1. INTRODUCTION

The full effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the world, our Country, Province and District will not be fully understood until this crisis has passed.

Various surveys have been done to have some idea on how this is affecting businesses, and one of the major outcomes is the issue of cash flow. Many smaller companies (lower turnover) do not have the financial resources to manage the Covid-19 response options.

All the growth sectors in the District have been impacted, especially the tourism and hospitality sector and retail sectors which have been hardest hit by this pandemic, and which will also be the last sectors to recover from this crisis. The impact on the informal sector, spaza shops and SMMEs must still be determined, but will certainly increase the poverty headcounts which was already on 40,5% prior Covid-19, as this is the “bread and butter” for many families.

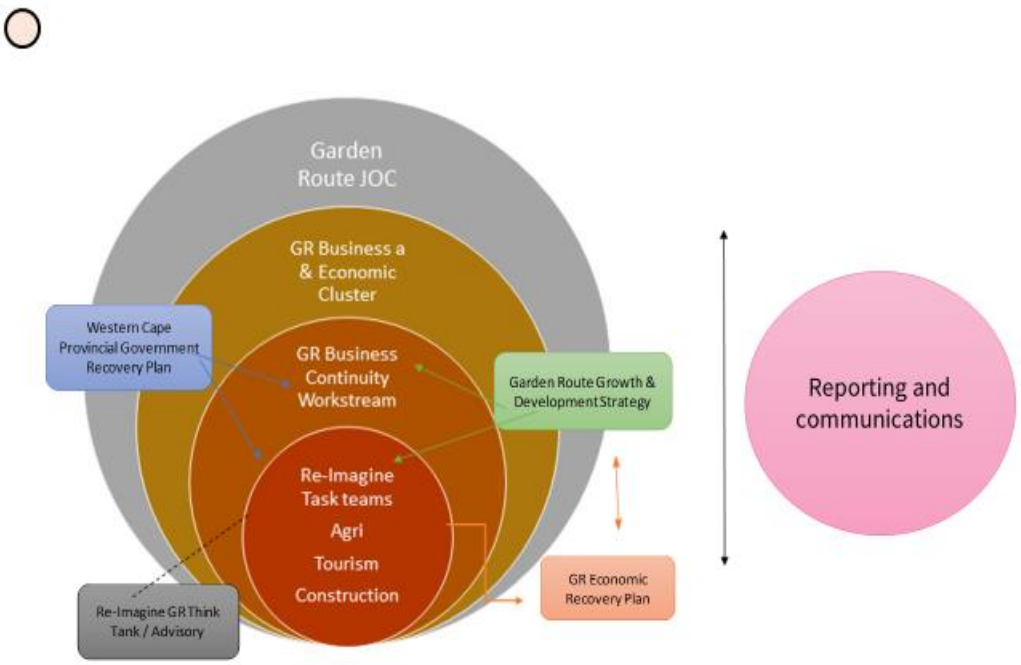
The survey, done by the George Business Chamber specifically, which was completed by 345 business across the district, specifically indicated that the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted businesses much more severely than the challenges this District has seen and is still facing in terms of load shedding, drought, fires and crime.

A total of 37,54% (128 respondents) of 341 respondents has indicated that they are considering closing their business due to the disruptive factors, whilst 51,32% (175 respondents) has indicated that they are considering retrenching staff.

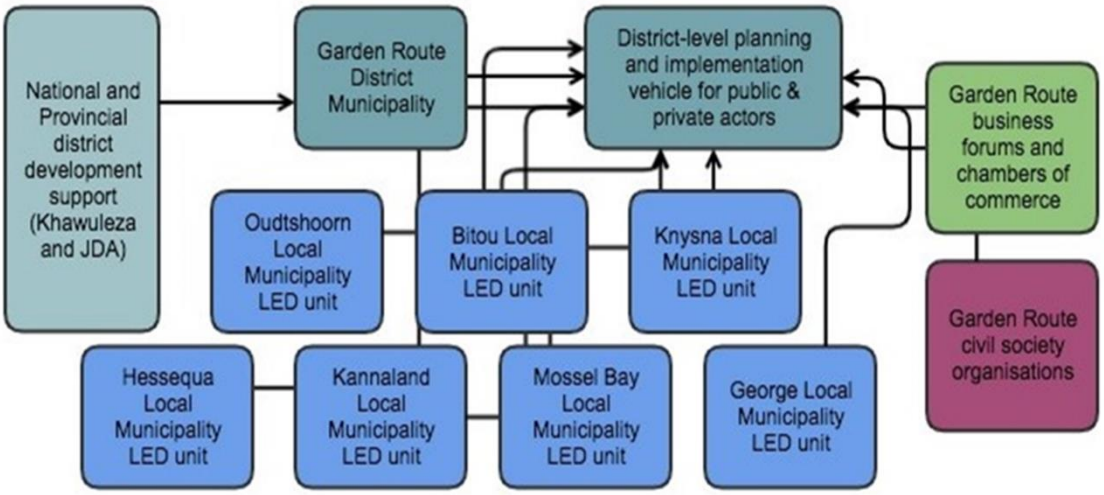
An Economic Cluster was established with stakeholders across the sectors being represented, which is a platform where information is shared, assistance and guidance is given in terms of government interventions.

A Business Continuity working group was formed from the Economic Cluster who are focusing on a recovery plan for the District, which will address business rescue, business support, business resilience etc. This plan will be informed by the Economy Recovery Plan that DEDAT is in the process of drafting and the results of the District survey and other surveys that was done, as well as input from sector experts and other stakeholders such as relevant Government Departments, municipalities, Wesgro, SCEP/WCEDP, Small Business Development forum, Business Chambers etc. This plan will address solutions which will be implemented on a short, medium- and long-term basis, and financial resources from all spheres of government will be needed to make the implementation of this plan a reality.

