



LOCAL ECONOMIC & TOURISM STRATEGY 2026 - 2031



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List of Acronyms

DEDAT	: Department of Economic Development and Tourism
CKDM	: Central Karoo District Municipality
IDP	: Integrated Development Plan
LED	: Local Economic Development
NASA	: National Aeronautics and Space Administration
MERO	: Municipal Economic Review and Outlook
MISA	: Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency
SALGA	: South African Local Government Association

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SEAD	: Spatial Economic Activity Data
SEP	: Socio-Economic Profile
SDG	: Sustainable Development Goals
SDF	: Spatial Development Framework
SWOT	: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
PACA	: Participatory Appraisal of Competitive Advantage
REDZ	: Renewable Energy Development Zone
RSDF	: Karoo Regional Spatial Development Framework

**“FROM ROOTS TO RESILIENCE -
LAINGSBURG LEADS GREEN”
2031**

1 CHAPTER: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Process Undertaken to Develop the Strategy

The development of the Laingsburg Local Economic Development (LED) and Tourism Strategy was guided by an inclusive and participatory process.

Key steps included:

- Stakeholder Engagement: Workshops and interviews were conducted with local businesses, community representatives and government officials to identify opportunities and challenges. Notable consultations included the PACA hypothesis workshops held in Laingsburg and Matjiesfontein in August and September 2025.
- Data Collection and Analysis: Review of foundational documents, including the 2022 LED Strategy, Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (2024/25), Spatial Development Framework (SDF) (2025), Municipal Economic Review & Outlook (MERO) 2024/2025 and Socio-Economic Profile (SEP) (2024/25).

The insights gained from these processes formed the foundation for crafting a strategy that reflects the community's needs and aspirations.

1.2 Structure of this Strategy

The figure below outlines the strategy's structure.

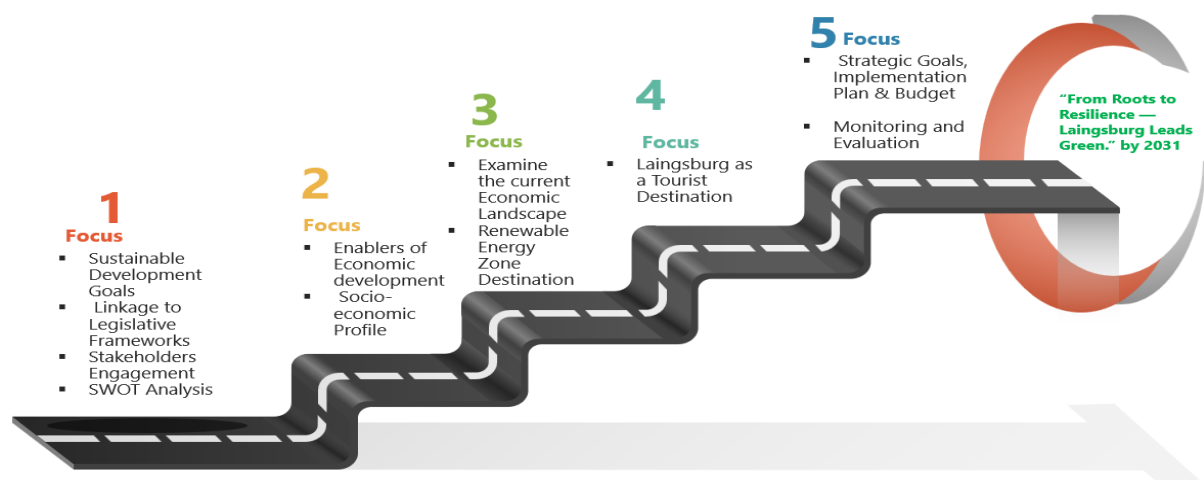


Figure 1: Chapter outline and focus (Laingsburg Planning Unit 2025)

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1.3 Linkage to Legislative Framework and Current Affairs

The Laingsburg Local Economic Development (LED) and Tourism Strategy align with critical legislative and policy frameworks to ensure coherence and effectiveness in achieving economic growth and sustainability. The tables below provide an overview of the linkage and relevance of Laingsburg's LED & Tourism strategy to global, national, provincial, regional and local economic strategic goals.

Table 1: Global and National Linkage to the LED Strategy

SDG GOAL	OBJECTIVE	RELEVANCE TO LED & COMMUNITIES
SDG 1: No Poverty	End poverty in all forms	LED strategies aim to reduce poverty through local job creation and community empowerment.
SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full employment and decent work	Central to LED, focusing on entrepreneurship, tourism and small business support.
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive industrialization and foster innovation	Aligns with LED's priority of strengthening local infrastructure for economic activity.
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	Empower marginalized groups and ensure equal opportunities	LED strategies emphasize inclusion of women, youth and disadvantaged communities.
SDG 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities	Make settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	LED promotes local planning and partnerships to improve community resilience.
SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals	Strengthening global and local partnerships	Mirrors LED's emphasis on collaboration between government, the private sector and communities.
Linkage to Global Goals (SDGs)		
National LED Strategy localizes SDGs by embedding them into community-driven initiatives.		
NDP 2030 shares the same priorities: poverty reduction, inclusive growth, infrastructure and partnerships.		
Laingsburg LED Strategy acts as the implementation arm, ensuring SDG objectives are realized at the community level		

Table 2: Karoo Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF) and the Western Cape Strategic Goals - Jobs for Growth (J4G) linkage to the LED Strategy

FOCUS AREA	KAROO RSDF	WESTERN CAPE G4J STRATEGY	LAINGSBURG LED STRATEGY CONTRIBUTION
Renewable Energy	Identifies Laingsburg as a Renewable Energy Zone	Promotes energy resilience and transition	Local implementation through wind & solar projects, creating jobs and sustainable growth
Agriculture	Strengthens agri-business and food security	Expands opportunities in agri-value chains	Supports small-scale farmers and local agri-business development
Tourism	Promotes astro-tourism and regional tourism growth	Diversifies the economy through tourism sectors	Develops local tourism initiatives, boosting community pride and income
Coordination & Partnerships	Aligns four provinces for integrated development	Builds a connected economy through collaboration	Fosters government–business–community partnerships for inclusive growth
Community Empowerment	Ensures equitable access to regional opportunities	Expands access to jobs and economic participation	Focuses on youth, women and marginalized groups for local transformation
Linkage to the RSDF and Western Cape Strategic Goals - J4G Laingsburg’s LED Strategy acts as the local bridge, ensuring that the regional vision of the Karoo RSDF and the provincial priorities of J4G are translated into community-level action and benefits			

1.3.1 Integration with Municipal Plans

The LED and Tourism strategy is rooted in existing municipal plans and aligns with their objectives to ensure a unified development approach:

I. Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (2024/25):

- The IDP highlights seven strategic objectives for the municipality, including economic sustainability, good governance and community prosperity.
- The LED strategy contributes to these goals by focusing on initiatives like workforce development, SMME support and infrastructure enhancement.

II. Spatial Development Framework (SDF) (2025):

- The SDF identifies growth nodes and infrastructure investment opportunities critical to unlocking economic potential.

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- The LED strategy integrates spatial planning priorities, ensuring that economic initiatives are geographically targeted to maximize impact and sustainability.

III. Municipal Economic Review & Outlook Central Karoo (2024/2025):

- The Municipal Economic Review & Outlook provides an overview of the regional economic performance, sector trends and socio-economic challenges affecting the Central Karoo region.
- The LED Strategy aligns with the economic outlook and development priorities identified in the review, ensuring that proposed initiatives respond to local economic conditions, employment opportunities and long-term growth potential.

IV. Socio-Economic Profile (SEP) (2022/23):

- The SEP provides critical data on population demographics, employment trends, and economic sectors.
- This information underpins targeted interventions in key areas such as youth unemployment, education, and informal sector growth

V. Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) 2022:

- Statistics South Africa provides official demographic, economic, and social data used to inform municipal planning and development processes.
- The LED Strategy utilises Stats SA data to assess population trends, employment levels, household income, and socio-economic conditions, ensuring that development initiatives are evidence-based and responsive to community needs.

