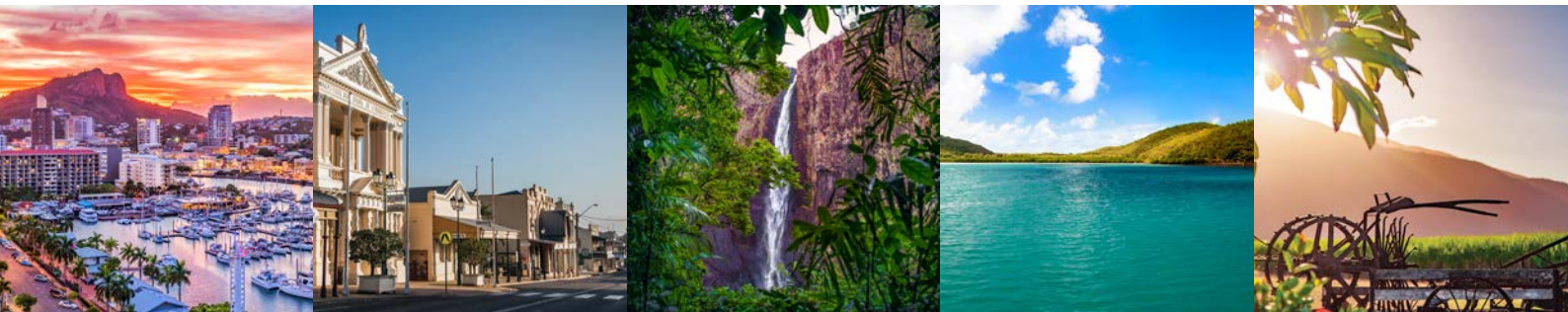


# UNLOCK THE NORTH



## Townsville North Queensland 2021 Federal Government Budget Submission



# Foreword

Home to the largest city in Northern Australia, the Townsville North Queensland Region encompasses the five major regional centres of Townsville, Charters Towers, Burdekin, Palm Island and Hinchinbrook.

The region's greatest strength is the diverse industry base and our economy. Annually, Townsville North Queensland contributes \$16.6B to the national economy and no one sector represents more than 20% of our Gross Regional Product (GRP). Coupled with an enviable lifestyle, Townsville North Queensland has the opportunity to be a major economic powerhouse that can play a key role in the nation's economic recovery.

With two World Heritages Listed areas – the Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef on our doorstep, the North West Minerals Province to our west, the Bowen and Galilee coal basins to our south and Australia's largest defence base, Northern Australia's largest public hospital, the world's number one live export port and a world leading university James Cook University at the heart of our region, there is nowhere in Australia better placed to capitalise on the strengths of this nation.

In 2020, COVID-19 illustrated just how important North Queensland is to the nation's economy. Without the region's key industries such as Agriculture, Mining, Minerals Processing, Defence and Health, the national economy would look much different today. Whilst no industry or region has been immune to the impacts of the pandemic, these are the industries and this is the region which has the potential to play a leading role in our national recovery and keep Australians in jobs.

We acknowledge and thank the Federal Government for standing up across the dual health and economic crisis

of COVID-19 and providing businesses and households invaluable support to weather the unprecedented event.

As we look ahead to the Federal Budget, we are making a strong case for targeted investment and policy support to ensure the North not only recovers but plays its part in supporting the nation's recovery and future resilience building.

This can be achieved through further investment into key infrastructure and industries that are the lifeblood of regional Queensland and policy levers that can support and grow the nation's economy, through:

- › Agriculture;
- › Minerals and Advanced Manufacturing;
- › Destination Development;
- › Defence; and
- › Health, Knowledge and Research.

The targeted priorities included in this 2021 Townsville North Queensland Federal Government Budget Submission have been defined based on their capacity to stimulate economic recovery and growth, encourage industry and private sector investment, influence business confidence and create jobs. This is more important than ever.

North Queensland has the people, the potential and the projects that can support Australia's long-term economic recovery and growth. North Queenslanders remain strong, we are resilient, and we are optimistic about our future, because a Strong North Queensland is a Strong Nation.



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# ENABLING THE NORTH

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An aerial photograph of a long, straight road stretching across a vast, flat landscape. To the left of the road is a large, bright blue pond. The surrounding area is a mix of green fields and low-lying vegetation. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear blue sky.

**Creating the right environment for business investment is critical to the growth and development of North Queensland.**

COVID-19 has demonstrated the critical role that North Queensland plays in our national economy. However, there are some fundamental issues that Government needs to address to ensure the sustainability of our existing jobs and the creation of new ones.

With the right policy framework around insurance, energy and taxation, and a commitment to enabling infrastructure, North Queensland can drive population growth and increase private investment.

Only when the fundamentals are right will we be able to ensure that the region can develop and attract the skills and population base we need to leverage our strengths for the benefit of the nation.



## ENABLING THE NORTH

# North and North West Queensland Zone of National Significance

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The North and North West Queensland region is the most strategically important export supply chain in Northern Australia. The area contains up to \$680B of known in-ground resources, \$500B of which are new economy minerals. Maximising the potential of the population, infrastructure and skills capability in this region is vital to a prosperous Queensland and National economy. Many Australian and international businesses wish to take advantage of the opportunities available in North and North West Queensland. However, the vast distances and cost structure of the region continue to constrain investment and employment.

The region requires a framework for major infrastructure, policy setting, and private sector investments to unlock its potential as the economic powerhouse of Northern Australia. These outcomes are best achieved through declaring the area that includes North Queensland and the North West Minerals Province a Zone of National Significance. The establishment of the Zone will drive the development of agriculture, minerals, and advanced manufacturing sectors.

The North and North West Queensland Zone of National Significance will utilise targeted company, employee, and infrastructure development incentives to attract investment, resident population, and industry development in a range of sectors which will leverage the region's existing industry base and export infrastructure.

### Key components of the Zone:

- › Establishment of a 'one-stop-shop' for streamlined development approvals within the precinct;
- › Increased zonal offset incentives, reflecting the costs of permanent residency in the rural/remote parts of the region;
- › Strong local content policy for all Government led infrastructure projects;

- › Support for new business investment, potentially including reduced/deferred payroll tax, accelerated depreciation for major capital and maintenance works, and allowances for increased exploration activity; and
- › Commitment to funding and fast tracking leading infrastructure that will support cost-competitive supply chains and industry expansion:

### Supply Chain Infrastructure:

- › CopperString 2.0;
- › Mount Isa to Townsville rail line; and
- › Port of Townsville Expansion
- › Investment in trunk infrastructure in industrial land at Lansdown and the Townsville State Development Area.

### Water Security:

- › Build Big Rocks Weir;
- › Raising of the Burdekin Falls Dam;
- › Progress works towards Hells Gates Dam; and
- › Fast track water allocations and approvals for HIPCO, Richmond Agricultural Project, and Wet Tropics Resource Operations Plan.

For the North and North West Queensland region, economic development and diversification through the Zone of National Significance framework will ease ongoing cost pressures, insulate the region against the commodity cycle, and provide economic opportunity for residents.

For Queensland and Australia this will lead to more stable regional communities, and cost-competitive mining and agricultural sectors. These key export and employment sectors will become more able to sustain operations during the down-cycle, and capture a greater share of the value chain generated by the North and North West Queensland region's natural resources and agricultural wealth.

# Insurance

In May 2017, the Australian Government directed the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to conduct a wide-ranging inquiry into the supply of insurance in Northern Australia. This Inquiry handed down its Final Report in December 2020, key findings include:

- › Home and contents insurance premiums are considerably higher and have risen faster in Northern Australia.
- › Insurers are using more granular data and sophisticated pricing techniques, exacerbating affordability problems for some consumers.
- › Higher and more volatile claims costs have led to poor profitability in Northern Australia.
- › Unusual market dynamics are leading to soft competition.
- › High premiums are leading to a rise in the number of uninsured homes but there is little help available for customers experiencing payment difficulties.
- › While shopping around can help consumers find lower premiums, understanding and comparing policies is harder than it should be.
- › Reforms to land use planning and building standards can help reduce risks and costs over the longer term.

Higher insurance premiums in North Queensland and Northern Australia (or above the 26<sup>th</sup> parallel more particularly) is increasing the financial risk exposure of the most vulnerable members of our communities; those on welfare, the elderly and some small businesses. Middle income households are expected to pay up to 10% of their take-home earnings to insure homes and motor vehicles. Access to insurance is essential to building resilient communities. The high cost of insurance and the ability to access insurance is seen as prohibitive for those looking to invest and live in the North Queensland region. Without insurance, investors are unable to access credit through financial institutions. This stifles the ability of the region to grow and prosper. There are many moving parts contributing to the insurance affordability crisis in North Queensland and Northern Australia. There is no single solution but there may be a combination of initiatives that will help deliver real and measurable outcomes.

The ACCC report makes 38 recommendations that seek to improve competition and consumer outcomes in the markets for residential home, contents, and strata insurance in Northern Australia. They are broadly included in these categories:

- › Making it easier to search for, and compare, insurance products
- › Choosing the right amount of cover
- › Dealing with conflicts of interest
- › Addressing immediate affordability concerns (including stamp duty)
- › Improving consumers' rights
- › Reducing risk and building better.

Townsville Enterprise welcomes these recommendations to improve transparency and competition, in particular abolishing stamp duty. However, there are gaps in

addressing the key issues in affordability of reinsurance, incentivising insurance companies to insure in the north and investing in public mitigation works to reduce the risk.

In addition to all the recommendations made by the ACCC report, the Federal Government needs to consider:

- › Incentives for insurance companies to insure in the north with a review of the current Prudential Standards and Capital Adequacy regulations – remove costs including rules relating to idle capital reserves;
- › Backing the banks with government guarantees, extend this, in part, to insurance companies that meet set criteria including insuring risk in North Australia;
- › Regional and remote taxation incentives that reward insurance coverage.
- › National Catastrophe Insurance Scheme like that of the Australian Reinsurance Pool Corporation, or the extension of the existing Pool to include natural disasters.
- › Resilience rewarded taxation concessions for residences and business that invest in risk mitigation measures; and
- › Fixed state duties that have no rise and fall aligned to premium costs and disallowing a 'tax on a tax'.

