and commercial complexes, marinas, infrastructure and green building and technology. Opportunities exist for investors in real estate, tourism infrastructure and major projects.

Food and Beverage
Gold Coast’s food and beverage producers offer excellent quality value-add products for domestic and international markets. We specialise in functional foods for sports, health and wellness, including organic products, as well as specialty products for health and gourmet retailers and the food service industry.

Creative
We have an exceptional pool of talent in film and television offering world class studios and breathtaking locations. Our emerging cultural scene is burgeoning with skills in design, fashion, music, art, architecture and literature and is supported by universities and specialist educators.

Tourism
Gold Coast is a city built on tourism, with decades of expertise backed by a stunning natural landscape; the highest concentration of themed attractions in the southern hemisphere; excellent accommodation and entertainment choices; and a mild climate enjoyable year-round. The City of Gold Coast contributes more money to its tourism marketing entity – Gold Coast Tourism – than any other Australian city, ensuring excellent partnerships and market confidence.
ASIA-PACIFIC HUB

Australia has strong trade, investment and cultural links with the Asia-Pacific region – the growth markets of the world.

Our location along the Asia-Pacific Rim, connectivity and relationship with this region make the Gold Coast an ideal location for organisations looking to do business in these markets.

The Gold Coast has cemented strong international relationships, stimulating trade, investment, cultural exchange, education and tourism.

Specifically, we have developed strong economic and cultural ties with China. China is now one of our number one source markets for international tourism and foreign investment and makes up a large share of our international university student numbers.

China’s investment in Gold Coast land now accounts for 31 per cent of total foreign investment (in land). Between 2007/08 and 2012/13, the Gold Coast has seen the value of Chinese investment grow by 487.4 per cent to reach $185 million.

Amongst the leading Chinese investors are Ridong and Wanda Group, ASF Consortia and Garuda GC Corporation.
“The Gold Coast presented the right opportunity for us. Growing interest from the Chinese tourism market, supportive government and iconic nature of the destination are the reasons why we have chosen to invest $1 billion in the Jewel project.”

Ridong Wanda Group
A VIBRANT INNOVATION CULTURE

The Gold Coast has evolved through a history of progress and entrepreneurship as pioneering individuals created opportunities to grow and prosper in an idyllic lifestyle location.

With rapid growth of the city’s three universities, the Gold Coast has built a reputation for cutting edge research and innovation – from drug discovery tackling global health issues; and probing solutions for climate change adaptation; to leading an extensive program of research through Australia’s largest-ever sport science research grant.

The emerging Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct links the Gold Coast University Hospital with Griffith University and provides Australia’s newest and most comprehensive environment for clinical research innovation.

Gold Coast companies are winning national awards and global business in advanced manufacturing from the flourishing marine industry to food science and processing as well as in health technology, ICT and niche sectors such as motorsport.

The Gold Coast ‘innovation ecosystem’ provides an environment where entrepreneurs, co-working spaces, tech start-ups, incubators and investors are emerging, establishing the Gold Coast as a hotspot for innovation and a successful start-up community.
“THE GOLD COAST HAS A REAL OPPORTUNITY TO BE A GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY HUB. PEOPLE WANT TO BE BASED HERE. WE HAVE EXCEPTIONAL TALENT FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD LOOKING FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH OPMANTEK ON THE GOLD COAST.”

DANNY MAHER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
OPMANTEK
EDUCATION CHOICE

The Gold Coast offers the greatest education choice of any city of its size, attracting students from more than 100 countries.

With three world class universities – Griffith University, Bond University and Southern Cross University – a diverse mix of technical and training colleges and some of Australia’s finest public and private schools, the Gold Coast gives businesses ready access to a highly qualified workforce.

The city attracts 14,000 international students to study, contributing over $770 million to the local economy.

The city’s skilled workforce is growing; one in five workers holds a tertiary qualification and three in five workers hold some form of qualification.

Our skilled workforce is relatively young – the largest demographic group is aged between 25 and 44.
Griffith University

Bond University School of Architecture
We find the Gold Coast workforce is different.

We have access to a ready-made workforce of people who are about getting in and getting the job done, and doing it really well. Our workforce is not only highly skilled but also enterprising.”

Luke Halliday
Chief Executive Officer
Mercury IT
BUSINESS FRIENDLY

Australia's Gold Coast is open for business.

Ranked amongst the top 15 countries in the world for ease of doing business, Australia has an internationally competitive Corporate Tax Rate of 30 per cent and has corporate tax breaks available for small to medium sized businesses.