1.4 Stakeholders and Situational Analysis

The success of the Laingsburg Local Economic Development (LED) and Tourism Strategy hinges on collaboration with key stakeholders who possess the capacity and resources to unlock economic potential. The following stakeholders were identified as crucial role players in driving economic growth, addressing challenges and fostering partnerships:

Table 3: Key Stakeholders

PARTNERS	ROLE
Local Businesses and Industries	- These include agricultural enterprises (e.g., citrus farming, rooibos tea production) and tourism operators leveraging the region's natural assets. - Their involvement is critical in job creation, skills development and enhancing supply chain linkages.
National, Provincial and Local Departments and Agencies	- Entities like the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT), the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) and the Central Karoo District Municipality. - These institutions provide policy direction, funding and technical support for infrastructure, SMME development and skills enhancement.
Community Organizations and NGOs	- Non-Governmental Organisations and civil society groups are intermediaries in community mobilisation and capacity building. - They play a significant role in ensuring inclusiveness and addressing socio-economic challenges such as poverty and unemployment.
Educational Institutions	- Institutions such as George College, Stellenbosch University and Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) offer skills development programs and research support. - Their role includes aligning education and training with market demands, supporting innovation and equipping youth with employable skills.

- Policy and Planning: Government bodies ensure alignment with legislative frameworks and provide funding and technical guidance.
- Economic Growth Drivers: Businesses and industries generate employment, innovate and boost local GDP through exports and value addition.
- Capacity Building: Educational institutions and NGOs focus on training, mentorship and entrepreneurial development.
- Community Engagement: NGOs and local organizations ensure grassroots participation and foster shared ownership of the LED and Tourism strategy.

1.4.1 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT Analysis)

SWOT analysis was conducted to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that impact the economic development of the Laingsburg Municipality. This analysis provides a strategic framework for leveraging assets, addressing challenges, capitalizing on opportunities and mitigating risks.

Table 4: SWOT Analysis (PACA 2025)

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Agricultural Base: • Sheep farming (Karoo Lamb) • Crops include lucerne (alfalfa), wine grapes, vegetables, and onions Tourism Appeal: • Scenic attractions include the Vleiland homestays and Matjiesfontein Renewable Energy Potential: • Ample resources for wind energy projects, aligning with global sustainability trends. Institutional Capacity: • High institutional support for LED initiatives, with strong governance structures. • Partnerships with provincial and national agencies for development funding. Cultural heritage and niche markets. Matjiesfontein – a National Heritage Village • Matjiesfontein is one of South Africa's best-preserved Victorian-era towns	SMME and Business Support • Lack of business services (pharmacy, panel beaters, artisans) • Lack of training, skills and financial support • No stalls for informal traders, no toilets & no street furniture Economic Diversification: • Over-reliance on agriculture and tourism with limited business activity or value-added production. Low Growth Potential Index: • Laingsburg and Matjiesfontein have low growth potential due to economic constraints and limited investment attraction. Skills Mismatch: • Gaps in workforce skills for high-demand sectors like renewable energy, tourism and agri-processing. • Lack of employability skills • Insufficient career guidance based on the lack of encouragement for students to take mathematics, accounting and physical sciences at school level. • No technical vocational education and training (TVET) institutions are available in the region (Central Karoo District)

• Matjiesfontein Rich Railway History: The town's origins on the Cape Government Railways line and the iconic Red Bus tour led by the entertainers make the railway story a major draw. Vleiland • Cultural identity: Represents the Karoo's rugged lifestyle and heritage, tied to farming traditions. • Agriculture blends with tourism—farm stays, Karoo cuisine and scenic landscapes attract visitors, creating additional income streams.	Poor Relationship between Municipality, Community and Business: • Poor governance & communication • Underfunded projects & poor implementation • Poor political partnership • Political interference • Poor intergovernmental support • Dependency and charity mindset • Apathy & pessimism • Lack of local buy-in
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Sectoral Growth: • Expansion of agri-processing industries to add value to raw products Karoo Lam. • Eco-tourism, adventure tourism and cultural tourism can attract a diverse range of visitors. Revive Laingsburg and Matjiesfontein Railway Precinct • Opportunities for luxury and themed train journeys and economic upliftment of disadvantaged communities in the region Manufacturing • Small but growth potential especially in food processing	Infrastructure • Poor sanitation • Health risks (unhealthy drinking water) • Infrastructure decay Economic Volatility: • Vulnerability to national economic challenges such as energy crises and inflation. Town Safety: • Vagrancy & harassment of tourists/residents • Drug & alcohol abuse • Poor street lighting

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Opportunities for Municipality- SMME Partnership (Stronger Business Eco-System)

- Local procurement: Prioritize buying goods and services from local SMMEs for municipal projects. This keeps money circulating within the community.
- Capacity building: Offer training, mentorship and workshops to help SMMEs improve management, digital skills and compliance.

Renewable Energy Development:

- Operating windfarms
- Matjiesfontein National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) monitoring station; support the community of Matjiesfontein

Strategic Partnerships:

- Opportunities to collaborate with educational institutions (e.g., George College, Stellenbosch University) to align skills training with economic demands.

Provincial and National Support:

- Alignment with the National Development Plan (NDP) and Provincial Strategic Goals (PSGs) to attract funding for infrastructure and skills programs.

Technology and Digitalization:

- Leverage digital technologies to promote tourism.

Limited affordable/social housing

- Low-income revenue base/municipality is grant-dependent.
- Limited rental opportunities
- Rent expensive

Increase in School dropouts

- School dropout in Laingsburg weakens the local economy by reducing employability, limiting skills development and perpetuating poverty

Climate Change:

- Increasing risks of droughts and extreme weather events, threatening agriculture and water security.

2 CHAPTER: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENABLERS

2.1 Laingsburg's Geographical Location

The Laingsburg Local Municipality located in the Western Cape Province, falls under Category B, which is the classification for Local Municipalities. It is an integral part of the Central Karoo District, representing a significant portion of its landmass alongside two other municipalities, Beaufort West and Prince Albert. Positioned just 280km away from Cape Town, Laingsburg is a contemporary Karoo town. Its unique geographical location is marked by geological intrigue entwined with a rich tapestry of historical significance and local customs (SDF 2025). Figure 2 gives an overview of Laingsburg's geographical location.

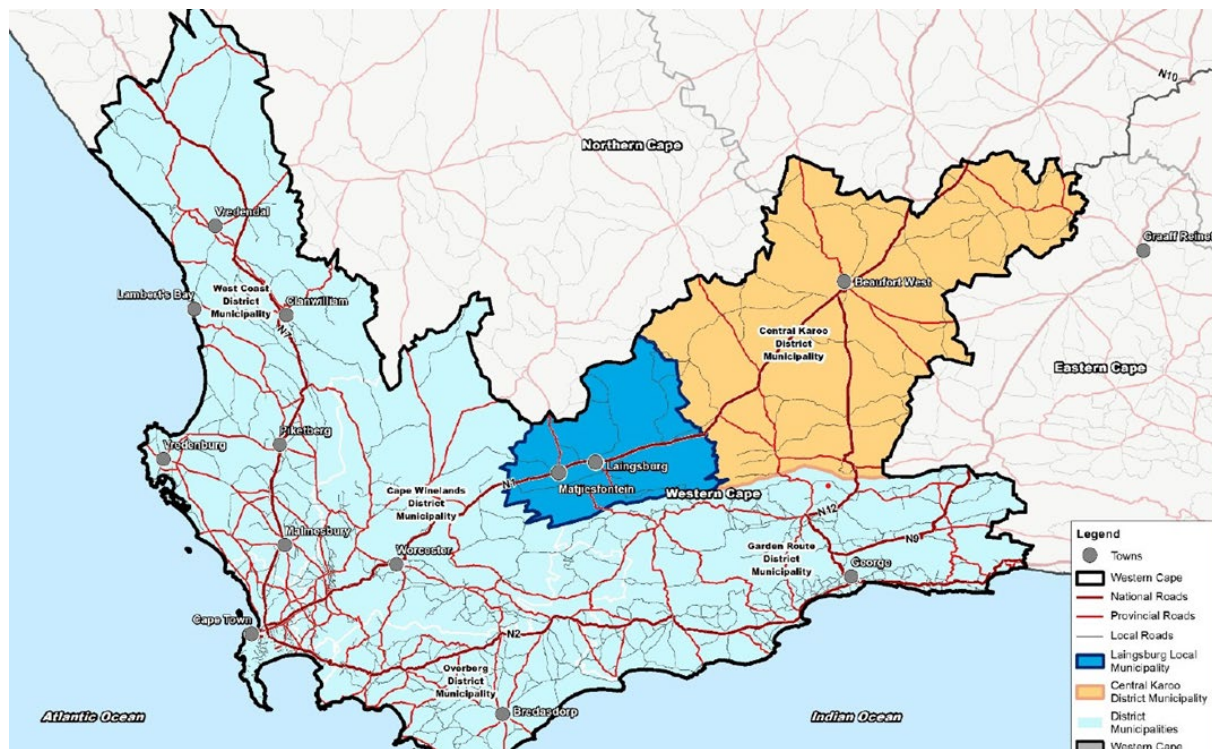


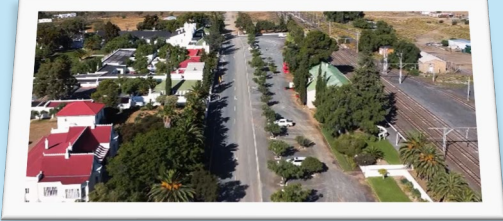
Figure 2: Laingsburg Location Map (Laingsburg IDP 2024)