A knee-jerk approach to insurance companies is not a solution, neither is increased government regulation. A better approach is to improve the operating environment that incentivises insurance companies to provide insurance to North Australia. With the right insurance policy framework, there is potential to increase competition and allow market forces to drive down pricing.

## Public Liability

The cost of insurance is forcing many tourism and hospitality businesses to self-insure. In addition to the ever-increasing cost of property insurance, tourism operators are finding that public liability renewal notices have seen significant premium increases or in some cases cover was outright refused. We have already seen tourism businesses in North Queensland, particularly in the adventure sector, close their doors because they are unable to obtain or afford public liability insurance.

The Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman Insurance Inquiry Report clearly identifies that the risk environment for public liability litigation can only change through government intervention. The proposed recommendations are supported by Townsville Enterprise to assist in reducing the cost and challenges of the industry:

- › Following the approach taken in New Zealand, liability for personal injury should be subject to statutory caps.
- › The Federal Government, in coordination with the States and Territories, should urgently progress work on a National Insurance Injury Scheme in line with the recommendations of the 2011 Productivity Commission Inquiry Report into Disability Care and Support.
- › Where there is only one or no insurers left in a professional indemnity market, the Federal Government should provide an insurance scheme of last resort for small business.

## Lowering the Cost of Energy

Low energy cost can be a catalyst to enabling North Queensland to reach its true economic potential. Getting the cost of energy right has a multiply effect for the community and economy as a whole. It can stimulate investment into North Queensland, boost business confidence, lower the cost of living, and increase social cohesion for households, businesses, and governments at all levels.

### Electricity

North Queensland is currently connected to one of the longest transmission networks in the world, the National Electricity Market (NEM). The sheer size and associated costs of this transmission network, without the corresponding business and population means that businesses in North Queensland pays proportionally larger transmission costs compared to similar businesses near capital cities. This extra burden is a disincentive to turbo charging the North Queensland economy. The Queensland government owns all the transmission network therefore, to encourage more regional development it could consider distributing these fixed transmission costs evenly over all energy users.

There are currently more than \$680B worth of untapped minerals in the North West Minerals Province. To realise this potential, lower energy prices are key. This can be achieved by connecting the North West Mineral province to the NEM and building new cheaper renewable energy. It will further unlock power generation projects in the Kennedy Energy Park in Hughenden, which was the first of its kind anywhere in the world to combine wind, solar and battery storage, but its expansion to date is limited without strong transmission lines connecting it to the grid.

### Gas

Townsville is the largest city in Northern Australia and the region is home to one of the largest manufacturing and agricultural industries in the country. Despite this, the region is not currently connected to the national gas network. Connectivity to the national gas network, would play a critical role in enabling competition and lowering the price of gas for North Queensland businesses.

There is a role for Federal Government to assist with funding common user infrastructure to enable better network connectivity and support for power storage projects to commence. These are nation building solutions that will unlock North Queensland and help to progress economic growth across the country.

### Solution:

1. Connect Townsville to the National Gas Network to provide affordable gas for North Queensland
2. Invest in battery production
3. Further advance hydrogen as an alternative fuel source replacing diesel for transport, remote power generation and new source of electricity generation.
4. Invest in CopperString 2.0 (refer to page 8)

# AGRICULTURE, MINERALS & ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

The importance and interconnectedness of agriculture, minerals and advanced manufacturing in North Queensland cannot be overstated, with the growth of these sectors critical to Queensland's and the nation's economic recovery. Support for the projects and policies across these industries in North Queensland will also assist in driving down the cost of energy encouraging private investment and job creation.

COVID-19 has revealed Australia's reliance on international supply and concerns around the ability to continue exporting to some regions of the globe. Industries of the future powered by renewable sources can complement our traditional and core industries of mining and resources, through projects such as CopperString 2.0 and the Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct.

Development of emerging industries and support for those across North and North West Queensland will immediately attract supply chain providers and supporting supply industries. Facilitating the upgrade of the Mount Isa to Townsville Rail Line and development of the Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor then provides a direct link to nearshore and export supply chains and facilitates further product through the Port of Townsville.

Additionally, as global food demand increases, protection and security of sources becomes critical, as does opening untapped cropping potential. Support towards water and agriculture projects such as Hells Gates Dam and construction of Big Rocks Weir will support securing food for the future.

## POTENTIAL JOBS FROM COMBINED PROJECTS

**15,549**

CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**14,540**

PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**35,632**

INDIRECT  
JOBS

PROJECT JOB SUMMARY	Construction	Permanent Ongoing	Indirect
> CopperString 2.0	400	20	3,500
> Mount Isa to Townsville Supply Chain (TEARC jobs)	1,035	87	2,484
> North and North West Queensland Water Supply (Hells Gates Jobs)	12,559	12,609	17,061
> Raising of Burdekin Falls Dam	904	40	2,169
> Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct	160	1,603	9,120
> North Queensland Hydrogen Hub	90	164	216
> Ayr Industrial Land	17	3	57
> Ayr Macro-algae Bioremediation Demonstration	20	3	48
> Hinchinbrook Agricultural Diversification	4	3	113
> Tropical Aquaculture Accelerator	360	8	864



**AGRICULTURE, MINERALS AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

# CopperString 2.0 Electricity Transmission Network

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The North West Minerals Province (NWMP) holds the world's largest deposits of new economy minerals including Lead, Zinc, Copper, Gold, Phosphate and significant critical mineral deposits, such as Cobalt and Vanadium, with an estimated value of \$680 billion. Queensland has a unique opportunity to take advantage of an unprecedented increase in global demand for these resources. This increased demand is driven by technological change, with the manufacture of advanced technologies including electric vehicles, smart devices and batteries, requiring large volumes of new economy and critical minerals.

The NWMP currently has some of the highest electricity prices in the world. The isolated power system supplying the NWMP delivers prices that are more than twice that of the east coast grid. This puts Queensland's minerals production at a disadvantage against our competitors in other mineral rich nations including South America and Africa.

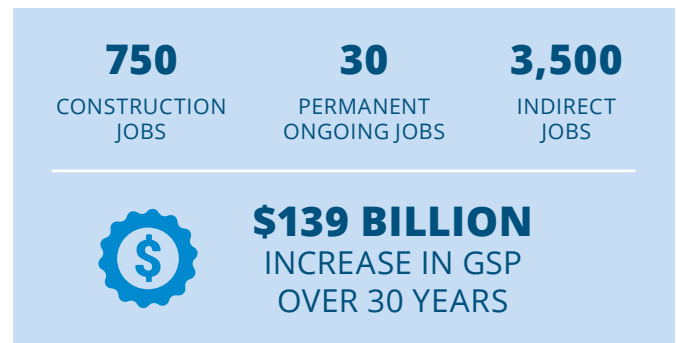
CopperString 2.0 will address this competitive disadvantage by connecting the NWMP to the east coast grid giving existing and new miners and mineral processors access to the competitive electricity pricing of the National Electricity Market (NEM). With electricity costs making up to 25% of the entire cost base for some minerals operations, this will significantly improve the opportunity for new investment and the viability of the existing 10,000 plus jobs supported by the NWMP.

## WHAT WE NEED

Financing support, for example contingent funding facility to share long-term demand/utilisation risk to complement NAIF and private capital. CopperString is one of the most important enabling projects for our region's long-term growth. The impacts from lower energy prices on our community will lead to enormous opportunities in the resource sector and help to grow the Australian economy.

Ensure NAIF capital contribution is maximised, delivering lowest prices for customers and maximum economic benefits.

CopperString 2.0 is a 1,100km long, high-voltage transmission line that will generate 750 direct construction jobs and importantly sustain more than 3,500 full time jobs and increase the value of mine production by up to \$154 billion over a 30 year period. These gains will result in an increase to Gross State Product of \$139 billion. In addition, the project will provide NEM access to some of Queensland's most efficient and geographically diverse wind and solar resources. This will position the region, and particularly Townsville, as the premier location for the development of a clean hydrogen export industry.



“**CopperString is one of the most important enabling projects for our region's long-term growth.**

**The impacts from lower energy prices on our community will lead to enormous opportunities in the resource sector and help to grow the Australian economy.**

**At Dugald River, CopperString will provide our site and our local community with access to a reliable, cheaper source of energy as well as provide an ability to tap into our abundant renewable energy resources and improved communication through the fibre-optic cable running the length of the project.”**

*- Tim Akroyd, MMG, Dugald River Acting General Manager*





**AGRICULTURE, MINERALS AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

# Mount Isa to Townsville Supply Chain

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The Mount Isa to Townsville Rail Line is a critical piece of freight infrastructure supporting mining, agricultural and manufacturing industries in North and North West Queensland, and servicing the freight needs of communities across the region.

Townsville North Queensland services the North West Minerals Province (NWMP) as well as the broader Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Development Zone (MITEZ). The NWMP is one of the world’s richest mineral producing areas containing Copper, Lead and Zinc as well as major silver and phosphate deposits and strong rare earth potential.

Product from the NWMP is railed and trucked to Townsville Port for export to global markets. Railing of product on the Mount Isa to Townsville Rail Line has decreased in recent years with increased trucking of product. A lack of reinvestment in the rail line has resulted in inefficiencies of rail line speed/ restrictions, lack of passing loops, and lack of multi-user terminals for loading and unloading of product which has led to a modal shift of product to road transport. This modal shift places greater pressure and cost onto the road network and has resulted in inefficiencies in the logistical supply chain. There is a real need to develop a competitive supply chain for agriculture and mining products from Mount Isa to Townsville port.