The City of Gold Coast is committed to delivering a business friendly environment where industry prospers. On average it takes 2.5 days to start up a new business on the Gold Coast, with very little government bureaucracy and regulation.

The Gold Coast regularly plays host to international, national and local conventions and business exhibitions across a diverse range of industries including ICT, marine and health and medical.

The Gold Coast enjoys some of Australia’s most impressive delegate statistics with each event attracting twice as many delegates than anywhere else in Queensland.

The Gold Coast has a strong professional services industry comprising financial services, accountants, architects, town planners, engineers and event managers that contribute $1.3 billion to the local economy.

The City of Gold Coast offers a suite of dedicated services and support to new businesses and investors to the city. Our qualified team assists clients across a range of industry sectors with special focus on innovation, culture, infrastructure and knowledge-based industries.
“For us, we wouldn’t be anywhere else. We get to live in such a great place and offer our clients outstanding value.”

Adam Stead
Director
Stead Lane Australia
“The ease of doing business on the Gold Coast has provided the perfect environment for our extremely successful international expansion strategy. We’ve been able to operate locally, maintaining the same high levels of service for the domestic market, whilst having a strong global focus.”

Jason Sintome
Sales Director, WRS
ACCESS

The Gold Coast is positioned to operate across three time zones – Asia, Europe and America – allowing companies the opportunity to efficiently connect with their global counterparts and trading partners.

The city is serviced by two International Airports – Gold Coast and Brisbane – with direct routes to all major Australian cities and key locations across Asia, the Middle East, US and the Pacific.

Passenger movements at Gold Coast International Airport continue to increase, making it the fastest growing airport in Australia, with almost 5.8 million arrivals and departures in 2015.

The Port of Brisbane, located less than an hour from the Gold Coast, provides a strong transportation network. The port’s close proximity to Asia, compared with Sydney and Melbourne, provides the opportunity for companies to save on shipping times and costs.

Yatala Enterprise Area (YEA) is a pivotal point, along the four-lane M1 Motorway, between Brisbane – Queensland’s capital – in the north and the New South Wales border in the south. The YEA’s location provides a high level of connectivity to local and regional markets, the Port of Brisbane and interstate trade destinations.
Yatala Enterprise Area
“THE GOLD COAST IS WELL CONNECTED. FROM OUR MANUFACTURING FACILITY AT THE NORTHERN END OF THE GOLD COAST WE ARE ABLE TO SHIP OUR PRODUCTS IN LARGE CONTAINERS OUT OF THE PORT OF BRISBANE.”

JOHN HOGAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SUPERIOR GROUP AUSTRALIA
RELATIVE AFFORDABILITY

For commercial, retail and residential markets, the Gold Coast delivers high value and relative affordability compared to Australia’s other major cities.

From commercial office space to city parking and employee wages, the Gold Coast provides businesses with real opportunities to reduce overheads and establish a more competitive business proposition nationally and internationally.

At just 4.75 per cent, Queensland companies pay the lowest payroll tax of any state in Australia and are not liable until total wages and salaries exceed $1.1 million per annum.
“THERE ARE RELATIVELY LOWER COSTS INVOLVED IN SETTING UP AND OPERATING AN AGENCY ON THE GOLD COAST. COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE IS MORE COMPETITIVE, PARKING IS EXTREMELY COST EFFECTIVE AND WE GET A HIGHER LEVEL OF EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE FROM OUR EMPLOYEES, NOT TO MENTION THAT WE ARE ABLE TO OFFER LIFESTYLE ALTERNATIVES TO MONETARY REMUNERATION MAKING OUR STAFF MORE COST EFFECTIVE.”

FLYNN MCFARLANE, DIRECTOR
STEAD LANE AUSTRALIA
A WORLD CLASS TOURISM DESTINATION

From Australia’s best beaches, rainforests and waterways to world class theme parks, sporting venues, convention services, events, cultural activities and hotels and resorts, the Gold Coast’s tourism assets provide an enviable platform for growth.

One of Australia’s favourite holiday destinations, the Gold Coast attracts more than 11 million visitors annually.

The Gold Coast’s largest source markets are China, New Zealand and United Kingdom.

The City of Gold Coast, in conjunction with Gold Coast Tourism, has established the Destination Tourism Management Plan 2023 that outlines the strategic direction of tourism on the Gold Coast, reinforcing the strengths and long-term prosperity of Gold Coast as a global tourism leader.
Business and investment support

The City of Gold Coast has established a program to assist you to invest or set up your business on the Gold Coast.

The program offers a suite of services including financial assistance, itinerary development, introductions to local industry networks, streamlined development applications and much more.

To find out how we can help you, contact us:

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