Laingsburg is also the entry point to the Central Karoo District if driving from Cape Town along the N1 to Johannesburg. The municipality borders two Western Cape districts, the Cape Winelands District and the Garden Route District. The municipality also borders the Northern Cape Province to the north, connecting it to Sutherland. The municipality of Laingsburg covers the following areas: Laingsburg town, Matjiesfontein and Vleiland.

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2.2 Laingsburg Settlement Profile

Table 5: Laingsburg Settlement Profile (PACA 2025)

	Laingsburg Town Role: • Anchor node (Provides social services, retail, and government functions to surrounding areas) • Key nodal point along the N1 corridor and railway line Economic Contribution: • Economic hub • Tourism linked to the Flood Museum, Karoo landscapes and transit tourism (N1 pass-through market) Investment Potential: • Logistics & transport hub development • Tourism expansion • Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) • Agro-processing and light manufacturing Investment Needs: • Town regeneration and beautification • Tourism infrastructure • Upgrading bulk infrastructure • Skills development and SMME support • Improved transport and logistics facilities • Climate resilience
	Matjiesfontein Role: • Tourism niche node with national heritage significance Economic Contribution: • Tourism destination • Attracts visitors via heritage assets & railway tourism (luxury train routes) Investment Potential:

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	• Heritage tourism expansion (museums, experiences, storytelling) • Niche tourism markets (e.g. astro-tourism, agri-tourism, cultural tourism etc.) • Rail-linked tourism development • Boutique accommodation and hospitality growth Investment Needs: • Preservation and enhancement of heritage assets • Expansion of tourism products and experiences • Improved marketing and branding • Improved local economic linkages (SMMEs, crafts, local supply chains).
	Vleiland Role: • Agricultural base • Rural agricultural area (farm homesteads) Economic Contribution: • Livestock farming (sheep, ostrich etc.) • Supports agricultural supply chains feeding into Laingsburg Town Investment Potential: • Agricultural expansion and intensification • Agri-processing opportunities • Renewable energy projects (solar/wind in rural landscape) • Small-scale agri-tourism (farm stays, Karoo experiences) Investment Needs: • Improved rural infrastructure i.e. roads (accessibility), water supply. • Agricultural support programmes (technology, input, skills etc.) • Climate resilience interventions • Market access and value chain integration • Basic service delivery improvements

2.3 Demographic Profile

A demographic profile of Laingsburg is important for its local economic strategy because it reveals who lives in the municipal area, their age, income, education, and employment patterns. This information helps leaders design policies that match community needs, whether that's creating jobs for young people, supporting services for an aging population, or attracting businesses that fit local consumer demand. In short, demographics ensure the economic strategy is realistic, targeted and sustainable rather than generic.

From the figure below, it's clear that Laingsburg has a relatively young population. With a total of 11 366 residents, 24.6% are under 14 years old, 32.8% fall between 15-34 years, 31.1% fall between 35–59 years and 11.5% is in the 60 and above age group (Stats SA 2022). This youthful demographic suggests strong future labour force potential, a need for investment in education, skills development and opportunities for industries that cater to younger consumers and families. It also signals that long-term economic strategies should prioritize job creation, youth retention and family-oriented services to harness this demographic advantage.

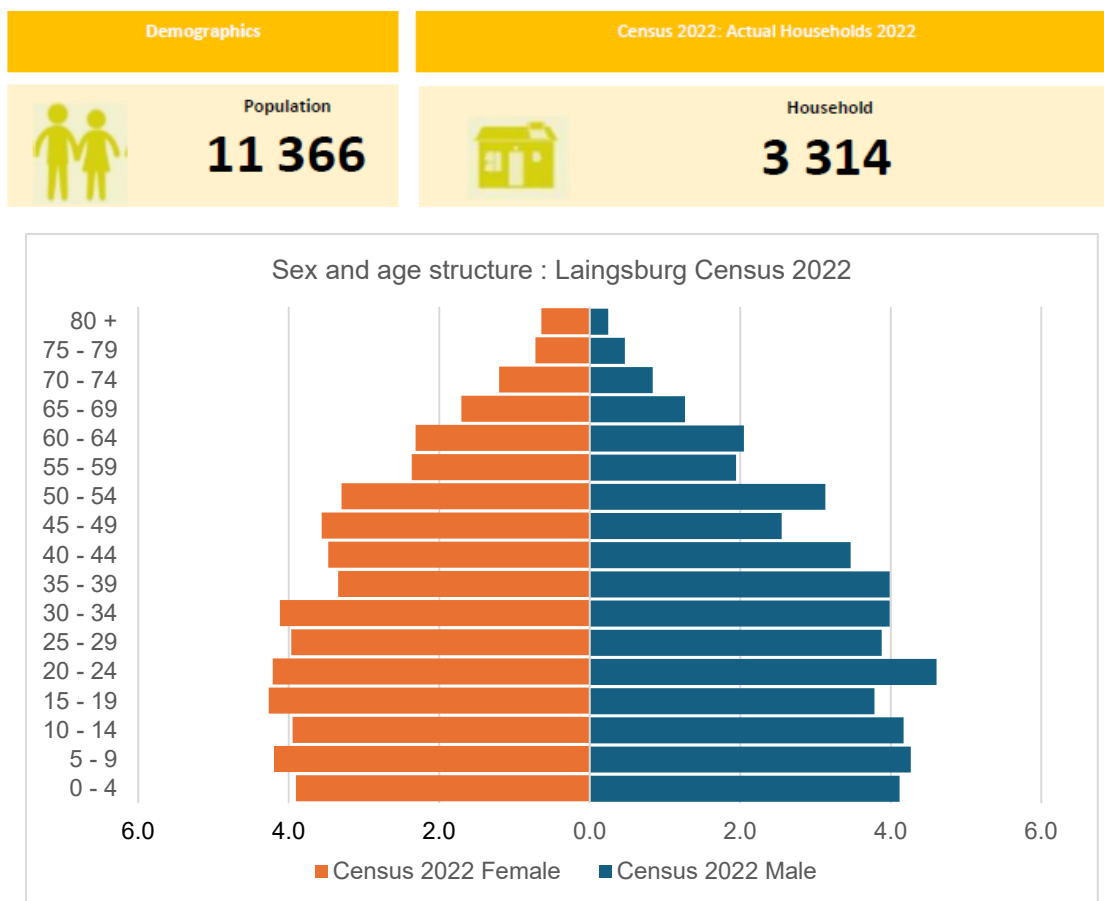


Figure 3: Laingsburg Demographic Profile (IDP 2022_2027 & Stats SA 2022)

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2.4 Workforce and Educational Level

Education remains a critical factor in shaping the socio-economic future of Laingsburg; however, current trends highlight significant challenges. As illustrated in Figure 4, the matric pass rate declined from 81.6% in 2022 to 72.6% in 2023, while dropout rates remain a concern, reflecting a weakening pipeline of skilled youth entering the labour market (SEP 2024 & Stats SA 2022).