This is vitally important, as reducing the cost and capacity issues of the supply chain will assist to unlock the potential of the Mount Isa to Townsville corridor development.

In addition to this, direct access into the port from the Mount Isa and North Coast lines will significantly improve efficiencies.

### The Solution:

- 1. TEARC** – Building the Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor (TEARC) will significantly improve port access through provision of a multi-modal road and rail corridor that provides direct access to Townsville Port from the Mount Isa and North Coast lines and the State road network. It will reduce bottlenecks, facilitate the use of 1,400 metre-long trains and improve the urban amenity of Townsville.
- 2. Subsidy** – A commitment to reviewing the current subsidy for the below rail component is necessary to ensure that it is achieving the objective that it is set out to do, which is to reduce input costs and encourage more tonnes on the line. Feedback from users indicates that a competitive and efficient supply chain is an important consideration in future expansion projects.
- 3. Investment** – A commitment to reinvest in rail and road infrastructure from Mount Isa to Townsville over the next five years, starting with the fast-tracking of the Queensland Rail re-sleeper program. In addition to this, any increases in North West Minerals Province government royalty income (using 2019-2020 financial year as a base) should be reinvested into infrastructure in this corridor. This will create a partnership between industry and government with aligned growth objectives.
- 4. Plan** – A 10-year updated master plan should be published for the Mount Isa to Townsville Rail Line detailing the planned investments to meet forecast demand and the key indicators to be monitored to ensure the supply chain is resilient, competitive and efficient in supporting growth in mining and agriculture sectors in North and North West Queensland.
- 5. Port** – The Port of Townsville is Northern Australia’s largest port and gateway to Asia and the world for the region’s growing economy and vast minerals industry. The approved Port Expansion Project (PEP) will provide six new berths in the outer harbour. The first stage channel widening is currently underway, creating the first 60 hectares of land. Investment for constructing the full PEP rockwall perimeter will secure the overall expansion footprint, enabling the Port to facilitate new trade projects in Northern Australia.

## WHAT WE NEED

- > TEARC – EIS Approvals and Corridor Acquisition
- > Review and update Business Case
- > Allocate \$391M (\$195.5M State and Federal) over the next four years to complete delivery of the TEARC
- > Allocate \$100M for the Port of Townsville perimeter rock wall

### TEARC JOBS

<b>1,035</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>2,484</b>
CONSTRUCTION JOBS	PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS	INDIRECT JOBS



# North and North West Queensland Water Supply

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

As demand for global food consumption from reliable and safe producers increases, North and North West Queensland is perfectly positioned to deliver clean and green food to the world, particularly to South East Asia, in addition to beef exports.

North and North West Queensland agricultural production remains dominated by extensive cattle grazing operations, focussed heavily on low-value breeder properties, with limited regional value-adding or intensive employment opportunities.

To unlock the extensive opportunities across this sector, all levels of government can work together to deliver the following for North Queensland:

- Water Storage – a coordinated plan for appropriate water storage;
- Affordability – to ensure water use is competitively priced to enable an increase in agricultural production;
- Allocation – timeframes and approvals for water allocations need to be reduced and with the assurance that where allocations are available, they are used for an increase in production; and
- Land Use – water security, pricing and allocations are insignificant unless there are expanded opportunities for land use.

Given the challenges of extreme distances and limited water storage infrastructure for irrigation, the region would benefit from greater commitment to a coordinated approach to large-scale water storage and associated infrastructure. We note the recent developments in relation to the Houghton Pipeline Stage 2 and believe this is a critical part of infrastructure for the region.

The region hosts several promising agricultural projects that would support the development of a sustainable agricultural supply chain from across North and North West Queensland, including:

### North West Irrigation Projects

Key developments seeking specific support include the Hughenden Irrigation Project Corporation (HIPCO) development in Flinders Shire, the Cave Hill Dam proposal at Cloncurry, and the Richmond Agriculture Project which involves sustainable gravity diversion to an off-river storage supplying 8,000 hectares of irrigated cropping land.

### Raise Burdekin Falls Dam

The Burdekin Falls Dam is Queensland’s largest dam (1,860 GL). The Dam supplies irrigation in the Lower Burdekin as well as mining in the Bowen Basin, and is currently an alternative source of urban water supply for Townsville (pumping commenced 13 November 2017).

As the Burdekin region’s population grows, so too does the pressure on dam water allocations. A dam safety upgrade and wall height upgrade of at least two metres is required to comply with ANCOLD national safety standards and State guidelines and was always designed to be eventually developed to Stage 2 (Dam wall raised two metres, to deliver 150,000ML). In addition to increased water supply, the raising of the wall will improve the viability of the proposed pumped hydro and increase the long-term efficiency of directly supplying Townsville’s water.

There are benefits of incorporating Stage 2 into the Dam safety upgrades required by 2035. The Queensland Government approved the development of a detailed business case in September 2019, which Sunwater is working on with Building Queensland to further investigate raising the dam. This will determine the preferred raising option based on detailed demand assessments, as well as any other associated water storage and distribution efficiency upgrade options. The findings of this business case will be important for future decision making.

### Raising of Burdekin Falls Dam Jobs

<b>904</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>2,169</b>
CONSTRUCTION JOBS	PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS	INDIRECT JOBS

## WHAT WE NEED

- Continued support for major water infrastructure projects across the North and North West via the NWIDF, including the HIPCO development in Flinders Shire, the Cave Hill Dam proposal at Cloncurry, the Richmond Agriculture Project, and the Hells Gates Dam and Big Rocks Weir near Charters Towers.



# Hells Gates Dam

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The proposed Hells Gates Dam (HGD) is located approximately 120 km north of Charters towers and 160 km north west of Townsville, capable of storing 2,100 GL of water and open 50,000 ha of agricultural land.

The purpose of Hells Gates Dam is to provide reliable and secure long-term water supply for irrigation, industrial development and to meet the future water demands for the Charters Towers and Townsville region.

The project comprises of a dam, three smaller weirs and the Big Rocks Weir further downstream.

### Status:

In 2019, the Australian Government committed \$24M to the business case for the Big Rocks Weir and Hells Gates Dam Irrigation Scheme. In August 2020 the Big Rocks Weir Business Case was delivered to the Queensland and Federal Governments and has been successful in securing \$60M to begin the construction of Big Rocks Weir near Charters Towers to commence in 2021/2022 - Charters Towers Regional Council being the proponent for the project moving forward.

The Hells Gates Dam Business Case is being prepared by Townsville Enterprise, working with the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority and is administered by the Queensland Government Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water.

The business case is currently halfway until completion for submission to both the State and Commonwealth Governments, however, the following benefits have already been identified:

### Benefits (based on Feasibility Study):

- › Support substantial economic activity for North Queensland with the potential to support employment in the construction, agricultural and supporting industries;
- › Project is deemed economically desirable with the benefits outweighing the costs;
- › Provide long term water security and reliability for the Townsville and Charters Towers regions, as well as future industrial and mining developments;
- › Major infrastructure will be developed for the scheme, including enhanced and improved access to roads and energy;
- › Harnessing highest flow Australian river resources to build long term prosperity;
- › Staged to optimise funding options;
- › Enabling up to 50,000 ha of irrigated agriculture

## WHAT WE NEED

- › Support the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority proposal to work with the Office of Northern Australia to support the Hells Gates Irrigation Scheme from Business Case to Construction, pending the outcome of the Business Case.

**10,855**

CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**12,539**

PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**14,892**

INDIRECT  
JOBS



# Hells Gates Pumped Storage

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The proposed Hells Gates Pumped Storage Business Case will be built upon the Hells Gates Pumped Storage Project Feasibility Report. This proposed Business Case establishes and assesses the need, benefits and affordability of the Hells Gates Pumped Storage scheme to enable governments and private equity partners to make informed investment decisions regarding the project. The Business Case will identify the construction timeline and jobs together with the economic benefit analysis for the North Queensland region.

The proposed Business Case will rely on the current Cultural Heritage Management Agreements and the Environmental Impact Statement, formed through the delivery of Hells Gates Dam Business Case.

The proposed Hells Gates Pumped Storage Project is adjacent to the Upper Burdekin River and will have a capacity of 808 MW. It will be located in Northern Queensland, within the Charters Towers Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 130km north of Charters Towers.

### Status:

In January 2021, as part of the Hells Gates Dam Business Case the Hells Gates Pumped Storage Project Feasibility report was delivered to the Queensland and Federal Government. This is a Pumped Hydro Storage system that can generate up to 808MW that is intended to integrate into the National Electricity Grid to secure reliable power for North Queensland.

Contributing to the energy transition from coal to renewables by helping to stabilise the grid (super battery) and support significant additional solar/wind in the North.

It has the potential to create job opportunities in construction and operation and further skills training in construction and management, which will create an economic benefit to the North Queensland region with a positive impact on employment and new industries that are attracted by reliable green power. The feasibility report indicates the project has a strong financial base to produce cost effective high demand green power with strong Returns on Investment that is expected to attract strong interest from the private sector.

The feasibility report identifies the following benefits that can be explored further in a Business Case:

### Benefits:

- > 808 MW of power
- > Utilising solar energy
- > Standalone project
- > Reducing greenhouse gases
- > Strong private investment opportunities
- > Construction jobs
- > Operational jobs
- > Six-year construction period
- > Shovel ready project
- > Reliable power source for North Queensland

## WHAT WE NEED

> Commonwealth Government to approve and appointment Townsville Enterprise Limited to deliver the Hells Gates Pumped Storage Business Case.

> Early allocation of the 'Business Case' grant funding to the Townsville Enterprise Limited led consortium to support and fast-track delivery of the project. This will ensure delivery of the Hells Gates Pumped Storage Business Case aligns with the Hells Gates Dam Business Case delivery in April 2022.

<b>800</b>	<b>30</b>
CONSTRUCTION JOBS	PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS



**AGRICULTURE, MINERALS AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

# Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct

**GROWTH OPPORTUNITY**

The Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct will secure long term, high-growth, high-skilled jobs for North Queensland through the attraction of environmentally sustainable, circular economy-focussed advanced manufacturing and emerging industries.

The Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct will be Northern Australia’s first environmentally sustainable, advanced manufacturing, processing and technology estate powered by locally generated renewable energy ensuring the long-term sustainability of the North Queensland economy. The precinct addresses Australia’s pervasive manufacturing challenge by co-locating industry with low cost power supplied from the adjacent 400MW solar farm by Edify Energy thus reducing ongoing operating costs.

The Precinct offers direct access available to the Great Northern Railway (connecting Port of Townsville to Mount Isa), close proximity to the Port of Townsville via high volume road corridors (Flinders Highway, Bruce Highway and Southern Port Access Road) including B-Triple carriageway capacity on major routes to the Port, immediate adjacency to the North Queensland Gas Pipeline for future renewable hydrogen expansion, and future connection to Haughton Pipeline for provision of raw water supply to industrial users.

The Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct has already attracted substantial private sector interest with over half of the land committed or conditionally committed to advanced battery manufacturing, clean energy, and battery minerals processing industries.

Investment in the Precinct will deliver:

- › Intersection upgrades to provide road access to the precinct, which would also have safety outcomes for Woodstock residents;
- › Relocation of the rail infrastructure to maximise strategic opportunities for creation of a multi-user rail siding within the precinct providing a second method of transporting product to and from the site through to the Port of Townsville and the North West Minerals Province;
- › Provision of a raw water supply for proponents from the Haughton Pipeline Duplication Project located just 13km from the Precinct;
- › Creation of internal access roads that will enable operations for all early Precinct users to commence; and
- › A precinct-wide gas microgrid that will support 24-hour industrial operations within the precinct, supplementing low-cost solar power feed for daytime use.

**Outcomes**

Investing in enabling infrastructure will:

- › Unlock rapid delivery of Stage 1 of the Imperium 3 Battery Manufacturing Facility, generating 205 jobs and at completion of Stage 3 achieve 1,150 jobs;
- › Accelerate the Pure Minerals battery materials refinement plant, generating a further 100 on-going jobs for the region;
- › Further promote DriveIT NQ, realising 147 jobs when fully operational, and an injection of \$1.4 billion in the economy over the next 40 years; and
- › Attract further private investment in advanced manufacturing, hydrogen and high-tech processing facilities for the remaining available land.

**WHAT WE NEED**

› A commitment to invest \$50M is essential for the construction of access roads, rail and water infrastructure. This commitment will give certainty to investors looking to develop projects on this site

<b>160</b>	<b>1,603</b>	<b>9,120</b>
CONSTRUCTION JOBS	PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS	INDIRECT JOBS



**AGRICULTURE, MINERALS AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

# North Queensland Hydrogen Hub

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Townsville is ideally located for the creation of a Hydrogen Hub powered predominantly by green energy. Due to the many renewable energy projects currently proposed or under construction in the region, Townsville is uniquely placed to contribute to supplying green hydrogen to domestic and export markets. There is currently strong interest from local large-scale industrial operators, including the Port of Townsville, Sun Metals, ITM Power, Origin and Edify Energy, in being part of a hydrogen energy hub. In addition, Queensland University of Technology has indicated a strong desire to be involved.

The Hydrogen Hub would underwrite demand for new renewable energy required to meet the State Government’s 50% renewable energy target by 2030. With the appropriate investment into the Hydrogen Hub, the Queensland Government can secure a sustainable future for Townsville, North Queensland based on clean advanced manufacturing and green hydrogen production. Building upon investments in recycled water, and private investment into solar power, Townsville has the immediate opportunity to leverage private sector interest into this emerging industry.

To ensure that North Queensland can play a part in the establishment of Queensland’s Hydrogen industry, it is proposed that \$28.3 million in funding is allocated to the creation of a Hydrogen Hub in Townsville North Queensland, which would drive the production of green hydrogen using renewable energy and recycled water.

## HYDROGEN USE

Hydrogen fuel cells produce electricity by combining hydrogen and oxygen atoms. The hydrogen reacts with oxygen across an electrochemical cell similar to that of a battery to produce electricity, water, and small amounts of heat. Small fuel cells can power laptop computers and even cell phones, and military applications.

Domestically there is an opportunity to reduce the Nation’s reliance on diesel fuel. Hydrogen is able to be used as a transportation fuel as it can be used in fuel cells for high efficiency, zero-emission electric vehicles.

A fuel cell is two to three times more efficient than an internal combustion engine. Domestic production for use in trucks and buses presents an opportunity for this region.

## WHAT WE NEED

➤ \$28.3M in funding allocated to the creation of a Hydrogen Hub in Townsville North Queensland, for Hydrogen produced from renewable energy and recycled water.

**90**

CONSTRUCTION JOBS

**164**

PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS

**216**

INDIRECT JOBS



**AGRICULTURE, MINERALS AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

# Ayr Industrial Land

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The Burdekin Shire Council proposes to develop additional land for industrial purposes in Ayr as the existing industrial estate is now close to capacity. Land owned by Council and previously identified for future expansion of the estate is partly affected by a State Government ‘wetland’ overlay that impacts its future development. The Council has therefore recently purchased additional vacant land adjoining the existing industrial estate, undertaken detailed engineering designs and obtained relevant planning approvals to enable the land to be reconfigured into a number of industrial lots.

The provision of suitably located and serviced industrial land in Ayr will help meet business and industry needs. The requested funding will act as a catalyst to develop further stages of the industrial estate as the land sales from stage one will enable infrastructure provision in future stages, thereby multiplying the initial investment and job creation opportunities.

**Status:**

The project is shovel ready but requires funding support to construct the necessary infrastructure to develop the land for industrial purposes, allowing for business growth and development in the Shire. The project is identified as essential economic infrastructure in the recently adopted Outlook 2025: Burdekin Economic Development Strategy 2020-25.

## WHAT WE NEED

➤ Burdekin Shire Council is prepared to meet 50% of the estimated \$5.6M total project cost, with a government funding request of \$2.8M.

**17**  
CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**3**  
PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**57**  
INDIRECT  
JOBS

# Ayr Macro-algae Bioremediation Demonstration

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The proposed project involves the construction of a demonstration facility using fresh water macro-algae to remediate nitrogen and phosphorous from the discharge effluent of the Ayr/Brandon Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). These two nutrients represent a significant threat to the ongoing health of the Great Barrier Reef. Research trials undertaken with JCU indicate the algae can significantly reduce the levels of nitrogen and phosphorous from the wastewater produced by the WWTP.

facility at the Ayr/Brandon STP. The Council has recently commenced a small-scale trial replica algal treatment system at the Ayr Brandon Waste Water Treatment Plant with JCU and Pacific Bio.

**Project Benefit:**

The construction of a 5.5 hectare bioremediation facility at the Ayr/Brandon WWTP will enable a full scale demonstration facility to be developed and operated. Subject to its success, the facility could be duplicated at a number of other WWTP sites throughout Queensland that are discharging to the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. The technology has significantly lower capital and operating cost than other current conventional treatment upgrade options designed to remove nitrogen and phosphorus.

## WHAT WE NEED

➤ \$6.5M funding

**20**  
CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**3**  
PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**48**  
INDIRECT  
JOBS



# Hinchinbrook Agricultural Diversification

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Hinchinbrook Shire Council is endeavouring to promote cultivation of alternate crops complementary to, and in rotation to sugar cane utilising current sugar cane fallow practices. The objective is to create additional cropping opportunities for the district increasing industry diversification and employment opportunities. Recently commissioned studies have identified that the district climate soils and existing infrastructure will allow establishment of commercial crops including capsicum, industrial hemp, kenaff, melons, pumpkins, mung bean, peanut, rice, sweet potato and taro.

The establishment of a district grain storage and drying facility will enable local handling and processing of crops such as pulse, dryland rice and peanuts.

This project entails purchase, acquisition, erection and installation of silo storage and equipment to dry and temporarily store new product pending transport to established processors in Tolga and Ayr. This will encourage and promote diversification in agriculture,

complementary to sugar cane production, by value adding during crop rotational/fallow cycles, utilising dryland rice cropping and legumes.

This facility will act as a depot for SunRice processing facilities already at Brandon and subsequent export opportunities through the Port of Townsville.

### Outcomes:

1. Improvement of economic yield of sugarcane in the district through soil health improvement. This will be achieved by breaking of current monoculture;
2. Creation of new agricultural industries for supply of agricultural product for both domestic and export markets. This aspect will also support agricultural growth on a regional scale supporting the Queensland Government Agricultural Strategy 2030 and North Queensland Agriculture and Supply Chain Study; and
3. Improved utilisation and protection of cleared cropping land by promoting and facilitating cover crops on traditional cane fallows over the summer/wet season periods.

## WHAT WE NEED

- > Funding of \$750,000 for earthworks and installation of two silos, one dryer and associated equipment.

**4**  
CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**3**  
PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**113**  
INDIRECT  
JOBS





# Tropical Aquaculture Accelerator

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Food security and the rapidly growing demand for high quality seafood protein are two significant challenges across the globe. Growing at its current rate, aquaculture is set to be Australia's second largest agrifood export by 2050 and worth \$12.8B.

Australian aquaculture production systems must be able to deliver high-quality, consistent volumes of produce, operate with minimal environmental impact, and use sustainable raw feed materials. Industry has stressed that the aquaculture industry needs innovation if it is to reach its full potential. Townsville is the perfect location to leverage tropical marine science, engineering and industry skills to address research priorities.