2. *INTERRELATIONSHIP AND ALIGNMENT OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENTS DRIVING AND INFLUENCING THE GARDEN ROUTE RECOVERY PLAN*



3. THE GARDEN ROUTE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – CO-OPERATION SYSTEM



4. PARTICIPATING PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

- District Municipality, Garden Route DM
- South Cape Economic Partnership (SCEP) /Garden Route Development Partnership (GRDP)
- All B-municipalities (Hessequa, Mossel Bay, Bitou, Knysna, George, Oudtshoorn and Kannaland)
- Department of Economic Development and Tourism.
- Wesgro
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Western Cape)
- Department of Environmental Affairs, Forestry and Fisheries (Western Cape)
- Department of Employment and Labour (Garden Route)
- Seda/Sefa (Garden Route)
- AHI Western Cape
- Small Business Development Forum
- Business Chambers (George, Mossel Bay, Still Bay, Bitou, Knysna and Oudtshoorn)
- Local Tourism Offices
- SATSA (Garden Route)
- Sector experts e. g. South African Boat Builders Export Council (SABBEX)/ South Africa Furniture Initiative (SAFI).
- Garden Route Film Office
- Kunste Onbeperk (KKNK)

- PUM (Netherlands)

5. GARDEN ROUTE MODELLING SCENARIO

a. CONCERNS

Factors influencing the projects and sectors within the Garden Route are including, but not limited to the following factors:

Concerns:

- Recent droughts a part of our region experienced / still experience leading to water stressed municipalities
- The recent fires and the rebuild thereafter
- Load shedding
- The national economic situation and the downgrade to junk status - The South African economy is expected to contract sharply. The Reserve Bank estimates that a contraction of 6.1% is likely, the IMF -5.8% and Moody's -2.5%. Business for South Africa projects the economy could contract by a whopping 10%.
- Local government policies on procurement and SCM
- The low oil prices
- The ever-worsening exchange rates with the major currencies
- Some less-functional municipalities and changing of the guard at other municipalities
- COVID-19 and its immediate and future impact
- Economy rely heavily on retail and services sector that is hard hit by the lock down
- Vandalism and crime during lock down period
- Poorest of the poor that struggle the most due to the shortage of basic goods such as food.

International Tourism

- Lock down restrictions in source markets and on SA allowed registers
- Air access – no matter what campaigns are in place we are all limited by this
- Costs of flights
- “New” airline travel health & safety restrictions – will passengers feel safe?
- Visa regimes need to be changed by governments
- Will SA be perceived as safe to travel too? Crime / health care facilities and infra structure adequate

Domestic Tourism

- Extended Lock down restrictions in local provinces
- Costs of domestic flights
- Kulula, SAA and SA Express all under business rescue - minimising options for travellers
- State of the SA economy and lack of disposable income to travel
- No leave days available as all would have been forced to use their leave days
- Shorter school holidays in 2020 / 21

b. POSITIVES

- Regional resilience to handle disasters
- Strong leadership at District Municipal level and some local municipalities
- Tax and payment of services holidays put in place by some local Municipalities
- Effective provision of basic services by Local Municipalities
- Garden Route still seen as an investment-friendly area
- Garden Route will remain a popular tourist destination in future
- Innovation and forward-thinking municipalities – despite their diverse ways
- Systems and structures in place for inter-governmental and business collaboration
- Pro-active approach to the disasters with an operational and well managed JOC
- An unplanned benefit of the rise of the coastal towns and the retirement industry is the skills and experience gained in the form of knowledgeable people that arrive in the region. The large numbers of highly skilled and highly trained people represent a resource from which the region should benefit much more.
- Although construction work is cyclical and not always desired as a sustainable means of job creation, it has over the past decade been a major source of income to large numbers of workers in the region
- Recently updated Garden Route Growth and Development Strategy will guide the way forward and have been adapted to include the COVID-19 risks.

6. GARDEN ROUTE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN FRAMEWORK

a. BASE DOCUMENTS

The Recovery Plan does not stand alone and nor does it replace any other document for the region. It should guide and be guided by a collection of strategies and documents already in place and in progress. The Recovery Plan should also be very much part and parcel of the Garden Route Growth and Development Strategy and be guided by its priority areas and risk approach adopted.

- The South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
- Garden Route Growth & Development Draft Strategy
- Western Cape Business & Economic recovery plan together with all the sub strategies adopted
- Garden Route Business Continuity Strategy Draft Document (Revision 4 – June 2020) – as collated by the GR Business Continuity Work stream
- GRDM and B-Municipalities SDF, IDP and LED plans
- GRDM Tourism Strategy and WCG Tourism Master Plan
- Garden Route Agricultural Master Plan
- Garden Route Investment Prospectus
- GR District Draft Green Energy Master Plan
- All other relevant plans not mentioned

b. GARDEN ROUTE GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PRIORITY AREAS AS THE BASIS FOR THE RECOVERY PLAN

This strategy provides a framework for growth and development planning in the Garden Route District for 2019-2039. It applies a coherent, risk-driven approach to growth and development planning. In 2019, a clear need was identified - to consolidate the area into a coherent system which promotes economic development. An integrated approach to risk management, across towns within the Garden Route, allows for more comprehensive scanning for, and monitoring of, risks. It also allows for a coordinated response which is more effective and uses limited resources optimally.

Over the coming decades, this risk-driven strategy will enable the cohesion necessary to navigate the challenges and changes that the Garden Route and its residents and visitors will face. Organising collaboration around shared risks will help to identify areas of collaboration, while allowing for the distinct development of each of the local municipalities in the region, without collapsing any of the differences and unique strengths that characterise these areas.

In December 2019, as this document's first draft was being compiled, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported the first case of Covid-19 that would radically alter the global socio-economic context for development planning. Over the following months, the South African government faced an unavoidable dilemma, choosing to shut down the economy in order to slow the spread of infections and avoid decimation of the national healthcare system.

The structure is shaped by regional priorities, which are the thematic focus areas listed below, selected through a combination of research, policy analysis and stakeholder engagements:

1) A water secure future	
2) A circular economy	
3) Resilient agriculture	
4) Sustainable tourism	
5) Supporting wellbeing and resilience	
6) A connected economy: transport and rural-urban integration	
7) Sustainable Local Energy Transition	

These priorities have been identified based on a long-term vision for the Garden Route, as well as on the existing work, strengths, and potential of the region as a whole. Each one is also aligned to existing policies and strategies.

It should also be noted that the Garden Route District includes a significant portion of South Africa's rich coastline. As such, the coastal economy is an important source of integrated economic development opportunities, as well as social and ecological risks, and spans all six prioritised focus areas.

In addition to these priority focus areas, there are **core principles** – ways of thinking and working – that cut across each of these areas:

- **People-oriented**: people are at the centre of development and growth planning in this strategy, and all actions should be tested against the requirements of inclusivity and generating economic opportunities and employment. Safety and security, and crime prevention for citizens and investors, are also included in this principle.