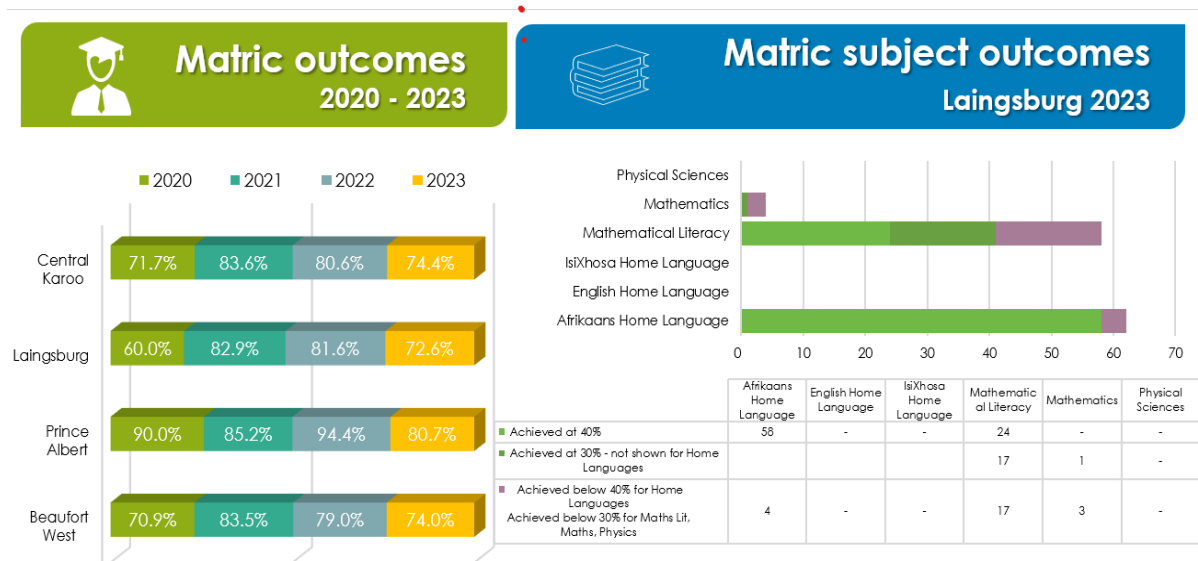


Figure 4: Laingsburg Educational Overview (SEP 2024)

In addition, Figure 5 indicates that 48% of the population between the ages of 5 and 24 do not attend school. This situation not only reduces employment opportunities for young people but also limits the municipality’s capacity to attract investment and support sustainable economic growth. Addressing these educational challenges is therefore essential to empower residents, reduce unemployment and ensure that Laingsburg’s youthful population contributes meaningfully to long-term development (SEP 2024 & Stats SA 2022).

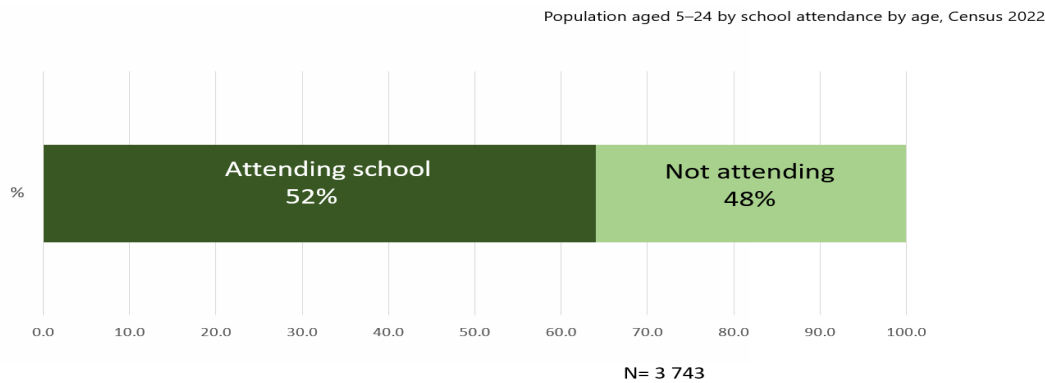


Figure 5: Laingsburg School Attendance (Stats SA 2022)

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Figure 6 further highlights Laingsburg’s critical skills challenge, with 43% of the workforce classified as low-skilled and only 20.3% skilled. This imbalance combined with declining educational outcomes and limited STEM readiness poses a serious risk to the municipality’s ability to compete in the Fourth Industrial Revolution era. Future economic development will depend on closing the gap between education attainment and labour market demands while also equipping young people with digital, technical and cognitive skills.

In addition, there is also a need to strengthen and expand vocational and innovation-driven learning opportunities. Addressing these skills shortages is essential to building a workforce capable of attracting investment, supporting local businesses and driving sustainable growth (SEP 2024 & MERO 2025_2026).

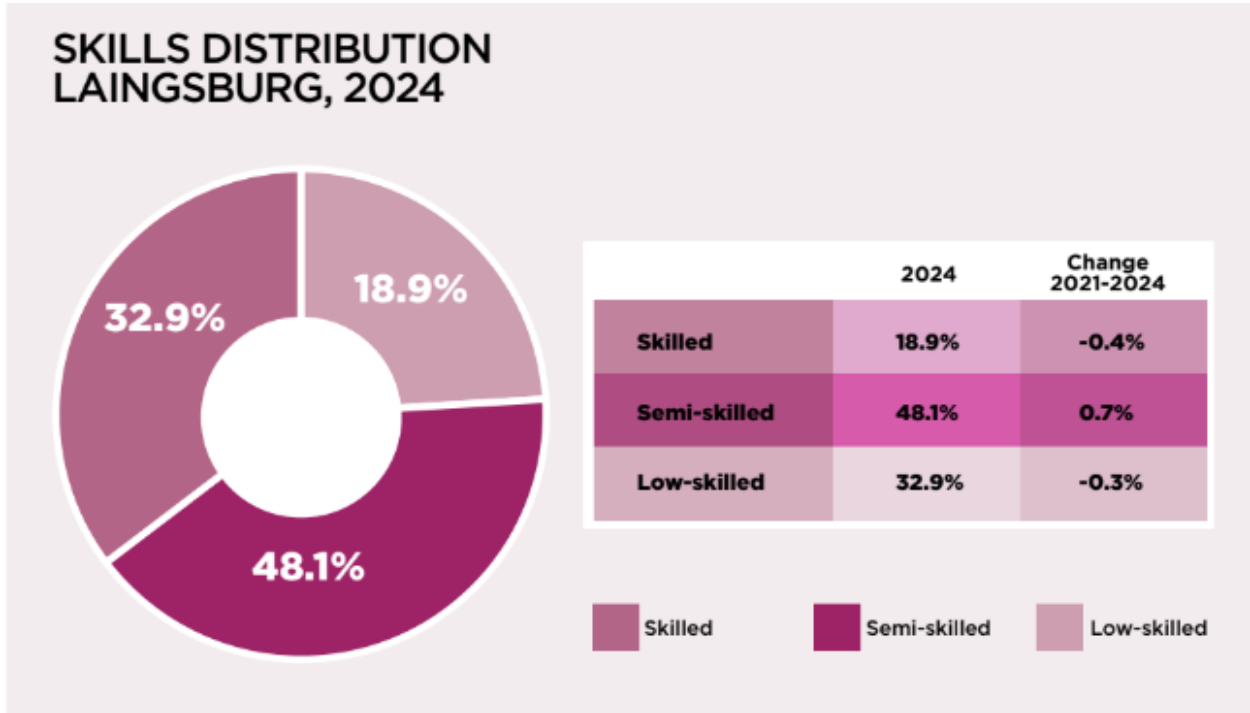


Figure 6: Laingsburg’s skills overview (MERO 2025_2026)

3 CHAPTER: ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

The development of an economic strategy requires assessing the economy's current functioning and understanding how it has changed over recent years. This section starts by providing an overview of the economy's performance and structure. It also considers how the current economic condition will affect future economic development. Infrastructure provision is one of the many prerequisites for economic development.