Key issues, opportunities and competitive advantage for the aquaculture industry in Northern Australia are:

- > Maintaining technological competitive advantage including rapid phenotyping, energy efficiency, and sustainability;
- > Disease management and genomic-informed breeding to achieve strong growth rates in high quality broodstock;
- > Food security and biosecurity;
- > Bioremediation, environmental and ecological sustainability innovation;

- > Internet of Things capabilities with integrated sensor and control development;
- > Industry co-location and partnership;
- > Skilled workforce and industry exposed graduates, from VET-sector (via MoU with TAFE), undergraduate and higher degree by research, through to continuing professional education; and
- > Achieving scale.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Tropical Aquaculture Accelerator will be based at the James Cook University Douglas Campus and will be a landmark industry-facing initiative with:

- > state-of-the-art life support systems for aquaculture research and development,
- > wet and dry laboratories and aqua-sheds
- > training facilities (pilot-scale hatchery)
- > specialist technologies (analysis and quality control)
- > industry co-location

This ensures Northern Australia continues to enjoy our leadership advantage in aquaculture, at a time when global demand is about to soar.

It is expected that by 2035, the accelerator will support \$2.6B in GRP and create more than 11,000 jobs.

## WHAT WE NEED

- Invest \$67M to create the Tropical Aquaculture Accelerator, ensuring Northern Australia and
- > Queensland continue to enjoy our leadership advantage in aquaculture, at a time when global demand is about to soar.

<b>360</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>864</b>
CONSTRUCTION JOBS	PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS	INDIRECT JOBS
	<b>\$2.6B*</b>	<b>\$5.8M*</b>
	ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	RETURN PER \$1M SPENT

\*BY 2034/5

# DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

The tourism, hospitality and events sector has been hit first and hardest by the impacts of COVID-19. This is an industry which in North Queensland supports 37,400 jobs and contributes \$6.4B to the Queensland economy annually.

Prior to COVID-19 the Townsville North Queensland region welcomed almost 3 million visitors annually. As a region, key policy considerations as well as investment and support towards turning sod on new tourism experiences and supporting infrastructure, will accelerate recovery from COVID-19. Rebuilding and enhancing the North Queensland tourism offering is critical, this is an industry which contributes greatly to the North Queensland economy, but also supports community pride and livability.

PROJECT JOB SUMMARY	Construction	Permanent Ongoing	Indirect
> Re-Building Tourism through Destination Marketing	N/A	N/A	N/A
> Townsville Airport Redevelopment	207	129	200
> North Queensland Trail Development	65	115	201
> Great Barrier Reef Marine Access - Dungeness	80	100	N/A
> Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium Redevelopment	95	70	468
> Wongaloo Conservation Park	N/A	N/A	N/A
> Direct International Flights	N/A	N/A	N/A
> North Australia Cultural Precinct	394	51	2,242
> Palm Island Retail and Commercial Precinct	N/A	N/A	N/A

## POTENTIAL JOBS FROM COMBINED PROJECTS

**841**

CONSTRUCTION JOBS

**465**

PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS

**3,111**

INDIRECT JOBS



**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# Re-Building Tourism through Destination Marketing

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The turn of the decade will forever be remembered as the toughest of times for Townsville North Queensland’s tourism, hospitality and events sector and the 8,000 local people whose employment is supported by this industry. The COVID-19 pandemic came at a time when businesses were finally starting to recover from the devastation of the 2019 floods. 2020 commenced looking positive for the region with the opening of Queensland’s newest stadium, the installation of Australia’s first underwater museum, and operators on Magnetic Island reporting record visitation.

Townsville North Queensland is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest employer of tourism and hospitality jobs in the state, contributing over \$1.2 billion to the local economy. Whilst recovery has commenced and the community have been supporting the local industry, social distancing restrictions and continued border closures continues to put the industry at high risk, especially as government support such as JobKeeper winds down.

The pathway to recovery for this sector in Townsville North Queensland will only be achieved if we can immediately stimulate the market – particularly from

Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne. Investment into tactical marketing to support the region in rebuilding visitation is critical, which is why we are proposing a jointly funded marketing initiative alongside the Federal Government to help rebuild and strengthen our region’s tourism economy.

### Benefits:

Backing Townsville’s tourism sector with funding for tactical activity will allow marketing initiatives to drive conversion and boost overall visitation and spend across the region. The campaign will look to:

- > Support the rebuilding of the aviation sector through trade and marketing partnerships;
- > Package the destination to appeal to the current domestic market’s desires;
- > Deliver a tactical marketing campaign to drive conversions to operators;
- > Support operators in becoming more ‘trade ready’ and preparing for international border reopenings; and
- > Reinvigorate our Visitor Information Centres to offer increased visitor services and act as a true economic driver for the region.

## WHAT WE NEED

- > A request of \$1M to drive recovery for the Townsville North Queensland visitor economy through strong demand driving campaigns targeted to South East Queensland and interstate markets.

**8,000+**  
LOCAL JOBS  
SUPPORTED

**\$1.2B**  
ECONOMIC  
ACTIVITY



**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# Policy Levers to Support Tourism and Hospitality COVID-19 Recovery

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The tourism, hospitality and events sector has been hit first and hardest by the impacts of COVID-19. The recovery for the tourism and events sector is anticipated to be long, with modelling suggesting visitation numbers will not return to what they were pre-COVID for at least three years. Continued border closures, hot spot declarations and negative sentiment towards travel puts

a cloud of concern and uncertainty around this critical industry. An industry which supports more than 37,000 jobs in North Queensland.

Government policy decisions will be critical in expediting recovery for this sector. Incentives and policy reviews which reduce business overheads and create conducive operating environments will minimise business fatality and enable economic recovery. The key policy measures that could support business recovery and growth are listed below.

## NORTH QUEENSLAND TOURISM



**37,400 JOBS**  
SUPPORTED BY INDUSTRY



**\$6.4B**  
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

## WHAT WE NEED

- > **Insurance:** Insurance costs are at an all-time high forcing many tourism and hospitality businesses to instead opt to self-insure. In addition to the ever-increasing cost of property insurance, tourism operators are finding that public liability renewal notices now have significant premium increases or in some cases cover was outright refused. Refer to page 5.
- > **Instant asset write-off:** Increase the threshold for company size and the ceiling amount allowed and extend COVID-19 instant asset write-off incentives for a further financial year.
- > **Implement FBT Tax Review** for hospitality and tourism businesses
- > **Address Skills Shortage:** COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the tourism workforce. With the absence of international backpackers and the cost and challenges in sourcing foreign workers, the industry is grappling with skills shortages that can not be addressed in the local market. Cleaners, chefs, bar staff and tour guides, just to name a few, are in short supply across the region and will be critical in ensuring recovery as travel begins to rebound. Immediate solutions to skills shortages in the region could include:
  - > Appoint Townsville North Queensland with a DAMA (Designated Area Migration Agreement)
  - > Fast-track visa approvals for foreign workers currently in Australia
  - > Incentivise worker relocation to regional Australia



**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# North Australia Cultural Precinct

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The ability for every member of the community to access cultural enrichment through sport, art, live performances, or music is fundamental to personal development and social cohesion. Recognising a long-term gap in modern facilities for the arts, the North Australia Cultural Precinct (NACP) will be an essential hub to access concerts and visual arts for the region.

The lack of suitably scaled venues and limited calendar availability at existing venues is restricting the growth of audiences and nurturing of local talent. Townsville is overlooked by major national and international performances due to the lack of facilities. At present, the cultural and arts offering for the region is limited compared to other equivalent regional cities. This creates

a cultural vacuum and favours those who can afford to travel to access broader cultural and arts experiences in capital cities.

While Townsville is the home to the North Australian Festival of Arts and Australian Festival of Chamber Music, we are unable to grow and expand due to a lack of suitable facilities. The socio-economic benefits include increased visitor numbers generating economic activity, increased resident economic activity, improved social connectivity, recreation, volunteering opportunities and improving the viability of local community groups and events.

Construction of NACP will address the critical lack of high-class performance venues currently impeding Townsville's access to cultural events and the related tourism expenditure.

## WHAT WE NEED

\$292M over 5 years (\$40M in 2020/21) jointly funded  
 > by the State and Federal Government through the Townsville City Deal

**934**

CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**51**

PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**2,242**

INDIRECT  
JOBS





**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium Redevelopment

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Opening in 1987 as a Bicentennial initiative, Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium, the Australian Government’s National Education Centre for the Great Barrier Reef, is home to the world’s largest living coral reef exhibit, a natural resource that welcomes approximately 140,000 visitors annually to view and learn all about the Great Barrier Reef. Reef HQ delivers both in-house and outreach education as well as Educational Tourism (EduTourism) programs.

Since opening, advancements in technology and building material have made it possible to have bigger and better viewing spaces and exhibits using energy efficient and sustainable materials.

Unfortunately, Reef HQ Aquarium has been unable to keep pace with these improvements. The facility has not been able to create new experiences and product development that promotes ongoing experience renewal to maintain and increase membership and deliver important educational messages about the Great Barrier Reef.

**Status:**

As developments surrounding Reef HQ Aquarium progress, the facility’s appearance is outdated in contrast. To date, the development has secured \$40M of the \$80M required to upgrade and redevelop the facility to world-class standards.

<b>95</b> CONSTRUCTION JOBS	<b>70</b> PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS	<b>468</b> INDIRECT JOBS
--------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------------

## WHAT WE NEED

- > \$40M funding to complete construction requirements

“Reef HQ Aquarium is one of Townsville’s most prominent and popular tourist attractions. It is a critical part of Townsville’s tourism offering and helps to cement our regional brand as the headquarters of the Great Barrier Reef. Reef HQ plays an important role beyond just tourism, it provides marine reef education and awareness to locals and visitors from across the globe.”

– Paul Crocombe, Adrenalin Snorkel and Dive & Master Reef Guide



**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# North Queensland Trail Development

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Townsville Enterprise recently commissioned ‘Destination Think’ to undertake a Tourism Sentiment Index (TSI) report for the Townsville North Queensland region. The TSI study analysed over 15 million online conversations about the region from across the globe to understand the quality of the visitor experience as well as what elements of the destination are the biggest attractors for tourism. The YE 2019 report demonstrated that when compared to similar sized destinations across the globe, Townsville leads in experiences centred around fishing, wildlife and hiking. As a region, there is significant opportunity to leverage our destination’s strengths and further build the experience offering through multi-purpose trail development and commercialisation.