- **Gender equality and economic inclusion of women, youth and persons with disability**

  The interventions that form part of the Garden Route Economic Recovery Plan will be geared towards promoting greater participation by black people, women, youth and persons with disability at all economic levels. Effective gender mainstreaming in all aspects of the Plan, through the participation and mobilization of women at all levels, will be ensured. Young people, women, and persons with disability will be encouraged and supported to form cooperatives in key economic sectors such as retail, agriculture and agro processing, financial services (Cooperative Financial Institutions), manufacturing and infrastructure development. In addition, young people, women and persons with disability will be prioritized in accessing funding for initiatives that will drive the recovery and reconstruction effort.

- **Valuing cultural and ecological heritage**: this strategy aims to work with, conserve, and celebrate the people, places and natural systems that make the Garden Route unique.

- **A partnering approach**: the process for creating, implementing, maintaining, and adapting this strategy should involve all impacted and interested parties, and draw in the right people and resources relevant to each issue.

- **Innovation and responsiveness**: this strategy recognises that the challenges and uncertainties facing the region will require novel solutions in many forms.

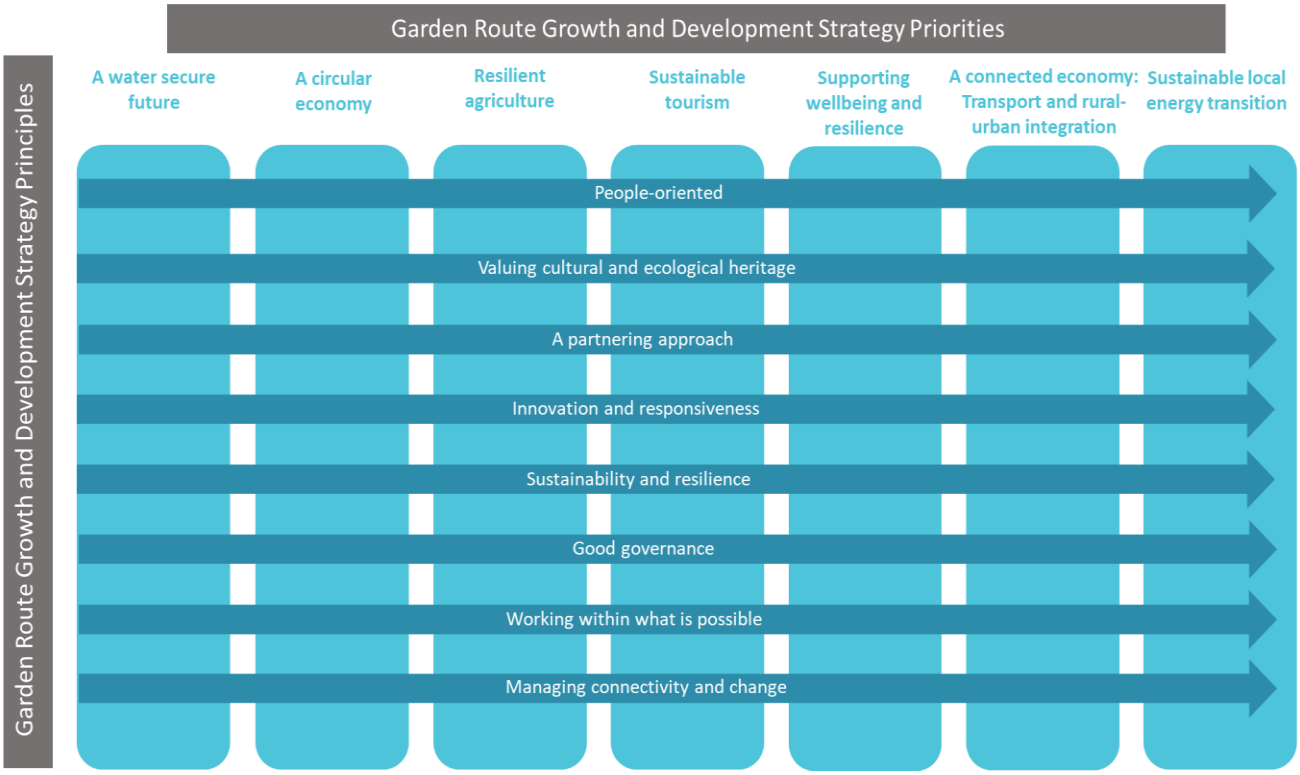
- **Sustainability and resilience**: any short term gains in growth and development will be undermined if the ecological base of the region is eroded, or if the risks from existing ecological destruction and climate change are not managed.

- **Good governance**: transparency and accountability are conditions for democracy, as are effective monitoring, learning, and adaptation. Efficient, effective, and integrated management, and good administration and governance, are critical to attract investment to the region.

- **Working within what is possible**: this strategy recognises and works within current possibilities and constraints to ensure that plans are implementable and goals are achievable. State-owned assets and regulatory frameworks are critical to local development and growth.

- **Managing connectivity and change**: the Covid-19 pandemic has made it clear that the region's interdependence and interconnection with the Western Cape Province, South Africa as a whole, and other countries need to be managed to optimise flows of resources and demand, as well as to ensure local resilience. Tracking changing variables over time is critical to this process.

These principles have been identified as critical to the successful implementation of growth and development activities and will need to be operationalised in the process of implementation of this strategy.



7. PILLARS OF THE RECOVERY PLAN

- Enhance the resilience and responsiveness of the District and B-municipalities towards local economic recovery and establishment of a central M&E function
- Facilitating the Region's support to business retention, growth, and development
- Re-starting the tourism and events sector (inclusive of the creative industries)
- Protecting and building the rural, township and informal economy
- Creating an extra-ordinary environment for construction, infrastructure and property development
- Ensuring a resilient agricultural sector and promoting agro-processing

a. BOUNCE BACK

- Sort out binding constraints and core fundamentals
    - Resolve most critical binding constraints preventing and enabling environment
    - Monitoring and responding to the region's financial position and health of the economy
    - Promoting Economic Transformation
- Protecting and building the rural, township and informal economy
    - Support to Informal sector, SMME's and township economies
    - Support to food relief projects
    - Support and implement the Community Recovery Project
- Support worst affected sectors
    - Support to Tourism and tourism-related industries