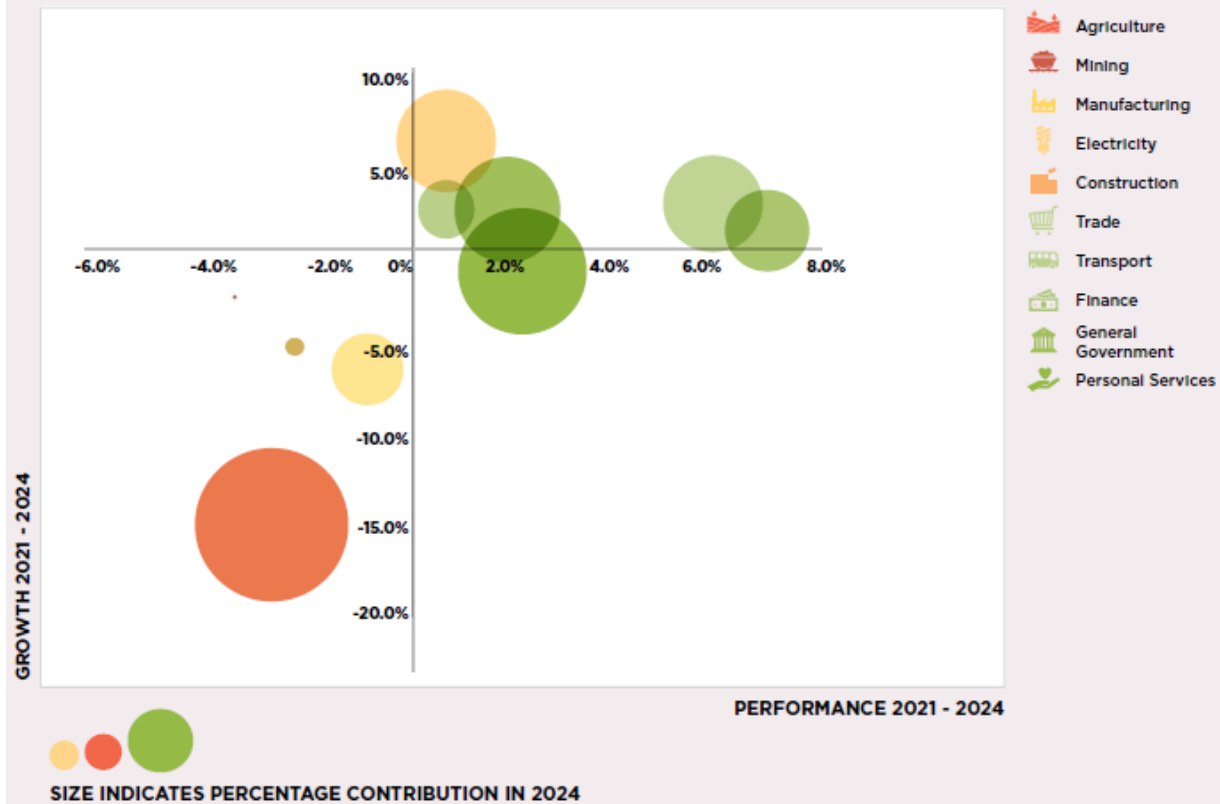
The second part of this section gives a brief overview of the Laingsburg municipal infrastructure environment. How the condition of the different infrastructures impacts economic development and planning is also considered. This section will conclude by assessing the cost of doing business in Laingsburg relative to other municipalities in the region.

3.1 Performance and Structure of Laingsburg's Economy

Figure 7 illustrates the Gross Domestic Product by Region (GDPR) performance for Laingsburg between 2021 and 2024, highlighting the municipality's economic structure and sectoral contributions. The data indicates that agriculture remains a key contributor to the local economy, accounting for 24.8% of GDPR in 2024 despite experiencing a significant decline in growth. The tertiary sector, particularly trade, transport, general government, and personal services, showed stronger and more stable performance, collectively contributing a substantial share to the local economy. In contrast, sectors such as mining and manufacturing remained underdeveloped, reflecting limited industrial diversification within the municipality.

Overall, the GDPR profile demonstrates that Laingsburg's economy continues to rely heavily on traditional and service-related sectors, making it vulnerable to external economic and environmental pressures. The data highlights the importance of diversifying the local economy, strengthening investment in emerging industries, and improving skills development to align with future economic demands and the Fourth Industrial Revolution. These insights are essential for guiding Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives aimed at building economic resilience, attracting investment, and supporting sustainable long-term growth.

GDPR PERFORMANCE PER SECTOR Laingsburg, 2021 - 2024



SECTOR		PERFORMANCE 2021 - 2024	GROWTH 2023 - 2024	CONTRIBUTION TO GDP 2024
PRIMARY SECTOR	AGRICULTURE	-3.4%	-12.7%	24.8%
	MINING	-4.3%	-1.4%	0.0%
SECONDARY SECTOR	MANUFACTURING	-2.9%	-3.9%	0.3%
	ELECTRICITY	0.7%	5.6%	9.4%
	CONSTRUCTION	-1.1%	-5.0%	5.4%
TERTIARY SECTOR	TRADE	5.6%	2.8%	13.3%
	TRANSPORT	6.9%	1.5%	11.5%
	FINANCE	0.9%	2.4%	4.4%
	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	2.1%	2.7%	12.8%
	PERSONAL SERVICES	2.2%	0.9%	18.2%

Figure 7: Laingsburg's GDPR Performance (MERO 2025_2026)

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3.1.1 Laingsburg Market Performance

Laingsburg’s investment activity remains concentrated in traditional sectors such as agriculture, public services and infrastructure-related industries. The local economy continues to depend largely on primary sector activities, particularly agriculture, which remain important for employment and economic output. Investment trends also emphasise the role of infrastructure and government expenditure in sustaining local economic activity.

However, limited investment in sectors such as manufacturing, mining and higher-value service industries reflects structural constraints within the economy. This narrow investment base increases economic vulnerability and restricts opportunities for diversification and innovation. This highlights the need for targeted economic interventions to broaden the municipality’s investment base, support emerging industries and strengthen long-term economic resilience and sustainable growth within Laingsburg (Stats SA 2022 & MERO 2025_2026).

3.1.2 Employment and Unemployment and Informal Employment Profile

Laingsburg’s unemployment rate is recorded at 23.3%, see figure 8 (IDP 2022_2027), highlighting ongoing challenges within the local labour market. The formal sector remains the primary source of employment, accounting for 86% of jobs, while the informal sector contributed 14%, see figure 9 (MERO 2025_2026). This employment distribution highlights the importance of strengthening growth within the formal economy while simultaneously supporting informal businesses that provide livelihood opportunities for many residents.

Addressing unemployment will require targeted interventions to expand job creation, improve skills development and ensure that both formal and informal sectors are integrated into the municipality’s broader economic development framework (Quantec 2024).



Figure 8: Laingsburg unemployment rate (IDP 2022_2027)

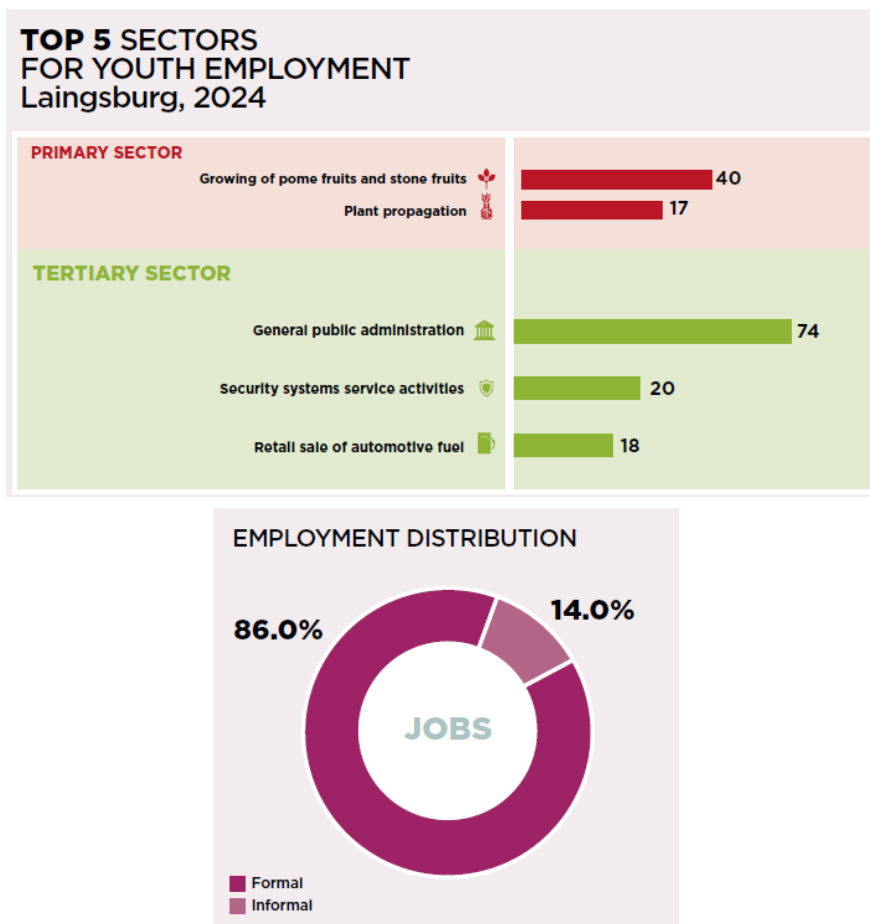


Figure 9: Employment Distribution in Laingsburg (MERO 2025_2026)

3.1.3 Household Expenditure Trends and Disposable Income

It's important for Laingsburg's Local Economic Development (LED) strategy to analyze disposable income and household expenditure because these indicators reveal the community's purchasing power, consumption priorities and overall economic resilience. Income trends show whether households are becoming more financially secure or vulnerable, which directly affects local demand for goods and services.