Hiking and mountain biking is a key growth segment within the tourism industry. Iconic trails from across Australia and New Zealand such as the Overland Track, Great Ocean Walk and Milford Sound Track attract thousands of high value visitors annually, injecting millions in economic value and placing regional destinations on the map for tourists from across the globe.

### Identified trail opportunities:

- › **Paluma to Wallaman Falls Multi-Day Trail:** A proposed 125km, 7 day/6 night mixed use trail to be established in the Townsville North Queensland region. This trail not only offers world-class scenery and landscapes but would provide visitors a spiritual and immersive experience travelling in the footsteps of ancient Indigenous tribes;
- › **Magnetic Island Trails:** Development of trails in line with Magnetic Island Trails Vision and redevelopment of Magnetic Island foreshores; and
- › **Palm Island Trails:** Multi-purpose trail development on Palm Island to complement new tourism offerings and introduce a new events and tourism industry to the community.

### Status:

- › **Paluma to Wallaman Falls Trail:** Pending Business Case completion and awaiting Capital Works funding;
- › **Magnetic Island Trails:** Funding required; and
- › **Palm Island Trails:** Requires feasibility and business case.

<b>65</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>201</b>	 <p><b>\$24.2 MILLION</b> ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ANNUALLY *</p> <p><small>*Based only on Paluma to Wallaman Falls Trail medium utilisation</small></p>
CONSTRUCTION JOBS	PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS	INDIRECT JOBS	

*Combined jobs from Paluma to Wallaman and Magnetic Island Trails*

## WHAT WE NEED

- › Commit funding to capital works of Paluma to Wallaman Falls Trail pending outcome of the Business Case
- › \$5.9M towards the urgent upgrades of trails on Magnetic Island
- › Funding commitment to Feasibility Study and Business Case of Palm Island Trails

“Hiking and mountain biking trails are proven tourism experiences that drive visitation, which will be more important than ever following COVID-19. Our region has some of the most spectacular, untapped opportunities in this space. New and improved trails will boost tourism, attract events and support an active local community.”

– Sam Stedman,  
Outer Limits Adventure



**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# Townsville Airport Redevelopment

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Townsville Airport is the gateway to North Queensland and plays an important role in providing a first and last impression for travellers and visitors. Until COVID-19, Townsville Airport was the 11th busiest airport in Australia, supporting 3,000+ jobs and contributing \$420M to the economy annually. It is a major economic enabler for North Queensland.

Based on existing and estimated increased future passenger numbers, there is a need for essential upgrades to core infrastructure at Townsville Airport. The last significant terminal upgrade occurred in 2003 and since then, Townsville Airport’s passenger movements have grown 84 per cent. To address capacity constraints and passenger comfort issues, leading airport planning experts concluded the terminal’s departure lounge was 42 per cent undersized and lounge seating needed to be increased by 25 per cent.

In 2019, Townsville Airport management was successful in securing a loan from the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF), enabling early works to proceed. A refresh of the terminal design has progressed well, and roof and other related works have been completed. A significant early works package was also

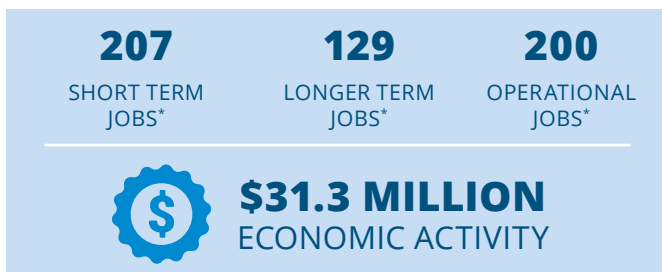
scheduled to commence when the COVID-19 crisis struck. As a result of the impacts of management measures relating to the COVID-19 health crisis on the aviation sector, Townsville Airport management is currently unable to proceed with the redevelopment, in accordance with the NAIF loan provisions.

This redevelopment will ensure improvement to the essential services of one of North Queensland’s critical infrastructure and tourism assets continues. Overall, this \$50M project will support 207 construction-related jobs and 50 operational jobs when complete. Progressing with the next stage will deliver 25 jobs, most of them trade related, this year and construction work for a period of six months.

**Status\*\*:**

- Stage one: Critical enabling core infrastructure works: Shovel Ready – 6-month construction timeframe;
- Stage two: Terminal redevelopment design completion: Currently at schematic design phase – 4-month design completion.

*\*\*contingent on funding*



*\* Figures based on whole project*

## WHAT WE NEED

- \$8.32M in funding to complete core infrastructure and associated building work
- \$1.5M in funding to complete terminal design

“

**“The Townsville Airport is a major economic driver for North Queensland and the terminal redevelopment is critical to ensuring that as a region we can truly realise our potential.**

**For us, and everyone within the tourism sector, aviation access is the lifeblood of our business. We need to ensure the infrastructure is to a standard that will attract new flight routes and help us to further build our tourism potential. ”**

*– Troy Scott, General Manager,  
Grand Hotel & Apartments Townsville*

”





**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# Dungeness Marine Access Upgrade

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The region's closest access point to the Great Barrier Reef is the Dungeness Enterprise Channel located in Lucinda, North Queensland. From Dungeness it is a short 20-minute boat transfer to Hinchinbrook island or a 90 minute transfer to outer Great Barrier Reef (approximately 30 minutes less than Townsville) with the area sitting at nearly 34% for fishing participation of any region of the State. Currently, Dungeness' access is dependent on tides and the limited infrastructure poses significant limitations and safety concerns.

Hinchinbrook Shire Council's Dungeness Marine Access Upgrade project involves the dredging of the channel and the construction of a rock-armoured retaining wall. Secondly, the project involves the redevelopment of the Dungeness Boat Ramp carpark and recreation area which is currently underway.

**Status:**

Council is proposing to undertake capital and maintenance dredging in the Dungeness Enterprise

Channel located in Lucinda, North Queensland. Council intends to improve access to the Dungeness Enterprise Channel by increasing the main channel depth to allow vessels to safely navigate to and from the boat ramp and marina area during low tides.

In addition, Council proposes to construct a rock armoured retaining wall at the channel entrance, adjacent to the main channel and to utilise the dredged spoil to replenish the adjacent beach foreshore to protect the remaining spit from further erosion. This aspect is not shovel ready as Council continues to pursue environmental permits to allow work to progress.

The second aspect is the upgrade of the existing carpark and recreation area. This aspect of the project is currently underway. The redevelopment will reduce current vehicle congestion and cater for an increasing demand on boating facilities and future growth in the area. Adequate and safe facilities for recreational boat users is essential to ensure continued tourism opportunities and economic growth within the Shire.

## WHAT WE NEED

- > \$5M funding to conduct the required capital works, dredging, rock wall and beach replenishment.

<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>
DIRECT FULL TIME JOBS	INDIRECT FULL TIME JOBS



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

# Direct International Flights

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

For Townsville North Queensland aviation access is critical to the recovery of the region’s tourism and events industry as a result of the impacts of COVID-19. We need strong capacity and affordable flights to re-ignite a sector that has been on its knees for months on end.

For Townsville, this is our opportunity to look to new markets to assist in rebuilding the economy.

### New Zealand

We were encouraged by New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters’ comments on Wednesday 10 June 2020 announcing Queensland could be one of two Australian states first in line to establish a trans-Tasman travel agreement.

It is our understanding that for a seasonal route to be established an airline would be looking for an existing demand of between 30,000 – 50,000 inbound passengers per year. In the 2019 calendar year, Townsville Airport

welcomed 20,000 New Zealand passengers. Furthermore, the Whitsundays region (7-8 hours’ drive from the nearest airport with direct NZ flights) received 10,000 New Zealand visitors. This demand has been driven with little to no marketing spend and without a direct flight.

A direct flight into Townsville, also packaged with our neighbouring Whitsundays region (through an additional regional ‘milk run’ flight) would meet the demand requirement. Furthermore, NZ-Townsville/Whitsundays passenger traffic was up 14% from 2018 to 2019, demonstrating a strong and positive increase in demand for travel to this region.

### Singapore

Townsville North Queensland has several linkages and business connections with Singapore including the James Cook University Campus and Australia–Singapore Military Training Initiative.

A direct route from Singapore to Townsville would open up trade and tourism opportunities from across the globe and help to rebuild the aviation and tourism sector.

## WHAT WE NEED

- › Funding for market development
- › Underwrite support for a seasonal direct flight between Auckland and Townsville
- › Support for a new ‘milk-run’ flight from Townsville – Whitsundays – Bundaberg – Brisbane return to ensure regional dispersal of inbound visitors
- › Support for a Singapore to Townsville direct flight

“A direct flight from New Zealand to Townsville would open up a new international market for our region. North Queensland has the experiences and products that align to the kiwi market. This is a perfect opportunity to expediate the tourism industry’s recovery at a time when global travel is not possible.”

– Clare Ley,  
Pilgrim Sailing and  
Beach Club Magnetic Island



**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# Wongaloo Conservation Park

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The Wongaloo Conservation Park – embracing the Cromarty-Clevedon Wetlands – is situated approximately mid way between Townsville and Ayr dissected by the Bruce Highway and Great Northern Rail line. These wetlands are famous for the diversity of flora and fauna with up to 250 species of birds, 51 species of reptiles and 44 species of mammals within a spectacular wilderness setting between mountain ranges and tidal creek and river systems. Many refer to the location as the Kakadu of Eastern Australia, but it is far more accessible.

To capitalise on the growing demand for nature based experiences, the wetlands management and visitor focus is centred on providing easy access for people of all ages at local, regional and international levels, and to provide opportunities to better understand and enjoy this North

Queensland prime example of the unique connection between mountain, woodlands, rainforest, landscape, and native wildlife just 30 minutes from northern Australia’s largest city.