    - Creating an extra-ordinary environment for construction and property development
    - Revitalising the Timber economy

b. BOUNCE UP

- Revive demand and stimulate the markets
    - Fast track private and public sector infrastructure projects
    - Facilitate the region's support to business growth, retention and development
    - Stimulate circular economy principles
- Support and promote growth opportunities in sectors
    - Resilient agriculture and agro-processing
    - Support Oil & Gas projects to ensure the industry remains relevant and supporting PetroSA
    - Assist in the formation of a boat-building cluster
- Attracting new investments
    - Promote region as investor friendly and investment ready
    - Digital and related industries
    - Film industry
    - Renewable energy and waste beneficiation projects

Bounce Back	Municipal resilience and response	Support to informal and SMMEs	Construction	Support to Tourism and tourism-related industries	Other
Immediate	• Implement revised recovery plan governance structure • Civic crowdfunding workshops	• Rates cuts • Community economic recovery plan incorporated	• Fast track Procurement / approval processes?	• Digital Marketing to ensure regional brand alignment	• Furniture Cluster Formation to improve collective resilience and shared services
Medium Term	• Municipal funding model changes to adapt to the "next" normal	• Buy Garden Route campaign	• On-line building processes	• FAM trips / Educationals/ Virtual trade platforms that ensures brand alignment.	• Furniture (Solid wood furniture-linked to Creative industries (Flatpack for export
Long-term			• Make Garden Route awesome through promoting green and eco-building & land development technologies	• Recognized regional brand international and national platforms. Collective effort to optimize brand exposure. • Possible establishment of a Destination Marketing Organization	

Bounce Up	Digital and Tech Sectors	Agricultural & Agri-processing	Other	Promote and attract new investments
Immediate	• Broadband **infrastructure**	• Food gardens and digital vouchers	• **Boat building cluster** formation for collective resilience and shared services	• Completion of GR **Investment Prospectus**
Medium Term	• **Drone** manufacturer expansion support • Digital tools (software? Tools?) – online platforms. Work together with Jump and Industry organisations for incubation (Seda) - **digital skills** • **BPO:** Lifestyle lends itself to knowledge economy	• **Infrastructure:** Cold room storage • Niche processing opportunities • Upskill and re-skilling initiatives towards **SMART AGRI** and enabled processing • **Bamboo** project	• **Boat building** (yachts launch & commission facilities) • Oil & Gas **Waste2Wing** project (alien clearing and conversion to aviation fuel)	• **Garden Route SEZ** concept • Garden Route **Development Agency** • Port and airport as **international ports of entry**
Long-term		• **Regional Fresh Produce Market**	**Oil & Gas** (Brulpadda / Luiperd Paddavissie)	

c. *KEY AREAS OF ECONOMIC INTERVENTIONS*

	Skills Development	Business Growth and Development Investment & Exports	SMMEs, rural, township & Informal economy	Municipal resilience (Ease of Doing Business)	Business Retention and economic resilience	Construction, property development and public Infrastructure	Business & Stakeholder Eco-system
Objective	Accelerate skills supply & employable labour	Diversify exports and increase investment	Support growth and productivity of SMMEs and Informal	Remove Govt blockages and increase govt efficiencies	Improve productivity through Green Economy and Innovation & Technology, Digital	Accelerate government infrastructure to improve productivity	Improve Business Confidence
Spatial	Garden Route Skills Mecca	Garden Route	B-Municipalities	B-Municipalities	Garden Route	Garden Route B-Municipalities	Garden Route
Sectors	All	Agriculture Furniture Oil & Gas ICT (drones) Boat Building Other manufacturing	Retail Services Informal trade		All	Construction Property development Built environment	All

8. PILLAR 1 – MUNICIPAL RESLIENCE AND RESPONSIVENESS

The Garden Route District and B-municipalities' revenue collectively decreased between April and September (Level 2-5 lockdown) due to non-payment or deferred payments by business and individuals affected. The Garden Route implemented an active and inclusive process to ensure collaboration between the public sector stakeholders, and between public and private sector. Not all municipalities can individually manage and respond to the challenges, therefor collaboration and partnering become key factors to consider ensuring regional resilience

- Municipalities play a crucial role in the implementation of a recovery plan – in some instances leading the recovery process through their own interventions and initiatives, and in other instances supporting a private sector-driven approach through ensuring an enabling environment.
- Understand that it can never be "business-as-usual" again. Adapt and adopt a different and sometimes bold approach in procuring and planning
- Collectively lobby support from Provincial and National Treasury to implement the "Next Normal" principles
- Support each other financially and otherwise to ensure regional financial health and well-being

Impact: Increase economic benefits in the Garden Route by R1bn within 5 years

Target: Bring about R 500 million worth of economic benefits and savings to the Regional economy

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Mandate MMF to act as oversight and steering committee to ensure centralized decision making - monitor and manage financial health of Municipalities where applicable	MMF	Next 3 months
Centralise allocated relief and support budgets from all Municipalities	MMF	Next 6-12 months
Allocate budget to implement recovery plan – Disaster Management Act Fund / LED / Social Relief	MMF	Next 3-6 months
Concentrate on regional hotspots for fund allocation and Identify sub-areas where affordability to render services are lacking	MMF	3-12 months
Monitor the **implementation** of the recovery plan based on a shared budget	MMF	Monthly for first 6 months, thereafter quarterly
Re-imagine municipal funding model changes to adopt to the “Next normal” and lobby with Treasury	CFO forum, MMF, DCF, Council, Treasury	6-12 months
Workshop and Implement the Civic Crowdfunding model	CFO Forum, MMF, SCEP	3-6 months

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Ensure consistency across the region in terms of rate relief initiatives, although blanket rates write-offs can't be offered to protect Municipal funds,	District and B-municipalities	6-12 months
LED officials - Investment & Export Promotion Training (Wesgro)	District and B-municipalities / Wesgro	Next 6 months
Partnering and collaboration municipal official's capacity building	District and B-municipalities / WCEDP	3-12 months
Modelling and predicting regional economic activity in conjunction with private sector • Invite bankers / economists to assist with modelling	MMF / LED Forum / Business Chambers / SCEP	3 – 12 months
Mandate industry-driven, government enabling supported task teams to generate strategic direction for key focus sectors • Tourism • Agriculture • Construction	MMF / LED Forum / Private sector / SCEP / Wesgro / DEDAT / Seda and other key stakeholders	Next 3-12 months
Complete business database per sector per municipality	District and B-municipalities	3-6 months

Capacity building of political principals	SALGA/Provin Dept of Local Gvt; Cogta/District Mun/Local Mun	12 – 24 months
Ensure Shared Services , especially for the smaller/less capacitated municipalities	District Mun/Local mun/WC Dept of Local Government	12 – 24 months

9. PILLAR 2 - BUSINESS RETENTION. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

a. Business retention and economic resilience

In working towards a more economic resilient economy, the strategy will encourage the proliferation of IPP energy by unlocking general barriers, including advocating for an appropriate energy mix at a national level and driving regulatory and financial model changes towards enabling diversified energy and water sources. The greater Garden Route support economic resilience through enabling innovation, technology and digital adoption.