Expenditure patterns highlight which sectors (i.e. services, food or housing) drive local consumption, guiding policymakers on where to support businesses and stimulate growth. Declining income growth signals risks for future economic stability, making it essential to design interventions that boost household earnings and reduce reliance on essential spending alone. Balanced development requires aligning investment strategies with household needs, ensuring that local industries can meet demand while creating jobs and raising incomes.

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Figure 10 shows that in 2024 Laingsburg's disposable income totaled R473.16 million, while household expenditure reached R465 million leaving only a modest surplus. Although income growth peaked in 2021 (10.35%) and 2022 (11.43%) it has since declined, turning slightly negative (-0.63%) in 2024. Household spending patterns reveal that services dominate consumption (44.24%) followed by non-durable goods with food, beverages and tobacco as the largest sub-category.

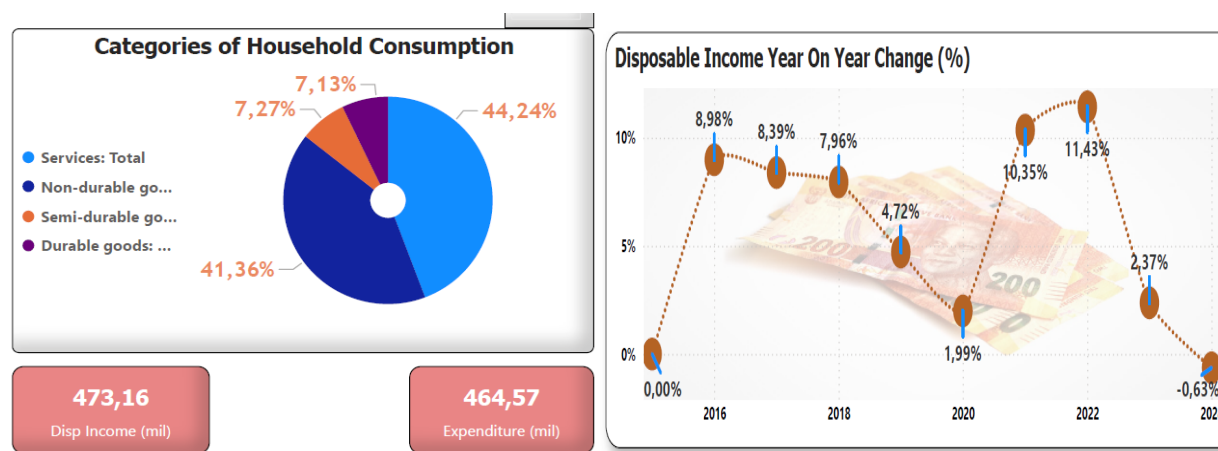


Figure 10: Household Consumption and Disposable Income (Quantec 2024)

3.2 Economic and Social Infrastructure

Economic infrastructure may be compared to the foundation of a building; it supports the multitude of productive activities that constitute the bulk of the economy and gross domestic product.

Infrastructure is broadly classified into two categories:

- **Social Infrastructure:** Facilities and services that enhance educational, health and cultural standards, such as colleges, universities, hospitals and museums.
- **Economic Infrastructure:** Structures that promote economic activities, including roads, highways, railroads, electricity networks, telecommunications and water supply systems (Kaur & Kaur, 2018).

Understanding the distinction between these two types of infrastructure is vital for strategic planning and prioritizing investments to foster both social well-being and economic growth. All sectors of infrastructure are necessary to ensure economic growth and reduce income inequality. Annexure A provides a comprehensive overview of infrastructure projects implemented and maintained by the Laingsburg Municipality. It highlights completed initiatives, ongoing

construction and planned future projects across both economic and social infrastructure sectors. This annexure demonstrates the municipality's commitment to strengthening bulk services, water supply systems and the maintenance of social facilities such as schools, clinics and community halls.

3.3 Laingsburg Transport and Communication Overview

Efficient transport and communication systems are critical enablers of local economic development. They connect communities, facilitate trade and ensure access to essential services. In Laingsburg, transport and communication infrastructure play a pivotal role in linking the municipality to the broader Karoo region and national markets. Table 6 below makes the strengths and gaps in Laingsburg's transport and communication systems immediately clear for decision-makers and investors.

Table 6: Transport and Communication Overview (IDP 2022_2027)

SECTOR / MODE	AVAILABILITY	NOTES / DETAILS
Public Transport	Yes	Minibus taxis (local services) and Inter Cape bus services operate.
Rail Transport	Yes	- Matjiesfontein operational - Laingsburg rail station exists but is not operational.
Air Transport	No	No air transport facilities available.
Telecommunication (Broadband/Wi-Fi)	Yes	Available only in Laingsburg town.
Tar Roads	No	Vleiland and Matjiesfontein lack tarred road infrastructure.

3.4 Ease of Doing Business in Laingsburg

Laingsburg Municipality has streamlined its processes to encourage investment and development, offering faster approvals and lower costs compared to neighboring municipalities.

Table 7: Ease of doing business (Planning Unit 2025)

BUSINESS PROCESS / SERVICE	TURNAROUND TIME / FEATURE	NOTES
Land Use Approval	3 months	Efficient compared to regional averages.
Building Plan Approval	1 month	Quick processing supports development momentum.
Application Fees	Lower	Cheaper than neighboring municipalities, reducing entry barriers.
Enquiries & Development Support	Dedicated staff	A designated municipal officer assists with enquiries and development applications, ensuring responsive service.

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4 CHAPTER: LAINGSBURG RENEWABLE ENERGY LANDSCAPE

The Karoo Regional Spatial Development Framework has identified the Laingsburg municipal area as a Renewable Energy Zone, positioning it as a strategic hub for clean energy development. This designation underscores Laingsburg's geographic and climatic advantages for solar and wind energy while also signaling strong potential for investment and long-term sustainability.

Over the past five years, the municipality has received 13 renewable energy applications for wind and solar projects. Of these, 9 have been approved and are currently in full operation, contributing to local economic growth, job creation and infrastructure development (see figure 11). The remaining 4 applications are still in the planning and approval phase, reflecting continued investor interest and future expansion opportunities.

This momentum strengthens Laingsburg's role as a renewable energy leader in the Karoo and integrating this into the LED strategy ensures that energy development is aligned with broader goals of economic diversification, resilience and sustainable growth.