The managing Trustee proposes to facilitate a staged infrastructure development as demand grows and finances allow. Planning for a 3.2 km signed walking trail linking the spectacular viewing points has been done, and a twenty seat ‘people mover’ for non walkers is available on site, making Stage 1 shovel ready.

However access to the Park is currently stalled because of the need to have a safe crossing of the rail line for pedestrians. The planned rail crossing site is just 1.5 km down a sealed road off the Bruce highway and directly adjacent to an already developed car and bus parking area.

## WHAT WE NEED

- › \$50K for basic service supply (power, telephone and basic entry control)



**DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

# Palm Island Retail and Commercial Precinct

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The project involves construction of Stages 2 and 3 of a Retail and Commercial Precinct on the underutilised waterfront land on Palm Island. The precinct will provide a vibrant mix of retail and specialty shops and is designed

to bring mainland shopping and service opportunities to the Island, increase employment, community capacity and pride and stem the leakage of vital expenditure from the Island. It will provide a safe and inviting environment to support Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council's Tourism and Events Strategy.

## WHAT WE NEED

- > \$30M to support construction of Stages 2 and 3 of a Retail and Commercial Precinct on Palm Island

# DEFENCE

**Townsville North Queensland is one of Australia’s prime strategic Defence regions. Situated on the north-eastern coast of Queensland, Townsville is uniquely well positioned for mounting operations into South East Asia and the Pacific. It is home to one of the largest defence bases in the Country which is strategically positioned between two of the Australian Defence Force’s (ADF) prime training areas - Shoalwater Bay Training Area and Townsville Field Training Area. Additionally, a ready workforce of veterans with security clearances and understanding of Defence requirements also reside in the region.**

Geography is but one of Townsville’s key enablers as the launchpad of choice for Pacific operations. The Australia-Singapore military training initiative will deliver not one, but two networked, all-weather, all-season training ranges. Supported by the Army Combat Training Centre with world’s best simulation-enabled training, there’s no better location to hone military skills. Equally important is the ability to project and sustain the force.

The Port of Townsville is currently undertaking a \$1.6 billion upgrade to deepen and widen the approach channel. A 62-hectare land-reclamation

project is delivering additional capacity to berth large Australian and coalition naval vessels. Upgrading and lengthening the runway at RAAF Base Townsville will enable operations of any fully loaded, wide-bodied aircraft.

Townsville North Queensland is competitively placed to become a leading location for global armed forces training, Defence Training and Simulation, Joint Amphibious Force Capability, and International Military Training. These opportunities identified have proven to be robust and remain aligned with the Strategic Update and Force Structure Plan 2020. In addition to this, the region has a well-structured strategy to guide logical and meaningful engagement around defence investment in North Queensland.

## POTENTIAL JOBS FROM COMBINED PROJECTS

**24,548**

CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**903**

PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**58,915**

INDIRECT  
JOBS

PROJECT JOB SUMMARY	Construction	Permanent Ongoing	Indirect
> Simulation and Soldier Systems Centre of Excellence	279	153	670
> Joint Amphibious Force Capability	24,269	750	58,245
> International Military Training	TBA	TBA	TBA



**DEFENCE**

# Simulation and Soldier Systems Centre of Excellence

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Townsville is at the forefront of large-scale simulation enabled military training and the development of cutting-edge technology. The region has been recognised in successive studies, including the regional Defence and Queensland State Government Health and Knowledge strategies, as ideally positioned to leverage local, world-class expertise to deliver investment and highly skilled jobs supporting simulation and human performance research and technology development.

The proposed simulation facility, The NQ SPARK, consolidates and exploits the unique confluence of defence, health and knowledge and simulation expertise to construct a multi-user Advanced Environmental Simulation Training Facility as the foundation infrastructure for an Advanced Training and Experiential

Centre of Excellence in Soldier Systems and Human Performance Studies. The facility will have flexible, multipurpose applications not only as an advanced training facility, but also an experimentation centre for research, development, and human performance studies. Several leading national universities and multinational industry partners with expertise in simulation and defence technology have expressed interest in the project.

A unique opportunity presents to develop a collaboration hub housing a cluster of defence, industry, health, research, and education on a shared geographic location. The NQ SPARK will be positioned on a common boundary between Lavarack Barracks, the Townsville University Hospital and James Cook University and close by two world-class, instrumented, military training areas (Townsville and Greenvale) – a location unrivalled in Australia.

**279**

CONSTRUCTION JOBS

**153**

PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS

**670**

INDIRECT JOBS

## WHAT WE NEED

➤ Prioritise Townsville North Queensland as the training and simulation centre, directing investment and ensuring key decisions support this.

➤ Total project value is \$70M (\$35M – private sector and \$35M – Commonwealth and State Government)

“

**“The investment into a performance technology centre in North Queensland enables world class simulation and training capability to fast track collaboration between emerging Defence industry, clinical training, academic research and emergency services readiness.**

**Townsville’s proximity to Training Ranges and regional location mean the opportunity to capitalise on that collaboration is unique and worthy of stimulus.”**

*– Mark Horn, Strategic Development Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia, Cubic Defence Australia*

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DEFENCE

## Joint Amphibious Force Capability

### GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The 2020 Defence Strategy Update and Force Structure plan describe Defence intention to invest in critical enabling infrastructure such as ports, wharves, fuel and explosive ordnance facilities and development. The plan also includes a requirement to support Army Watercraft in Northern Australia.

Strategically located on Australia's north east coast, Townsville is ideally suited as an amphibious mounting base for operations into the Pacific region. With close proximity to the majority of the ADF's specialist amphibious, land and aviation force elements, the Port of Townsville offers easy access and shorter transits to major joint exercise and possible operating areas to the north and east of Australia.

The Port has commenced an upgrade program that includes deeper and wider approach entrance channels, extra berths, and significant land reclamation. A master plan is under development to guide the direction and future expansion of the Port for the next 30 years. Recent meetings with Defence recognised this upgrade and planning activity presents a window of opportunity

for consultation and cooperation to ensure possible efficiencies and operational requirements are carefully considered in the Port development long term planning process.

If Defence is considering increasing capacity at Townsville beyond the current limited availability, including a facility to support Army Watercraft, a time sensitive window exists to consider future threats and opportunity linked to planned port expansions. Defence and the Port agreed to meet regularly to identify any operational restrictions or possible efficiencies for defence infrastructure that will be far more expensive to implement once the current upgrade is completed.

Fully supporting this consultation process will maximise the mutual benefit opportunities for Defence and Townsville North Queensland to support the amphibious capability.

**24,269**

CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**750**

PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**58,245**

INDIRECT  
JOBS



DEFENCE

## International Military Training

### GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The Australia Singapore Military Training Initiative will deliver two world-class simulation enabled training facilities in the Townsville North Queensland region. In addition to Australian Defence Force training, the region will host major international activities such as Exercise Talisman Sabre in 2021 and Singaporean military training scheduled to commence from 2025.

The Singapore Armed Forces will exercise for a maximum of 14 weeks a year, so ample opportunity exists in Northern Australia to support military engagement with our neighbours. The new training ranges are among the largest and best equipped for modern military training

with spare capacity to increase international utilisation of these facilities, through either joint exercises or unilateral training like the Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative.

The Townsville North Queensland region, with established defence support infrastructure including an international, dual user airport, all tide commercial port and supporting logistics is ideally positioned to boost the government's Pacific step-up and host training deployments from near region militaries. This offers a unique opportunity to enhance Australia's defence diplomacy and regional cooperation.





# HEALTH, KNOWLEDGE & RESEARCH

Townsville North Queensland is home to James Cook University and Townsville University Hospital and a range of other health, education, research and innovation enterprises such as CSIRO, Tec-NQ, Australian Institute for Tropical Health and Medicine and ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies.

North Queensland is on the precipice of establishing itself as a global leader in tropical health and knowledge, a community dedicated to helping the world access, understand and benefit from breakthroughs and solutions in health and tropical science. Supported by world class digital connectivity, the region could have the ability to provide an excellence never seen before in health care to remote and equatorial neighbours. Building on its established health and knowledge precinct, remote services through robotic and innovative practices can enable patients to receive world class health care while remaining on country.

These projects identified are set to create benefits for the research and education sector with close collaboration with industry partners to:

- › Solve challenging problems, create new and innovative ways/methods for increased health care and develop practical outcomes to support and conserve the tropics;

- › Provide access to a knowledge intense environment with expert knowledge and skills. Create long-term strategic partnerships with connections to local, national and international networks; and
- › Ensure a growing region with changing demographics has access to world class sustainable health and medical services.

## POTENTIAL JOBS FROM COMBINED PROJECTS

**779**

CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**1,347**

PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**2,891**

INDIRECT  
JOBS

PROJECT JOB SUMMARY	Construction	Permanent Ongoing	Indirect
› TropiQ	605	396	667
› STEM Booster, ICT Centre of Excellence and Townsville Connect	49	911	2,224
› Royal Flying Doctors Service Townsville Support Hub	125	40	N/A



# EXPLORING REAL-WORLD SOLUTIONS

Take your research into one of the world's most diverse ecosystems

## HEALTH, KNOWLEDGE & RESEARCH

# TropiQ and a New Economy for Townsville

### GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

TropiQ is a tropical intelligence and health precinct development in North Australia's largest city – Townsville. The precinct is home to two of Townsville's biggest powerhouses, James Cook University and Townsville University Hospital and a range of other health, education, research and innovation enterprises such as CSIRO, Tec-NQ, Australian Institute for Tropical Health and Medicine and ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies.

The co-location of these sizable institutions sees a significant advantage for Townsville in leveraging their cumulative offerings to attract new talent, new innovations and a new knowledge-based economy to Townsville. The \$5.9 billion TropiQ development is a key deliverable of the Townsville City Deal under the Health and Knowledge Strategy and is also recognised as an important economic driver within the North Queensland Regional Plan.