- Expand the mandate of the GR Energy Forum to investigate and initiate alternative energy and water projects on a regional basis (resilient bulk infrastructure)
- Fast track and support Garden Route District's initiative to become both a Waste, Water and Energy authority to centralise projects and implementation to the best interests of the regional resilience
- Waste2Wings project and other energy projects supported and taken into the Investment Prospectus

Target:

Increase the percentage of green or low carbon energy to 50% within 10 years and double technology investment within 10 years.

Energy Security: 50 MW of lower or no carbon electricity produced in Garden Route;

Water security: 20% improvement in the water efficiency of four water-intensive sectors

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Formation and implementation of GR Business Services Centre (One-stop shop) • Regional Hotline need to be operational, aimed at helping businesses access support • Access to stakeholders and funding institutions (similar concept to Invest SA) • Provision of Statistics and Easy Support Finder • Establish Satellite Business support at LED offices must be open and assisting SMME's	GRDM Partner with existing private sector driven initiatives (AHI Western Cape / Chambers) Seda / Sefa / DTI / SARS / DoHA / DoL / IDC / Business Partners / etc. Wesgro Support Business portals B-municipalities	6-24 months
Garden Route to promote a "Buy Garden Route" Campaign – already prevalent in certain towns • Mainstream and social media apps	All partners	6-12 months
Creation and establishment of a Garden Route Exporters Club	Business organisations and Chambers	6-12 months

Investigate opportunities to replace imports. Manufacturing in Garden Route District.	GRDM B-municipalities Partner with existing private sector driven initiatives (AHI Western Cape / Chambers) Seda / Sefa / DTI / SARS / DoHA / DoL / IDC / Business Partners / etc. Wesgro Support Business portals	12-24 months

b. Business Growth and Development

COVID-19 further weakened an already stagnant domestic economy that entered into a recession prior to the economic effects of the pandemic. Export growth and domestic growth through crowding out imports are therefore key to economic and employment growth.

Supporting growth of the trade account will require us to: 1) Improve productivity in key tradable sectors, 2) Deepen existing destination markets, 3) Stimulate the growth of key sectors and 4) Assist firms in increasing product complexity.

- Ensure Garden Route is investor friendly – SEZ and/or Dedicated Economic Zones (including airport precincts)
- Development of the Garden Route Development Agency and its relevance in terms of partners such as WCG (JDA), SCEP, Wesgro and the private sector, with a clear mandate to drive investments and export opportunities
- International port of entry status for the Port of Mossel Bay and George Airport and support Plett Airport as local hub
- Red-tape support from WCG in municipalities will be expanded with specialised units and a drive to remove legislative blockages

Export impact: Increase Rand value of Regional exports by R1.5 billion within 5 years

Export target: Increase Rand value of priority exports by R 800 million within 5 years

Investment impact: Increase investment in the Garden Route by R 1 billion within 5 years

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Adopt and approve the Garden Route Growth and Development Strategy as a working document with continuous monitoring and evaluation	MMF / WCEDP	3-6 months
Garden Route Development Agency - funding mobilisation and implementation to include the following o DMO (see tourism) o Foreign Direct Investment and Growth o Investment prospectus (regional and individual municipalities) o Investment development and promotion o Incentive policies o Readiness checklist o Catalytic projects follow up, implementation & After care	MMF / SCEP / Wesgro	24 -48 months – phased approach
Lobby national for prioritisation of international Port-of-Entry status to Mossel Bay Port and George Airport and upgrade Plett Airport as a local hub	GRDM / ACSA / TNPA / WCG Bitou	12-24 months
Garden Route SEZ application	GRDM, George and Mossel Bay	12-36 months Phased approach

c. Business & Stakeholder Eco-system

It has become increasingly critical for the business and economic community to establish and sustain an eco-system that ensures that roles and responsibilities are effectively distributed in alignment with mandates and functions. This ultimately ensures that implementation of programmes takes place as and how it should and subsequently attains the desired outcomes and objectives.

- Operation of Economy cluster as a feedback and information sharing platform with representations from all stakeholders, local and provincial government and private sector.
- Establishment or strengthening of sector specific working groups.

Target:

To ensure an inclusive and integrated business and stakeholder eco-system for seamless communication and execution of economic strategies and processes

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Formalise Business / Municipal Advisory Partnership with joint communication (extend mandate of the GR Business and Economic Cluster and Business Continuity workstream into the Advisory Partnership concept)	DCF and Business Chambers / Forums / Industry bodies	3 – 6 months
Create a Regional business council representing all Business Chambers and Forums in the region to ensure an inclusive business environment	Business Chambers and forums	3 – 6 months
Broaden support through the established Clusters, Chambers and Forums in the applicable Sectors to member and non-member firms in all industries • Establish sectoral industry bodies where there is no representation locally, and harness the current and active bodies as part of the Advisory Partnerships • Mobilise key industries to respond to opportunities	Business Chambers / Forums / Industry bodies	3-12 months
Promote and expand the Business Chamber Support Programme	DEDAT / GRDM / Business Chambers	3-6 months
Finalise MoU with Innovation Norway and other agencies / countries to enhance international investment opportunities	GRDM / Innovation Norway / other agencies	November 2020 for Innovation Norway. 3-6 months for other relevant agencies

10. PILLAR 3 – RE-STARTING THE TOURISM AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SECTORS

a. Re-starting the tourism sector

Lack of buy- in from stakeholders and role players which results in brand dilution and non-uniformity. Tourism sector suffered severely with Covid – 19 and this resulted in loss of jobs and complete closure of the sector. Consumers concerned for safety when travelling once travel bans is lifted and the additional costs and protocols to be followed.

- Brand alignment and promotional campaigns to encourage safe travel to the region.
- Facilitate and coordinate familiarization trips for trade and media.