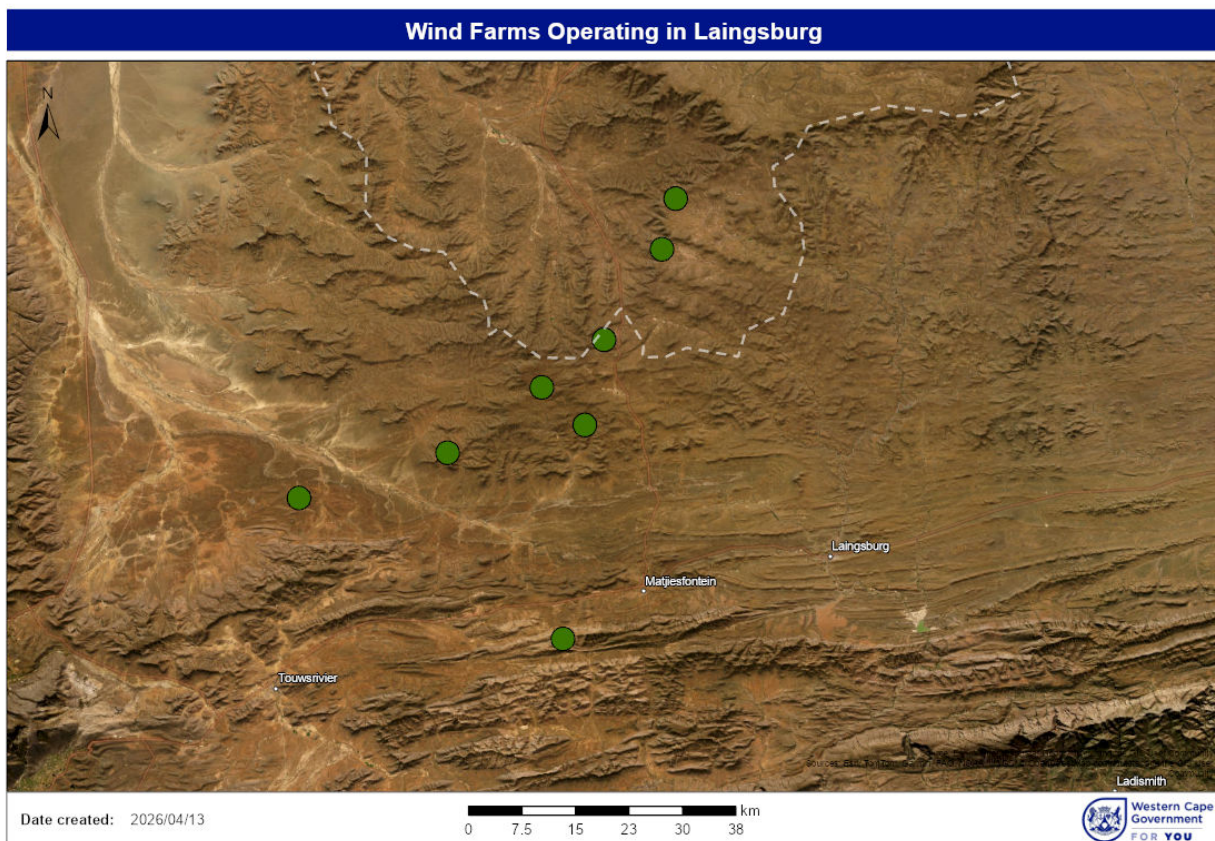


Figure 11: Renewable Energy Footprint (Laingsburg Planning Unit 2025)

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5 CHAPTER: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION STRATEGY FOR LAINGSBURG

Laingsburg Municipality, situated in the heart of the Great Karoo, is a region rich in history, culture and natural beauty. Known for its warm hospitality, dramatic landscapes and unique heritage, Laingsburg offers visitors an authentic Karoo experience that blends tranquility with adventure. Tourism plays a vital role in the municipality's vision for sustainable development.

This strategy seeks to harness Laingsburg's distinctive assets to:

- Promote sustainable tourism growth: balancing economic opportunities with environmental conservation and cultural preservation.
- Enhance visitor experiences: showcasing heritage, natural attractions and community-driven initiatives.
- Empower local communities: through job creation, skills development and inclusive participation in tourism activities.
- Strengthen destination branding: positioning Laingsburg as a gateway to the Karoo and a must-visit destination for domestic and international travelers.

By aligning stakeholders, investing in infrastructure and promoting unique offerings such as heritage tours, eco-tourism and cultural events, this strategy aims to establish Laingsburg as a resilient, competitive and welcoming destination.

5.1 Exploring Laingsburg Visually

To discover the hidden gems of Laingsburg, simply scan the barcode below and step into the journey of experiencing the Karoo as a tourist. From breathtaking landscapes and rich cultural heritage to warm community hospitality, Laingsburg invites you to explore, connect and create lasting memories.



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6 CHAPTER: ACHIEVING THE LED VISION: “FROM ROOTS TO RESILIENCE, LAINGSBURG LEADS GREEN”

To realize its vision “From Roots to Resilience, Laingsburg Leads Green” the Municipality will implement a set of integrated strategic goals that balance economic growth, community empowerment and sustainability. Figure 12 below illustrates how Laingsburg’s strategic goals directly align with the LED Vision “From Roots to Resilience, Laingsburg Leads Green.”

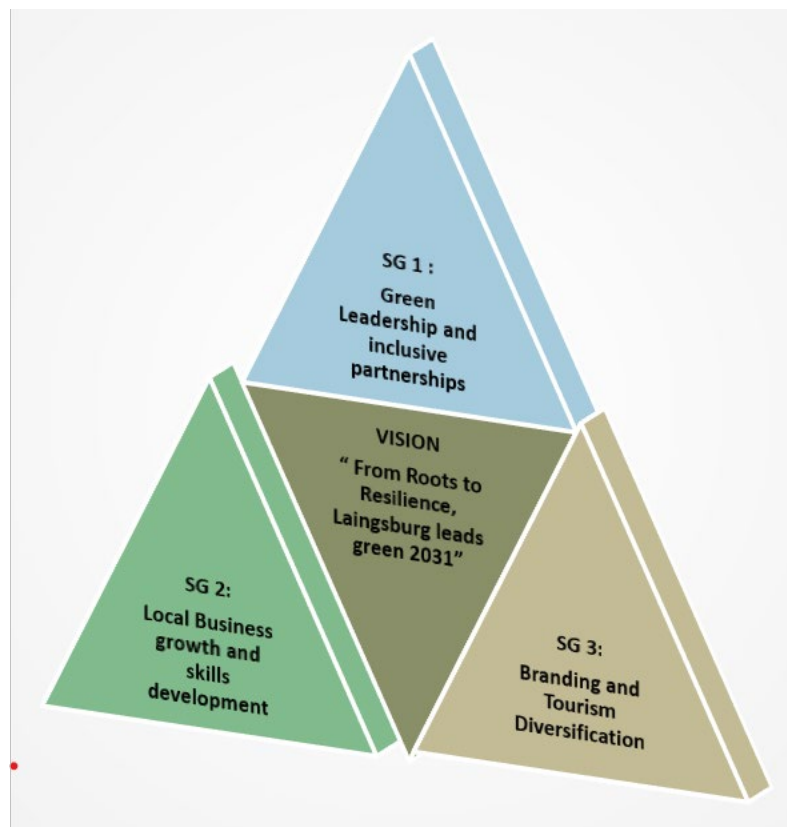


Figure 12: Strategic goals (PACA 2025 & 2026)

6.1 STRATEGIC GOAL 1: GREEN LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIP

LED Project Name	The objective of the Project/Programme	Action Required to Implement Project	Economic/Benefit Impact	Champion/Role Players	Resources Required Cost Estimate
Establishment of Laingsburg Economic Development Agency	To develop a wind energy project on municipal land that harnesses renewable resources for electricity generation, with the primary purpose of selling clean energy into the grid or through power purchase agreements	Project Initiation Formally resolve (through council decision) to pursue the wind farm project. Appoint a project team or partner with a developer/consultant. Land & Legal Preparation Secure internal approval for use of municipal land. Prepare lease/concession agreements if partnering with private investors. Regulatory Applications Apply to the national energy regulator (e.g., NERSA) for a generation license. Commission and submit an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to the Department of Environmental Affairs.	Increase in Municipal Revenue Employment creation (Construction & maintenance phase)	Municipality MISA DEADP	TBC

		Technical & Feasibility Studies Conduct wind resource assessments and site feasibility studies. Prepare grid connection studies in collaboration with Eskom or the local utility.			
Educational Partnership	Collaborate with universities and TVET colleges to create renewable energy training programs, preparing youth for jobs in turbine maintenance and environmental monitoring.	Youth Training Programmes Host regular sessions in schools and community halls to teach residents about wind and solar energy.	Green skilled workforce Economic Diversification	Municipality Wind farms Educational Institutions SALGA All relevant departments.	TBC
Position Strategy for Laingsburg Economic Vision <i>“From Roots to Resilience, Laingsburg Leads Green.”</i>	By 2031, Laingsburg will be a carbon-neutral municipality, powered by renewable energy, resilient to drought and recognized globally as a model for rural sustainability.	Annual Green Summit: Host a regional or local conference in Laingsburg showcasing wind farms, local municipalities and community-led sustainability. Digital Campaign: Launch “Laingsburg Green by 2031” across social media, with videos, infographics, and stories of local farmers, youth, and innovators. Knowledge Exchange	Resilience against climate change Economic Diversification	Municipality SALGA DEDAT All relevant departments.	TBC