The institutions in the precinct already contribute heavily to the North Queensland economy with a combined \$3.5 billion in economic output and support nearly 16,000 jobs in Townsville. TropiQ will attract additional investment in world-leading innovation, research and entrepreneurship.

By 2035, the precinct will generate an additional \$1 billion in economic output for Townsville and support an additional 5,500 FTE jobs – half of these in the TropiQ precinct and the other half throughout the city. Construction activity in the precinct is expected to generate \$7.8 billion of activity for the local economy, paying \$1.8 billion in wages for more than 23,000 FTE jobs between 2020 and 2035.

#### Status:

The anchor institutions have private infrastructure but the same is not suitable for third party proponents. This infrastructure is beyond the financial or technical capacity of the anchor institutions and as such government support is required.

### WHAT WE NEED

Trunk infrastructure; A preliminary assessment anticipates a requirement of \$10M for an investigation/ planning phase and \$280M in stages after that.

Commitment to an active partnership in the planning and investment of public infrastructure that supports the development of the precinct.

<b>23,000</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>\$7.8B</b>
FULL TIME CONSTRUCTION PHASE JOBS	FULL TIME ONGOING JOBS	GENERATED DURING CONSTRUCTION

 **\$1 BILLION** ECONOMIC OUTPUT

“TropiQ is focused on issues of the North, it is focused on issues of the tropical world... it is also focused on the issues of rural, remote and indigenous communities, serving the North as well”  
 – Prof. Sandra Harding AO

“The precinct will open a pipeline of investment for private enterprise and commercial operators to leverage the significant opportunities associated with being located between a major hospital and university”  
 – Tony Mooney AM



HEALTH, KNOWLEDGE & RESEARCH

# STEM Booster

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

STEMBooster is a major economic and skills development initiative. Townsville North Queensland is experiencing an increased demand for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) skills in major employment sectors including mining and minerals processing, agriculture/ cattle/ aquaculture, health and services as well as our emerging industries such as defence, aviation and digital services. Our region, despite some pockets of strength, has poor education attainment levels compared to state and national averages, as well higher unemployment levels. The gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous education results is still large and many schools have limited access to new technologies and STEM exposure and learning opportunities.

The skills shortages are already inhibiting business growth and will potentially drive current employers and new investors to other regions. Without addressing this issue, our region will continue to suffer economic decline.

## WHAT WE NEED

> STEM Booster Program - \$7.5M over four years (2020/21 - \$1.5M)

### STEMBooster has six core components:

1. Engaging with the business community to develop priorities, commitment to the program including school visits, student site visits and work experience;
2. Engaging with the education community to tailor curriculum for STEM subjects to be relevant to the region's industries, geography, and demography;
3. Developing STEM education networks;
4. Engaging with families, students, careers advisors and media to promote STEM opportunities;
5. Purchasing and distributing technology into schools, with the associated coaching of teachers to use it;
6. Project management to deliver the above.

<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>
CONSTRUCTION JOBS	PERMANENT ONGOING JOBS	INDIRECT JOBS



**HEALTH, KNOWLEDGE & RESEARCH**

## NQ ICT Centre of Excellence

### GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The NQ ICT Centre of Excellence will grow the ICT workforce in North Queensland through partnerships between government and private providers to establish and expand the skills required to build a sustainable ICT workforce in the North Queensland region.

Replicating partnerships similar to other locations (e.g. the Digital Transformation Centre in Adelaide), the NQ ICT Centre of Excellence will build a critical mass of “like” resources in the region. This in turn will then attract other projects to the North Queensland Region and will create a highly skilled and sustainable workforce in the region.

Examples of the types of projects that would be supported by the NQ ICT COE include:

- Virtual contact centres – Deliver a scalable cloud-based solution that allows decentralisation/ work from anywhere for critical call centres. Removes reliance on centralised call centres and affords flexible working and ability to move workloads across QLD regions;
- Digital Government – enhance QLD Governments ability to Digitally Transform by modernising legacy workflows, business rules, services and products to the future of Government being responsiveness;
- Acute / Mental illness centre – Centre for research, co-ordination and management of Queenslanders with acute and mental illnesses. Includes trialling personal health monitoring devices / telehealth services and remote management. e.g. Diabetes;

- Social impact IT support centre – helps the community develop and run programs that benefit individuals and society. Initial areas of focus include neurodiversity, veterans, disability, indigenous people and climate change;
- Cyber Security Centre – security awareness, vulnerability assessment, detection and management of critical infrastructure supporting Smart City, Energy, Water, Agriculture, Environment and Defence initiatives. The Program will enable veterans exiting the forces to attain the appropriate industry security certification and skills to meet high demand for defence cleared ICT workforce;
- Application modernisation – can partner with JCU and TAFE to create a pipeline of Application Modernisation experts leveraging both University and private ICT providers capability; and
- Infrastructure managed services – Managed services, cloud migration and outsourced ICT services across Local and State Government. Implementing effective automation can reduce typical costs by 20-30% and doing this onshore addresses Government risk.

The NQ ICT Centre of Excellence will work closely alongside local University and TAFE partners to develop the long-term skills required to deliver ICT projects within the region and help work towards being a global leader in tropical health and knowledge.

### WHAT WE NEED

- NQ ICT Centre of Excellence – \$40M over five years (2020/21 –\$8M)

**30**  
CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**900**  
PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**2,160**  
INDIRECT  
JOBS



## HEALTH, KNOWLEDGE & RESEARCH

# Townsville Connect

### GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Access to high speed, affordable digital communications is a major enabler to attract potential new, retaining and connecting Townsville businesses to markets in Australia and around the world. Townsville Connect, in conjunction with Smart Precinct NQ will drive creation of new products, new technologies and new business in Townsville and the region.

Townsville Connect aims to deploy high speed, high capacity data network providing next generation broadband to a range of strategic priority precincts throughout Townsville including:

- › The Townsville CBD
- › The Strand
- › Smart Precinct NQ
- › Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct
- › Health and Knowledge Precinct including TropiQ
- › University and Education Sites
- › North Queensland Regional Data Centre (NQDRC).

Smart Precinct NQ has been established to provide an entity that drives creation of new products, new technologies and new business within Townsville and the broader region. Overall Smart Precinct NQ seeks to provide support for businesses to establish, grow and

remain in the region – as opposed to heading to a capital city to get the guidance and support needed. In a post COVID-19 environment this ability to establish globally competitive business in lower density areas becomes even more critical.

Establishing digital connectivity as a competitive advantage for Townsville will attract and retain both residents and business which in turn will generate economic activity in the region. Townsville Connect serves as a valuable enabler for Smart Precinct NQ to deliver tangible outcomes, that can leverage Council and the Queensland Government’s investment in Smart Precinct NQ. For businesses to grow and stay in Townsville creation of high-speed seamless connectivity becomes a fundamental requirement. Establishment of a 10G network between the region’s productive precincts becomes critical to evolution of business in the region. With the North Queensland Data Centre now fully operational, this next step will grow innovation and entrepreneurs in the region.

The move to working from home arrangements en masse due to the COVID-19 restrictions, has provided an opportunity for organisations to re-evaluate how and where their workforces work, with many surveys now showing staff in favour of working from home/working remotely permanently. The IT sector has been ahead of the game in this area for many years. The creation of Townsville Connect and Smart Precinct NQ and the ICT Centre of Excellence would allow Townsville to capitalise on this new ‘work from wherever you like’ world and draw migration to the region.

### WHAT WE NEED

- › Townsville Connect - \$6M for establishment of 10G network between Townsville’s productive precincts

**19**

CONSTRUCTION  
JOBS

**3**

PERMANENT  
ONGOING JOBS

**45**

INDIRECT  
JOBS



**HEALTH, KNOWLEDGE & RESEARCH**

# Royal Flying Doctors Service Townsville Support Hub

## GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (Queensland Section) (RFDS) has committed to a major expansion of its north Queensland Aeromedical Facility at Townsville to boost health outcomes and infrastructure investment in the region.

With the Townsville Base nearing capacity, this new facility will help to increase new economic infrastructure development and enhance community services and Indigenous engagement.

The North Queensland Aeromedical Facility will be a new infrastructure development designed to improve patient transfer for the benefit of more than 2,000 plus people who are transported through Townsville each year.

It will create new regional employment opportunities and position RFDS for sustainable business growth, and improved safety, quality and service delivery in North Queensland.

The Super Hub in Townsville is estimated to inject \$40M into local businesses, boost the gross regional product by \$18M, and add 125 full-time jobs during construction and \$10M in wages and salaries.

As well as a new dedicated patient transfer facility,

the build will also include new aviation engineering and maintenance facilities, aircraft hangars and an aviation and clinical training complex. The project will be a significant capital investment to boost local jobs in construction and create new ongoing aviation, aeromedical, clinical and support roles.

The North Queensland Aeromedical Facility will be instrumental in ensuring our regional operations are cost-efficient and competitive and provide a sustainable service for North Queensland into the future.

### Status:

The RFDS is aiming to deliver an \$87M infrastructure upgrade program across Queensland. This includes a \$30M investment in a new base at Townsville.

The RFDS has received a \$20M commitment from the Queensland Government for the State-wide infrastructure program and hopes to secure the remainder of funds from the Commonwealth Government and private sector.

The base currently supports about 30 staff. Once upgraded, the base will support up to 40 jobs. This increase will be due principally to the fact that the RFDS will use the base as an engineering base for maintenance of its aircraft (drawing on the local, highly skilled, former defence workforce).

## WHAT WE NEED

▶ The RFDS is seeking at least a \$50M commitment from the Commonwealth for its State-wide program, including \$30M to build a new base in Townsville.

**125**

FULL TIME  
JOBS

**\$40M**

LOCAL BUSINESS  
INJECTION

**\$18M**

GRP  
BOOST



**\$10 MILLION**  
IN WAGES AND SALARIES

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