Target:

Collective effort for optimized brand exposure - 5-year plan

Grow and strengthen Garden Route brand as a collective stakeholder effort.

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Establish an industry driven / government supported task team	RTO, LTO, SATSA, SCEP (GRDP), Wesgro, DEDAT	Next 3 months
Review the WC Tourism Act and Tourism Master Plan to enable the redefining of the role of the RTO's and LTO's to ensure relevance and avoid duplication (Roles and responsibilities)	DEDAT / GRDM	6-12 months
Ensure synergy between Garden Route, Wesgro and Provincial Tourism	GRDM / Wesgro / DEDAT	Ongoing
Investigate and Establish the Garden Route DMO • Appoint SP to investigate model and funding requirements • Centralise budgets and funding for a more concentrated and focused marketing campaign • Investigate and lobby to increase funding previously provided to Local Tourism Organisations from municipalities to market the region, under the Garden Route brand campaign and oversight – JDA and DMO models	GRDM / Task Team / SATSA /LTO's	6-24 months Phased approach 6 – 12 months 6 -24 months 12-24 months
Support tourism industry access national support and improve international status	GRDM / Industry	6-24 months

Run a re-introduction campaign of Garden Route to the Domestic and International markets as a fresh and clean Garden Route that is health, safety and security ready • Soft international campaign until December 2020 • Packages that factors in COVID19 requirements	GRDM / LTO's / Industry	Next 6 months
Intervention	**Key stakeholders**	**Timing**
Re-categorisation of B&Bs and Guest Houses to residential rates, on application to Revenue Management	District and B Municipalities	9 – 12 months
Provincial and National Treasury should be requested looking at the implications of discounts on municipal leases in popular tourism spaces, for a maximum period of 6 - 12months (provided rental is market related)	District and B Municipalities / Treasury	6-12 months
Review legislative process for Public-owned accommodation bookings to be directed to small businesses like Bed and Breakfasts	District and B Municipalities CFO Forum and LTO's	Next 9 months
Partnering in terms of the International/National Tourism Marketing Platforms/exhibitions	Garden Route RTO / LTO's/Wesgro	Next 6-12 months and continuous

b. …….. and the creative industries

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Lobby municipalities to issue filming permits without charge for the next 12 months - Centralise and standardise permitting and bookings	GRFO / B-Municipalities	Next 3-12 months
Develop a Film Policy Framework for the Garden Route to base review and standardize policies to create a film friendly region – inclusive of drive-in proposals. Develop Policies where not in place.	B-municipalities	6-24 months phased approach
Location promotion and Events and festivals support, promotion and licensing	Event organisers / B-Municipalities	6-24 months
Budget support from all municipalities	District and B Municipalities	Next 6 months and ongoing for a period of three years before review

11. PILLAR 4 - PROTECTING AND BUILDING THE RURAL, TOWNSHIP AND INFORMAL ECONOMY

a. Promoting Economic Transformation

SMMEs and informal business were fragile prior to the pandemic. The strategy will encourage SMME growth, bring more business-friendly regulations and collaborate with the private sector to improve business productivity

- One-stop business center to provide a comprehensive service to Small businesses, including informal business (Include SA Informal Traders Alliance (SAITA) in processes and initiatives).
- Link municipal and government procurement to local economic development
- Re-skilling of businesses to adapt to the current and future business opportunities
- Facilitate and provide training programmes.
- Support with stock, items and equipment.
- Referrals and advice.
- Facilitate evaluation and mentorship programmes.
- Collaborate with other partners to create platforms for marketing of products e.g. Exhibitions
- Support to enhance product development in collaboration with the CDI.
- Sufficient resources allocated to assist the development and growth of small businesses.

Target:

SMME and informal impact: Accrue R 100 million worth of economic value to SMMEs and informal businesses within 5 years

SMME and informal target: Assist 100 SMME and informal businesses within 5 years

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Setting aside more covid19 Procurement funding support programs for cooperatives and micro enterprises - link to Government SCM. • Include food parcels; access to procurement opportunities to SMME's, PPE, sanitisers and detergents • Recommend the facilitating of Bulk Buying, through online platforms	WCG / GRDM / B-Municipalities / Private Sector / NGO's	Immediate and review next 6-12 months
Identifying informal enterprises likely to be left out in National support programmes • Database to include informal sector and EPWP • Provide PPE and relevant equipment access • Links to Major buyers and suppliers • Ensure businesses register and comply to access relief and other funds	GRDM and B-Municipalities	6-12 months
• Recommend a 6-month rental holiday for Informal Businesses including Street Traders; Hives/Incubators; • Provide 0% increase in rentals/fees applicable to registered informal traders for 2020/21 • No increase to formal business license fees for 2020/21	B-Municipalities	Next 6 months
Intensify moving micro businesses online through "Buy Garden Route"	GRDM / SEDA and others	12-24 months