6.2 STRATEGIC GOAL 2: LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

LED Project Name	The objective of the Project/Programme	Action Required to Implement Project	Economic/Benefit Impact	Champion/Role Players	Resources Required Cost Estimate
Public-Private Partnership Framework	Establish collaboration platforms between the government, local businesses and investors.	Hold Business Events	Mobilization of private investment	Municipal Manager's Office All Departments Local Business Chamber DEDET	OPEX
Business Regulatory Reform Program	Streamline licensing, land development applications and compliance processes to reduce barriers for entrepreneurs and potential investors	Review By-laws and policies	Sustainable economic growth creates lasting value for the community	Town Planning Unit Technical Services (Infrastructure) Unit Supply Chain Finance DEADP MISA	OPEX
Infrastructure development (maintenance and improvement)	Enhancing connectivity, attracting investment, creating job opportunities and supporting local economies. A strong infrastructure foundation (water, electricity, road and sanitation systems to ensure reliability for businesses and communities).	Building Maintenance	Hard and soft infrastructure maintenance supports economic development by preserving asset value, enhancing safety, creating jobs and fostering sustainable growth.	Technical Services (Infrastructure) Unit Town Planning Unit	1st Year – OPEX 2nd Year – Application for funding
		Rehabilitation of water/electricity, sewage. Roads and street light maintenance		Technical Services (Infrastructure) Unit	WSIG
Revive Laingsburg and Matjiesfontein Railway Precinct	To revitalise the Laingsburg and Matjiesfontein railway precincts as economic, tourism and heritage nodes	Develop and implement a Railway Precinct Revitalisation Plan.	Will stimulate local economic growth, enhance tourism appeal, preserve	Municipality/ Town Planning Unit Technical Services	Apply for funding

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	that support local development, connectivity and investment.	Upgrade railway-related infrastructure, public spaces and surrounding precinct areas. Promote heritage tourism, small business development and mixed-use economic opportunities within the precincts. Strengthen integration between transport, tourism and local economic development initiatives. Engage strategic partners and apply for external funding to support precinct redevelopment.	heritage assets, improve accessibility and create opportunities for investment, job creation and small business development.	(Infrastructure) Unit - LED PRASA DEDET MISA SALGA	
Municipal Skills Development Plan (end-user IT training)	Uniform end-user training in IT software will ensure that all officials use the same task processes. Even if one employee leaves the organisation, it won't affect the accuracy and continuity of the work being done	Internal Skills Audit (IT) Training	All employees can adapt quickly and effectively to changes (local, national & international). Improve the way of working, increase productivity and encourage innovation.	IT Department Human Resource Department	WSP

Upgrade of the Municipal Website	Develop a dedicated Municipal Website as an online platform for investment attraction, entrepreneurship, business services and property sales. (Market-specific investment opportunities)	Strategic Session Develop a prototype Test the prototype (Customer Evaluation of the website) Launch Website Maintenance of Website	Businesses and entrepreneurs can enjoy greater access to resources that the municipality offers because information is readily available Community Branding (e.g., Business-friendly environment where people can enjoy an exceptional quality of life).	Municipal Managers Office All Departments Private IT Specialist NGO	OPEX
Small Business Incubator	This aims to support entrepreneurs by providing training, mentorship, resources and networks to grow sustainable enterprises and drive local economic development	Conduct feasibility studies to identify demand, target sectors and suitable locations. Secure funding and partnerships from government, private investors and development agencies. Develop governance structures with clear policies, management teams and accountability mechanisms.	Establishing a business incubator that will generate significant economic benefits by creating jobs, fostering innovation, attracting investment and driving local business growth.	Municipality – LED SEDA SEDFA DEDET SALGA Banks	OPEX

6.3 STRATEGIC GOAL 3: BRANDING AND TOURISM DIVERSIFICATION

Proposed LED Intervention	The objective of the Project/Programme	Action Required to Implement Programme	Economic Impact	Champion/Role Players	Resources Required Cost Estimate
Create a Strong Municipal Brand	Develop a unique Laingsburg Brand highlighting its unique offerings (natural beauty, biodiversity, adventure sports and cultural heritage)	Identify selling points Identify the target audience Develop a Branding story Leverage visual elements – photos, videos, etc. (1 st , develop a prototype)	Sustainable economic growth creates lasting value for the community	Municipality Tourism Association Schools (Youth) Businesses	R100 000
Diversify Tourism Products	Tourism diversification is essential for a region as it increases sustainability and resilience, attracts diverse visitors and ensures steady tourist inflow. It also stimulates local businesses, creates jobs and supports community development, contributing to economic growth. By offering varied attractions and experiences, the project can better adapt to changing tourism demands, ensuring long-term success	Identify tourism products (develop niche and mass tourism products) Identify the thematic and spatial synergy between the products. Marketing	Sustainable economic growth creates lasting value for the community	Municipality Private Sector	OPEX

Film Location Initiative	Enhance and grow the Matjiesfontein municipal area as a film destination	Film marketing bylaw Training for officials to provide film permit support	Sustainable economic growth creates lasting value for the community (job creation)	Municipality – LED & Tourism Town Planning Unit DEDET	TBC
Precinct Plan for Voortrekker Main Road	To revitalise and enhance the functionality, attractiveness and economic potential of the Voortrekker Main Road precinct through integrated spatial planning and a smart rural town approach.	Precinct Plan	Economic development by implementing a smart rural town approach	Municipality	Apply for funding
A Safer Laingsburg Town initiative	aims to enhance public safety, strengthen community resilience and create a secure environment for sustainable growth.	strengthen community policing and increase visible patrols/ Law Enforcement Improve coordination between police, municipality and community safety forum	Will drive economic growth by attracting investment, boosting local commerce, enhancing tourism and creating jobs through a secure environment.	Municipality Police Community Safety Forums Schools Social Services	OPEX

7 CHAPTER: RISK, MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

7.1 Risk

Several risks could necessitate a strategic rethink or adjustment. The following potential risks were identified:

- Lack of political will to implement the LED Strategy
- Internal inefficiencies and resource constraints
- Regulatory and compliance risks
- Climate change impacts
- Inflation fluctuations (global market pressures)
- Non-participation of SMMEs
- Non-participation of sector departments
- Poor relationships (trust deficit) between the Municipality and the private sector

7.2 Risk Mitigation Strategy

To ensure successful implementation of the LED Strategy, the following mitigation measures will be pursued:

- Strengthening inter-governmental relations
- Establish an investment promotion unit
- Rebuild and strengthen public-private partnerships
- Provide targeted support to SMMEs
- Support the private sector and farmers through enabling policies and incentives
- Develop a comprehensive Risk Management Strategy
- Develop disaster-resilient infrastructure guidelines and plans

7.3 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Progress will be measured through the following indicators:

- Number of jobs created
- Growth in investment and municipal revenue increase
- Improved municipal service delivery
- Increased tourism numbers

7.4 Process for Evaluation

Evaluation will be embedded into the implementation process through:

- Annual reviews and stakeholder feedback sessions
- Integration of findings into the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and LED updates

8 REFERENCE

1. Laingsburg Municipal Integrated Development Plan, 2024
2. Municipal Spatial Development Framework, 2025
3. Municipal Economic Review and Outlook Central Karoo District 2025_2026
4. SEAD: <https://spatialtaxdata.org.za/dashboards/total-jobs-growth> - 2023
5. Socio-Economic Profile Laingsburg 2024
6. Statistics South Africa 2022
7. Quantec, 2024

ANNEXURE A

OVERVIEW OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

No	Project Description	Completion date
1	Bergsig Sports Facility Phase 1	11 Jul 2025
2	Bergsig Sports Facility Phase 2	Ongoing
3	Upgrading of Goldnerville Stormwater Bridges	Ongoing
4	Construction of Main Sewer Pump Station	11 July 2025
5	Refurbishment of Bergsig & Soutkloof Sewer Pump Stations	11 July 2025
6	Laingsburg South Raw Water Feed Phase 1	13 Jun 2022
7	Construction of New Business Park Phase 1	30 June 2021
8	Replacement of Existing Elevated Tank in Matjiesfontein	11 July 2024
9	Upgrade of Gravel Roads in Matjiesfontein Phase 1	06 Mar 2024
10	Construction of New Matjiesfontein Wastewater Treatment Works	27 Mar 2024