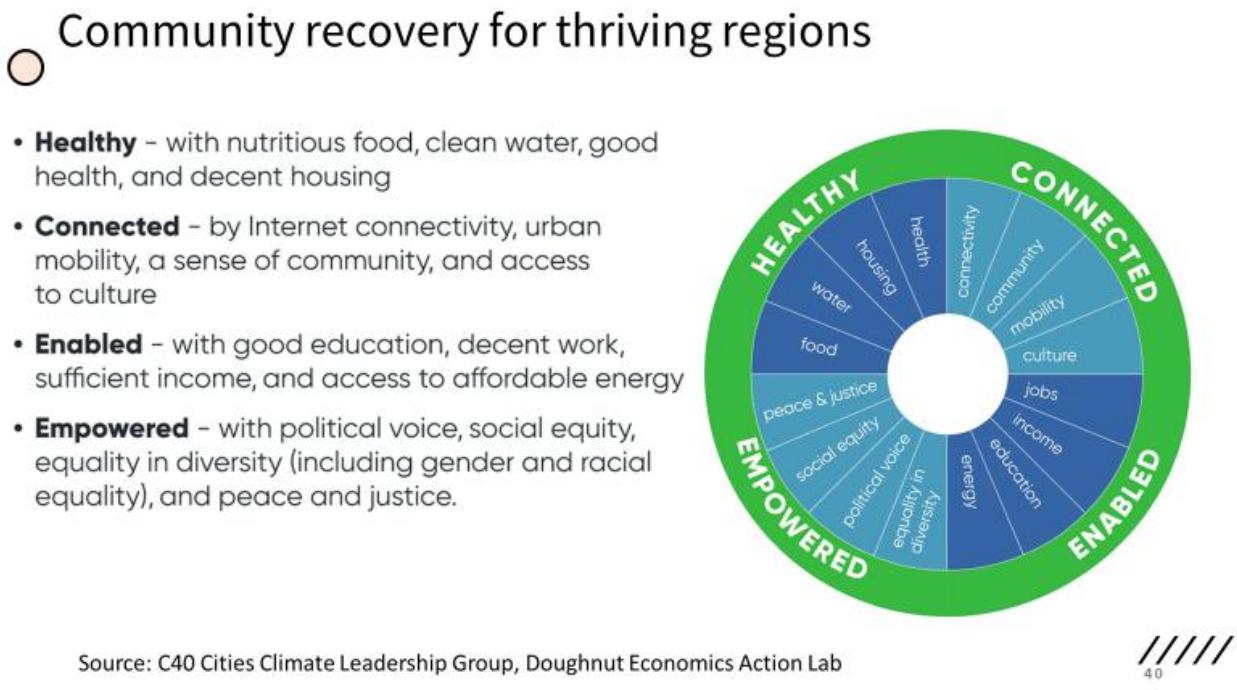
b. Community economic recovery

The project will inject cash into local area economies within hotspot areas in order to provide support to the formal and informal economy and to provide food relief to vulnerable communities. The initiative started in the City of Cape Town but has been extended into the Garden Route and will be further extended as the effects of the pandemic remains with us for a long time. This initiative needs to be supported by all spheres of government, NGO's, agriculture and private sector

- Build relationships with community kitchens and local food suppliers
- Share lessons about how to support informality
- Demonstrate the implementation of an innovative cash transfer mechanism, i.e. the digital voucher system

Target:

Support vulnerable communities during and after the pandemic by stimulating local economic growth by enabling local job retention or expansion of local businesses due to voucher redemption



12. PILLAR 5 – CREATING AN EXTRAORDINARY ENVIRONMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure driven growth will be implemented by protecting and growing the infrastructure asset base through a focus on maintenance and stimulating the economy through the construction and maintenance of dams, roads, education, health and general building facilities.

This will catalyse economic productivity and competitiveness. Enhancing the rate of municipal infrastructure spend will unlock growth, benefiting the construction industry and its supply chain.

- Alternative procurement processes to streamline approvals and fast track public construction projects
- Innovative development application approvals and electronic building plans
- Alternative infrastructure delivery and Private-Public-Partnerships on infrastructure
- Development finance and other alternative finance models to improve access to finance
- Establish local industry think tanks
- Unsolicited bids and the “new” way of handling them
- State owned land made available for development

Public Infrastructure impact: Increase public infrastructure investment supporting 5000 jobs

Public Infrastructure target: Garden Route District and B-Municipalities to facilitate public infrastructure investment of R 750 million within 5 years

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Contractor's development programme – Ring-fence infrastructure for small and emerging contractors - at least 30% of contracts allocated to emerging subcontractors - Improve CIDB levels on a continuous basis. Develop District Contractors' Development Policy Framework for B-municipalities to base their Policies or By-Laws on.	GRDM/B-Municipalities/Provincial Treasury/CIDB/Construction Seta	6-24 months
Municipalities to Standardise electronic building applications and approvals	B-Municipalities / WCG DEDAT	6-24 months Phased approach
Expediting Municipal Procurement • Bid Committees to be held more regularly to expedite tenders being advertised and adjudicated (over MS Teams) • Implementing a 7-day payment period for small businesses and 14 days for larger contractors after submission of invoices and checking • SCM to consider establishing Panels for emergency procurement, and including new SMMEs	B-Municipalities	6-12 months
Accelerating the implementation of government projects	B-Municipalities	Next 6 -12 months and ongoing
Reduce red tape through a easier-to-use and streamlined quotation process (SBD forms)	GRDM / B-Municipalities / WCG	Next 3-6 months

Adopt a Bold investment Incentive Scheme to be brought to Council • Identify Catalytic Projects (process already underway as part of the GR Investment Prospectus) • Database - Continuously update • Drive Foreign Direct Investment opportunities	GRDM B-Municipalities GRDM and B-Municipalities Wesgro / GR Development Agency	6-12 months Next 3-6 months 6-24 months and ongoing after that
Standardise approvals of Catalytic Projects and reducing the time taken to process applications – focusing on high impact projects	DCF / MMF structures can manage and monitor	Monthly
Development Planning Depts to consider waiving all development application fees as an incentive (Policies to be standardised)	B-Municipalities	until 30 June 2021
Convene webinar with developers to provide information and support as part of a series of Webinars organized by the Municipality	Economic and development Cluster /GRDM / B-municipalities	Next 3-6 months
Get these projects into construction within 12 -24 months - Local firms first	B-Municipalities / Project team	12-24 months and ongoing

13. PILLAR 6 – RESILIENT AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-PROCESSING

The drive for more sustainable agricultural practices, water use and enhancing value-chains in the agricultural sector can be used to progressively revitalise the agricultural economy. Over time, the aim is to make exports both more desirable and valuable, adding to the region's economy. Niche agricultural industries and activities must be encouraged, supported, and marketed globally.

Beneficiation of existing agricultural resources could be a significant value add in the region and must be provided for as a primary right in agricultural zones. Sustainable agricultural practices must promote spatial resilience and climate change mitigation and adaptation through the conservation of natural resources, sustainable resource management and capitalising on the region's inherent environmental, social and economic potential.

- Agric-processing expansion to be aggressively encouraged via a range of mechanisms such as land use rights, revised zoning schemes and support initiatives.
- Appropriate sustainable agricultural expansion for climate change (drought tolerant) resilient crop types to be supported
- Support and encourage circular economy principles in the agricultural sectors through Waste-to-biofuels and green energy solutions to be investigated in region.

Target: Increase agricultural sector by 5-10% year-on-year through adding commodities not previously cultivated in the region - Increase exports of processed agricultural products

Intervention	Key stakeholders	Timing
Support Department of Agriculture in the roll-out of relief funding	Dept of Agriculture (DoA) / District and B-Municipalities	Next 3-9 months
Food gardens / digital vouchers and food relief NGO's to collaborate and to supply the food banks	District and B-Municipalities / NGO's / WCEDP / DEDAT	Next 3-9 months and then review need
Regional Produce Market concept to be further investigated and implemented to support the initiatives – implement local industry support (circular economy principles related to GR G&DS)	Garden Route District Municipality and other stakeholders	12-24 months
Investigate and implement Water resilience opportunities and infrastructure especially in the Klein Karoo – Establish Garden Route as Water authority. Reduce red tape for EIA's	Garden Route District Municipality with support from B-Municipalities	Next 3 months to 36 months (Phased approach)
Implement the Agricultural Value Chain project	DoA	Next 12 months
Appoint service provider to ascertain the location and frequency of agri-processing units that serves the region and to avoid duplication of efforts	DoA and GRDM	Next 6-12 months
Identify new commodities for potential growth in the Klein Karoo and Garden Route. Promote and create incentives for ease of access – pre-zoned areas and pre-approved EIA's	DoA	Next 6-36 months Phased approach
Ensure timeous distribution of goods from and to both George Airport and Mossel Bay Port as international cargo areas (Exports and Imports) – part of Garden Route SEZ process	GRDM, DoA, ACSA, TNPA, DEDAT	12-24 months

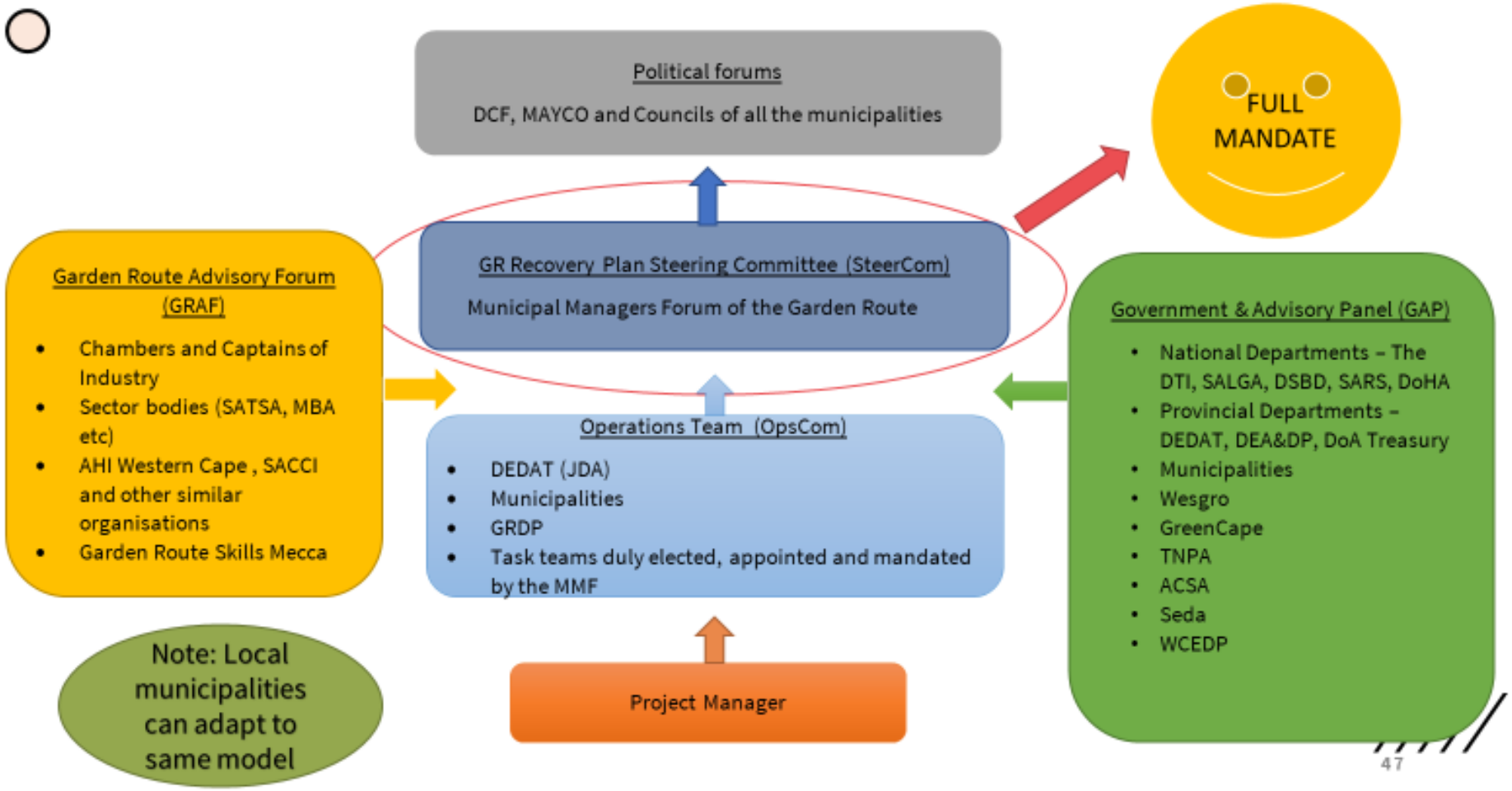
14.SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The skills strategy will be reoriented to be more demand led and responsive to the changing nature of work as well as to, in the immediate term, focus SETA skills training on addressing the impact of Covid-19.

The skills priority is focused on increasing the capability of youth by addressing constraints related to work readiness, appropriately skilled workers and suitable experiences as demanded by private sector business. In giving expression to the recovery plan the skills intervention will ensure that there are 2500 work placements through internships designed to develop soft skills and required experience as well as technical skills development.

- Develop skills that can attract investment especially from knowledge-based economy sectors (e.g. BPO)
- Establish the Garden Route Skills Mecca as the custodian of skills development – establish steering committee and appoint a project manager tom ensure implementation
- Identify, verify, list and prioritise skills and training opportunities and projects that will have impact
- Complete a full database on existing accredited training providers and map them to identify gaps in accessibility and skills shortage areas to avoid supplication of efforts and congestion in certain areas
- Liaise and interact with Seta's to maximize regional impact with regards to funds disbursed
- Contract private sector to maximize local host employer status in line with Buy Local campaign
- Expand apprenticeship model beyond typical apprenticeships - e.g. Swiss / German models
- Re-skilling and training of workforce in partnership with business
- A comprehensive skills audit to ascertain the Garden Route's skills requirements and to determine what skills are already available will be undertaken.

Skills Impact: Increase youth employment by 25% for up to 24-year-old cohort

Skills target: 2500 work placements through internships and skills development interventions within 5 years

15. PROPOSED REGIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE