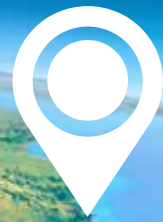


DECEMBER 2019

# CAIRNS

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES



# OVERVIEW OF KEY

CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL IS CALLING ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO



## CAIRNS AVIATION EXCELLENCE PRECINCT

\$20 million funding commitment to the Cairns Aviation Excellence Precinct development.



## CAIRNS GALLERY PRECINCT

\$13.3 million funding commitment towards the estimated capital cost (\$39.8 million) of the Cairns Gallery Precinct as part of the proposed tripartite (Federal, State and Local Governments) funding arrangement for this iconic cultural and tourism infrastructure project.



## CAIRNS ROAD NETWORK PROJECTS

Extension of the National Land Transport Network from Draper Street (just south of the Cairns City Centre) to Smithfield and confirmation of the \$287 million in Federal funding allocated to enhancements on this road corridor.



## CAIRNS CITY CENTRE MASTER PLAN

\$33 million commitment from the Federal Government (as part of a \$100 million tripartite funding pool) over the ten years to 2030 for the implementation of the Cairns City Centre Master Plan.



## CAIRNS UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Confirmation of the \$60 million announced previously for James Cook University's Cairns Tropical Enterprise Centre (CTEC). Advocacy support to help secure \$100 million in funding from the Queensland Government to establish the Cairns Health and Innovation Precinct (CHIP) and allocation of 80 additional places within James Cook University's Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery programs

\$21 million for a Strategic Assessment of Service Requirements, Preliminary Evaluation and Business Case development for the Kuranda Range Road corridor to address significant safety, capacity and reliability issues on this strategic road link between Cairns, the Atherton Tablelands and beyond.

Confirmation of the \$180 million commitment from the Federal Government towards the Cairns Southern Access Corridor Stage 5 (Foster Road Intersection) project.

Advocacy support from the Federal Government to secure an investment of \$370 million from the Queensland Government for the upgrade of the Cairns Western Arterial Road.



## CAIRNS CITY DEAL

Federal Government commitment to sign a statement of intent with Cairns Regional Council and the Queensland Government to establish a 10-year City Deal for Cairns based on the priorities outlined in the Cairns Region City Deal Proposal Document.



## QUNIVERSITY CITY CAMPUS AND IMPACT PLAN

\$50 million towards the establishment of a new permanent city centre campus, \$25 million (with a further \$20 million to be sourced from industry) towards Asia Pacific Aviation Hub development and \$25 million toward the establishment of Queensland's first University High School.



## DRAPER ROAD WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Commitment from the Federal Government to join Council and the Queensland Government in a tripartite funding arrangement (one third each) for the capital cost of the Draper Road Water Treatment Plant.

# PRIORITIES

*It's time to invest in the future of Cairns and the Far North*

COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE CAIRNS REGION



## HMAS CAIRNS AND CAIRNS SEAPORT

\$170 million across the forward estimates for program upgrades to the HMAS Cairns naval base in readiness for the homeporting of four new offshore patrol vessels.

Designation of Cairns as a Regional Maintenance Centre of strategic importance in the delivery of naval maintenance and sustainment services.

Funding allocations across the forward estimates for the HMAS Cairns Mid Term Refresh and HMAS Cairns Redevelopment projects.

Funding allocations to support Stages 2 and 3 of upgrades to the Cairns Marine Maintenance Precinct.

Further policy change to support superyacht industry development and complement the provisions of the recently passed Special Recreational Vessels Bill.



## NULLINGA DAM

Join Council in advocating to the Queensland Government for the project to proceed and a Federal Government commitment for the provision of joint (with the Queensland Government) capital funding to support project delivery.



## POPULATION AND MIGRATION STRATEGY

Completion of a detailed population and migration strategy for the Cairns region to deliver the skilled population base needed to unlock the region's full potential.



## PRIORITY RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE FOR CAIRNS AND FNQ

Designation of the Cairns and FNQ region as a Priority Renewable Energy Zone and implementation of the policy and investment required to support regional renewable energy development.



## REEF AND RAINFOREST MANAGEMENT

Commitment to undertake a detailed independent review of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) and Wet Tropics Rainforest (WTR) management structures and GBR/WTR funding (quantum and structure) requirements for long term management and preservation of these critical ecosystems.



## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HERITAGE CENTRE

Funding to support initial concept development and business case preparation for a National Indigenous Heritage Centre located in Cairns.



## PRIORITY REGIONAL RECYCLING AND REPROCESSING HUB

Designation of Cairns as a Priority Regional Recycling and Reprocessing Hub together with funding to support recycling and processing infrastructure development and expansion as well as the investigation of innovative commercial opportunities for the use of recycled materials.



## STRENGTHENING AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PNG AND THE PACIFIC

Support for a joint PNG/Cairns team entering the NRL competition. Placement of Office of the Pacific personnel in Cairns. Support further investigation of future potential air links between Cairns and Lae.



## NORTHERN BEACHES LEISURE TRAIL

Provision of funding towards the estimated \$20 million to \$30 million total capital cost of delivering the remaining connectivity components of the Northern Beaches Leisure Trail.

# CAIRNS AT A GLANCE

## HOUSING (JUNE 19)



MEDIAN PRICE

**\$418,000** House

**\$209,000** Unit

**\$200,000** Residential Land

**1.8 %** Rental vacancy rate

## GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

(Y/E 30 JUN 18)



**\$8.8B**

Cairns



**\$15.4B**

Far North Queensland

## GREAT BARRIER REEF

1/7

One of the seven natural wonders of the world



Economic, social and icon value

**2,300** KILOMETRES LONG



Covering an area of 344,000 km<sup>2</sup>



Employment supported



**1,625** SPECIES OF FISH

(10% of the world's fish species)



**600+** TYPES OF HARD & SOFT CORALS



**\$6.4B** ANNUALLY

Economic Contribution

## WATER



Cairns and FNQ region's water run off as a % of:

**60%** Queensland's total

**26%** Australia's total

**1,998mm**

Average annual rainfall (Far North Region)

## VISITORS

(TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND REGION Y/E 30 JUN 19)



**2.1m**

Domestic visitors spending \$2.2B

**849,000**

International visitors spending \$1.1B

## AGRICULTURE

(FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND)



**\$2.95B** Sector value

**\$1.81B** Export value

## WET TROPICS RAINFOREST



**2.0m** HECTARES

Bioregion area



**OVER 2,800**

Plant Species



**35%**

of Australia's mammal species



**\$5.2B** ANNUALLY

Economic Contribution



**40%**

of Australia's bird species



**60%**

of Australia's butterfly species



## CAIRNS PUBLIC HOSPITAL

**82,714** Total admissions (y/e 30 Jun 19)

**>6,000** Total staff employed

## CAIRNS AIRPORT

(PASSENGER MOVEMENTS Y/E 30 JUN 2019)



**686,000** International

**4.2m** Domestic

**7th** Busiest airport in Australia

## UNEMPLOYMENT



**4.1%** (JUN 2019)

Cairns City Unemployment



**4.8%** (SEP 2019)

Cairns Region (SA4) Unemployment

**9.6%** (SEP 2019)

Youth

## CAIRNS SEAPORT



Cargo movements (y/e 30 Jun 19)

**552,000 tonnes** Export

**754,000 tonnes** Import

**5%**

Average annual growth in cargo movements (last 5 years)



**952**

Total vessel arrivals (y/e 30 Jun 19)

## RESIDENT POPULATION



**306,000** 2050 (projected)

**165,000** (today)

Cairns City Resident Population



**286,000** (today)

Far North Queensland (FNQ) Resident Population

**467,000** 2050 (projected)

**9.8%**

Proportion of population that is Indigenous (highest of any Australian city)



## TERTIARY EDUCATION

(CAIRNS CAMPUS)

	JCU	CQUniversity	TAFE
Students enrolled	3,913	1,684	11,269
Persons employed	1,213	162	381
Number of courses	134	127	180

# Foreword

## *A targeted plan to deliver jobs, growth and liveability in Cairns and Far North Queensland*

Cairns is the capital of Far North Queensland (FNQ), the largest region in Northern Australia (population circa 286,000) and is a strategic gateway to the Pacific, Asia and beyond. With a resident population of 165,000 people and an average 30,000 additional visitors staying in the city on any given night, Cairns is one of the largest and most dynamic regional cities in Australia. Unique liveability and solid economic fundamentals have seen Cairns experience significant population growth (2.3% per annum in the 15 years to 2016) – well in excess of the national growth rate. Significant private investment and renewed business confidence has also seen the Cairns region unemployment rate reduce significantly in recent years. The region's unemployment rate currently sits at 4.8% (SA4, Sep 19). A unique combination of economic potential and superior liveability means Cairns is ideally positioned as a growth centre of strategic significance in Northern Australia. But in order to realise this potential, Cairns and indeed the FNQ region, requires investment in the infrastructure, programs and policy that will provide the foundation for future growth.

### STRATEGICALLY POSITIONED

Cairns is strategically positioned to support the Federal Government's Northern Australia agenda and also has an important role to play in alleviating the pressures being experienced in some of the nation's metropolitan cities as a result of population growth and migration. But to enable Cairns and the broader FNQ region's enormous potential to be realised, investment in enabling policy and infrastructure will be critical. Federal Government investment in the Cairns region will not only support the local community but will deliver benefits for the region and nation as a whole.

### TARGETED INVESTMENT









It is recognised that in order to be effective, regional investment and policy needs to be developed in the context of a broader regional strategy to ensure such initiatives are complementary and contribute to the realisation of a long-term vision. With this in mind, Cairns Regional Council and key regional stakeholders have worked together to develop the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision ([www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision2050](http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision2050)). This vision also incorporates the views and priorities of the Cairns community as expressed through the 2016 Our Cairns Survey, a community survey conducted by the Cairns Regional Council that attracted over 6,000 responses. The Cairns 2050 Shared Vision provides a framework that will deliver economic prosperity, quality of life and liveability for the Cairns community both today, and for the generations that follow. It sets out the projects, investment and policy required for the vision to be realised. The Cairns 2050 Shared Vision has provided the foundation for the priorities contained in this document.

### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Cairns 2050 Shared Vision was developed in the context of policy and strategy settings at the Federal, State and Regional level. From a Federal perspective, investment in the priorities contained within this document aligns with, and will support the implementation of, a number of key Australian Government strategies, plans and policies including (amongst others):

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Indigenous Advancement Strategy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Pacific Step-up - Stepping up Australia's engagement with our Pacific family
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Smart Cities Plan (2016) and City Deals Policy/Program
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)

# UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITY AND POTENTIAL

AREA OF FOCUS 	 <b>FOOD PRODUCTION</b>	 <b>TOURISM</b>	 <b>TERTIARY EDUCATION</b>
<b>TRENDS/ CONTRIBUTING FACTORS</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World population expected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050 (up by 2 billion from today)</li> <li>Income growth in developing countries is leading to dietary changes also driving up global food demand per capita</li> <li>Global food demand expected to increase anywhere between 59% and 98% by 2050</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant and rapid expansion of the global middle class population leading to increased discretionary expenditure</li> <li>Global population age profile and propensity for travel both positively impacting tourism and travel</li> <li>Cultural, nature based and sports/ events tourism are significant growth sectors</li> <li>International inbound travel to Australia expected to increase by 75% over the period to 2026-27</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rapid expansion of global middle class expected to drive significant increases in tertiary level education attainment</li> <li>Australia's international education sector enrolments expected to increase by 45% in the period to 2025</li> <li>Significant growth in demand domestically for tertiary level education. In 2016, 3.8 million Australians held a bachelor degree or post graduate degree level qualification, an increase of 28% over the preceding 5 years</li> </ul>
<b>CAIRNS REGION'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical proximity and connectivity to the Asia-Pacific and beyond</li> <li>Significant water resources and run off</li> <li>Large tracts of underdeveloped arable land (FNQ)</li> <li>Established agriculture industry</li> <li>Established and well connected airport and seaport</li> <li>Existing road networks and rail links</li> <li>Cairns established as the regional capital and service centre for FNQ</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iconic world heritage listed natural assets (Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest)</li> <li>Direct connection to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures</li> <li>Established sports and events tourism destination</li> <li>Established tourism industry and allied sectors</li> <li>International airport</li> <li>Seaport expansion underway to facilitate increased cruise ship visitation</li> <li>'Clean green' reputation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two well established and growing universities (James Cook University and CQUniversity) and other tertiary institutions</li> <li>International and domestic air connectivity</li> <li>Multicultural and diverse population</li> <li>Superior quality of life and liveability</li> </ul>
<b>THE OPPORTUNITY CREATED</b> 	<p><i>Potential for significant growth in regional agriculture development, production and export to meet increasing global food demand</i></p>	<p><i>Capturing a share of significant global tourism growth by leveraging Cairns' competitive advantages in cultural, nature based and sports and events tourism</i></p>	<p><i>Servicing significant growth in demand for tertiary and higher level education both domestically and internationally and attraction and retention of human intellectual capital</i></p>
<b>WHAT'S NEEDED TO UNLOCK THE OPPORTUNITY</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water infrastructure (storage and distribution)</li> <li>Demand and supply chain analysis to identify specific opportunities/ markets and potential barriers to production, transport, processing and distribution/export</li> <li>Road network investment</li> <li>Increased direct aviation connectivity</li> <li>Seaport development and expansion</li> <li>Integrated transport strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective management and funding to support the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest</li> <li>Tourism experience and attraction development</li> <li>Increased support for destination marketing</li> <li>Increased direct aviation connectivity</li> <li>Seaport development and expansion</li> <li>Infrastructure, services and facilities that support an increased visitor population</li> <li>Policy change to deliver sustainable tourism funding</li> <li>Investment in Indigenous arts and cultural tourism facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University facility development and expansion</li> <li>Innovation precinct establishment</li> <li>Increased direct aviation connectivity</li> <li>Attainment of University Hospital status for Cairns Hospital</li> </ul>

The Cairns region’s unique competitive advantages mean it is well positioned to prosper from a number of trends emerging at both the national and global level. Queensland Government investment in the Cairns region is needed to ensure these opportunities can be fully realised.

 <b>STRATEGIC LOCATION</b>	 <b>SKILLED &amp; GROWING POPULATION</b>	 <b>RENEWABLE ENERGY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing regional influence of China and other Asian countries in the PNG and Pacific region</li> <li>Increased foreign policy focus of the Australian government on the PNG and Asia-Pacific region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant population growth in Australia’s metropolitan capitals has resulted in an infrastructure deficit and settlement imbalance</li> <li>Delivery of the Australian Government’s Northern Australia policy agenda will need to be supported by a skilled population base ‘on the ground’ in regions</li> <li>Direct alignment between a region’s human intellectual capital and the achievement of its economic potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International commitments to emission reductions are driving record investment in renewable energy projects</li> <li>Australian government’s 2030 Emission Reduction Target is a 26-28 per cent reduction in 2005 emission levels by 2030</li> <li>Changing social attitudes towards climate change is raising expectations politically for increased renewable energy investment</li> <li>Commercial viability of renewable energy alternatives is improving as technological advances see cost reductions and life cycle improvements in equipment and infrastructure</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical proximity to PNG and the Asia-Pacific region</li> <li>Existing naval base (HMAS Cairns), marine maintenance facilities and expertise, and established and expanding seaport</li> <li>International airport with direct connectivity to PNG and Asia</li> <li>Multicultural and diverse population including significant expat PNG population</li> <li>Well established business, cultural and social links between Cairns and PNG as well as many Asian and Pacific Island countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established track record for above average population growth</li> <li>Largest region (FNQ) and second largest city (Cairns) in Northern Australia</li> <li>Existing multicultural and diverse population</li> <li>Superior quality of life and liveability</li> <li>Well established universities and vocational institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant regional natural resources (water, sun, wind) to support renewable energy development</li> <li>Existing alignment between the environment and the economy (e.g. tourism) enhances the region’s ‘clean green’ reputation</li> <li>Significant regional renewable energy projects either planned or recently delivered</li> </ul>
<p><i>Leverage Cairns’ strategic physical location and connectivity to support the delivery of Australia’s PNG and Asia Pacific foreign policy objectives</i></p>	<p><i>Contribute to the alleviation of population growth constraints in Australia’s metropolitan capitals and support the delivery of economic growth in Northern Australia</i></p>	<p><i>Supporting Queensland and Australia’s energy needs through the development of a nationally significant renewable energy sector</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further development of the HMAS Cairns naval base and commitment to ongoing naval maintenance in Cairns</li> <li>Policy , investment and personnel deployment to leverage Cairns’ strategic location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Cairns region population and migration strategy</li> <li>Infrastructure, services and facilities that attract, retain and support a skilled and growing resident population</li> <li>Investment in the facilities required to support population growth in a naturally sensitive environment (e.g. waste management)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designation of Cairns and FNQ as a Priority Renewable Energy Zone</li> <li>Investment in the transmission distribution network to support further renewable energy generation project development</li> <li>Appropriate incentives to encourage investment and establishment of renewable energy operations bases within the Cairns and FNQ region</li> <li>Leveraging the ‘clean green’ reputation for the benefit of the region’s tourism and allied industries</li> </ul>

# Cairns Aviation Excellence Precinct

*Growing high value jobs in the aviation services sector by leveraging Cairns' strategic position in the Asia Pacific region*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

\$20 million funding commitment to the Cairns Aviation Excellence Precinct development.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Pacific Step-up - Stepping up Australia's engagement with our Pacific family
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)

The aviation services industry will be worth \$2.7 trillion in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region by 2038.

The APAC region is the single largest destination for commercial jet deliveries within the next 20 years, expecting 40% of global deliveries or 17,390 aircraft. Existing traditional Aviation Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) destinations such as Singapore are already operating at or near capacity. Airlines are already experiencing difficulty in securing MRO services for their aircraft in these destinations. Availability of the highly skilled people required is already constrained.

Cairns is geographically in the centre of the APAC region, has a pipeline of highly skilled people, an existing reputation for excellence, and a geopolitically stable jurisdiction for aviation services operators. Cairns is perfectly positioned to capture a share of this growing market.

Cairns Airport has developed the Cairns Aviation Excellence Precinct (CAEP) masterplan to meet this demand. This will see the redevelopment of the existing General Aviation precinct adjacent to the Captain Cook highway.

The land is at approximately 1AHD (Australian Height Datum). In other words, it is in practical terms a wetlands area and subject to frequent flooding. The land needs to be raised to approximately 2.65AHD before any construction of the 534,673m<sup>2</sup> of groundworks, aprons and roads could take place. This is a significant cost for Cairns Airport to overcome, whilst retaining competitiveness in attracting new

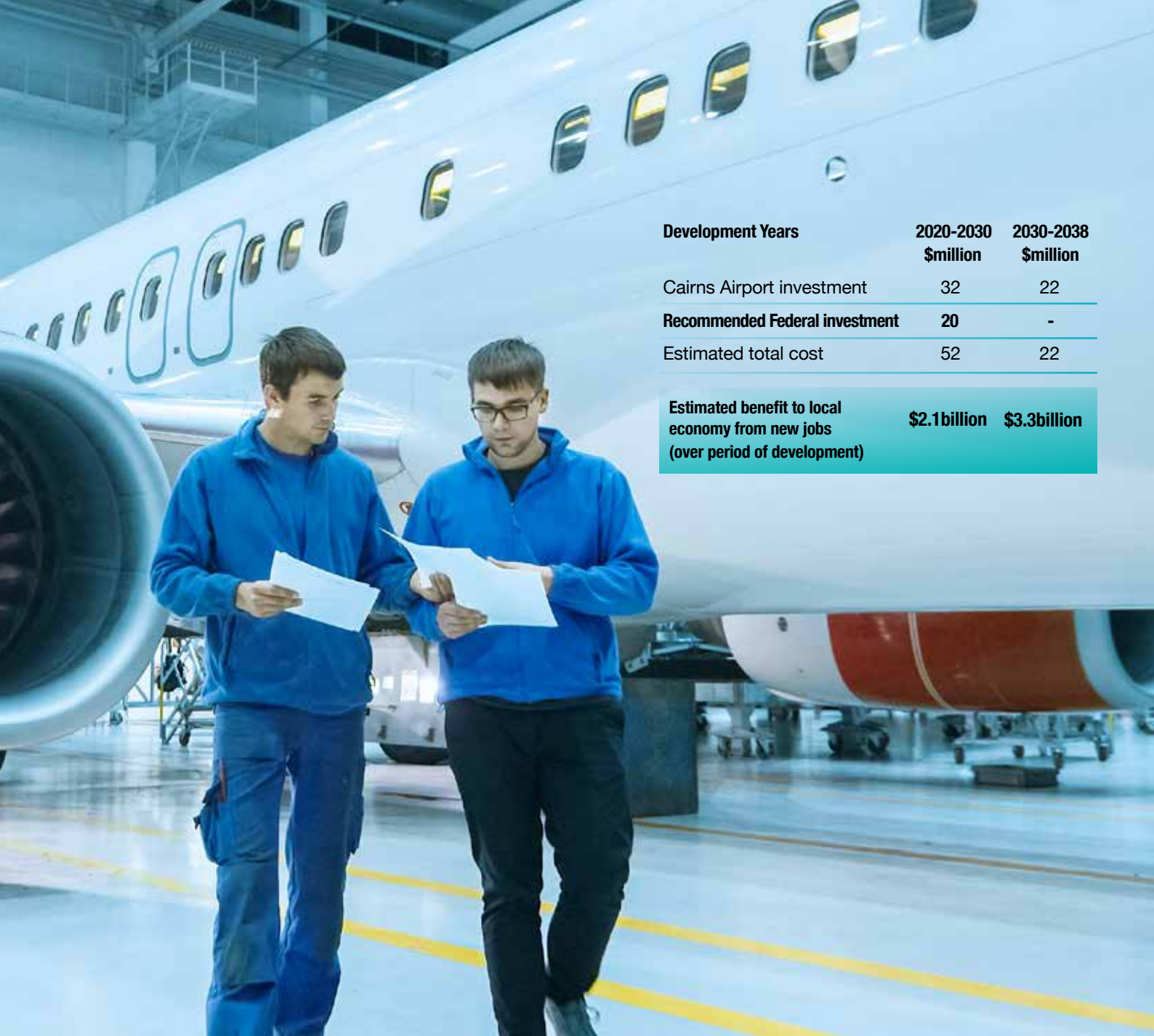


businesses. Consequently, partial public funding is required to make this catalytic regional development viable.

Ultimately, CAEP will deliver at least 28 new business locations. These are a combination of different size hangars for MRO, as well as other industry operators in avionics, training, research development and advanced manufacturing businesses.

Over 1,200 high value jobs will be created, with this contributing a minimum of \$105 million into the local regional economy each year. This supports sustainable population growth, sustainable aviation route development, the Pacific





Development Years	2020-2030 \$million	2030-2038 \$million
Cairns Airport investment	32	22
<b>Recommended Federal investment</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>-</b>
Estimated total cost	52	22

<b>Estimated benefit to local economy from new jobs (over period of development)</b>	<b>\$2.1billion</b>	<b>\$3.3billion</b>
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engagement strategy, the education and research sectors, tourism growth and advanced manufacturing. The true impact for the region is expected to be well in excess of \$3.3 billion over the length of the development.

The precinct is already home to a thriving aviation services industry, with Hawker Pacific being a prominent example of an MRO operator in growth mode. In 2017, Hawker Pacific undertook a significant expansion of their hangar, which resulted in an additional 39 high value jobs worth an estimated \$3.9 million. In 2019, Hawker Pacific confirmed winning \$4 million worth of new contracts for 2020. This is just one

example of recent investment and success within the aviation services industry in Cairns.

Cairns is perfectly positioned at the centre of the APAC region; equal flying distance to Bangkok, Shanghai, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur. Fiji and Hawaii are a manageable flight time away and the closest capital city, Port Moresby in PNG, is less than half the distance to Sydney.

The airport is home to the CQUniversity Asia Pacific Aviation Hub and Cairns Aviation Skills Centre (CASC). Since 2003, CASC has graduated 650 aircraft technicians and upskilled over 7,000 aviation professionals, all with the industry

reputation for excellence that comes from being trained in Cairns.

Cairns should be a major destination for aviation services in the APAC region because it can meet the needs of industry – perfectly positioned geographically, geopolitically and as a place that already has a reputation for aviation excellence with a pipeline of highly skilled people.

Cairns Airport is seeking assistance with the cost of this catalytic regional development in order to make it viable. This is a partial investment, with Cairns Airport meeting the majority of the cost. Cairns Regional Council supports Cairns Airport’s proposal in this regard.

# Cairns City Centre Master Plan

*Guiding the ongoing evolution of public spaces within the Cairns City Centre to ensure the city remains a vibrant and liveable space for everyone*



**THE MASTER PLAN IS UNDERPINNED BY FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

1



**EMBRACE TROPICAL URBANISM**

2



**SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH & DIVERSITY**

3



**CREATE AN ACCESSIBLE & CONNECTED CITY CENTRE**

4



**CELEBRATE ARTS, CULTURE & CREATIVITY**

5



**DELIVER A SUSTAINABLE, SAFE & LIVEABLE CITY**



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

\$33 million commitment from the Federal Government (as part of a \$100 million tripartite funding pool) over the ten years to 2030 for the implementation of the Cairns City Centre Master Plan.

Tourism is a significant driver for the Cairns and TNQ economy with the region attracting almost three million visitors every year and annual visitor expenditure now exceeding \$3.4 billion. Whilst Cairns' tourism reputation has traditionally been built on its location at the gateway to the iconic Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest, an opportunity exists to further develop the city as an attraction in its own right. In doing so, there is potential to further increase visitation, visitor length of stay and visitor expenditure. Recent developments including the Cairns Aquarium, Munro Martin Parklands, Cairns Performing Arts Centre and Crystalbrook Collection suite of hotels, have all made positive contributions in this regard as will the proposed Trinity Wharf Cairns (Global Tourism Hub) and Cairns Convention Centre expansion projects. A comprehensive city centre master plan is critical to ensuring the future development of the City Centre occurs in a coordinated and guided manner. In doing so, it not only supports the jobs and economic benefits increased visitation will deliver, but also ensures the City Centre is a vibrant and dynamic public space that can be enjoyed by the local community.

Throughout 2018 and early 2019, Cairns Regional Council invested



extensive resources in developing the Cairns City Centre Master Plan 2019 including significant public input and consultation. Almost 2,500 people took the opportunity to give feedback and make suggestions on initial project ideas using innovative mediums including Council's interactive online ideas wall. Residents and visitors told Council how they use the city's public spaces, what they value most, what issues they would like to see addressed, and also generated new ideas. Reflecting on the community's feedback and suggestions, Council developed a suite of opportunities and preliminary concept sketches. Council invited feedback on these project opportunities throughout July and August 2018, with over 3,300 people engaging in the process. The process culminated in the endorsement of the Cairns City Centre Master Plan 2019 by Council in early April 2019. Funding is now required to support the progressive implementation of the Master Plan recommendations.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Smart Cities Plan (2016) and City Deals Policy/Program
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)



## RENEWED ESPLANADE PARKLANDS

A renewal of the parklands' key spaces, connections and facilities will build upon the Esplanade's most valued qualities and features and distribute activity more evenly along the full length of the parklands. The Esplanade is a large and diverse space and the project will consider the discrete features and activities unique to the Esplanade's north, centre and south.

## FLORENCE STREET

Council has created a new, world-class cultural hub spanning Florence Street, with the construction of the Cairns Performing Arts Centre and adjacent Munro Martin Parklands. The opportunity now exists to enhance Florence Street with the creation of a pedestrian boulevard that supports walkability and connects these public places to the Esplanade Parklands. Florence Street will become an extension of Munro Martin Parklands, with an avenue of shade trees. Tropical planting will feature along revitalised footpaths, and flowering shade trees will highlight the intersections.

## CITY STREETS

This project recognises that all streets within the City Centre are valuable public spaces, playing an important role for movement and circulation. Vibrant and well-defined streetscapes foster walkability, encouraging people to explore, relax and gather. Drawing from feedback during consultation, this project focuses on delivering streetscapes that create a connected, tropical public place with an active street life.

## ESPLANADE DINING PRECINCT

This project will enhance the best features of the Esplanade Dining Precinct, expanding the dining area to provide space for additional dining and seating, improving views to the parklands and increasing pedestrian connections.

## CAIRNS GALLERY PRECINCT

The project will transform and connect three heritage listed buildings in the Cairns City Centre (the Cairns Art Gallery, former Cairns Court House and former Mulgrave Shire Council offices) and establish a vibrant new world-class gallery building. This project has been separately included within this City Deal proposal as a full business case for the project has been completed and the capital investment required has been quantified.

# Cairns City Deal

*Unlocking the economic potential of Cairns and Far North Queensland*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Federal Government commitment to sign a statement of intent with Cairns Regional Council and the Queensland Government to establish a 10-year City Deal for Cairns based on the priorities outlined in the Cairns Region City Deal Proposal Document.

City Deals are a key mechanism to deliver on the opportunities and challenges in Australia's cities by bringing together the three levels of government, the community and private enterprise to create place-based partnerships. They work to align the planning, investment and governance necessary to accelerate economic growth and job creation, stimulate urban renewal and drive economic reforms. City Deals are designed to secure the future prosperity and liveability for Australian cities.

In June 2018, the Joint Standing Committee on Northern Australia released its report 'Northern Horizons – Unleashing Our Tourism Potential'. A key recommendation from that report was the establishment of a City Deal for Cairns. A City Deal for Cairns would support the Federal Government's agenda for the development of Northern Australia and would also contribute to the implementation of a variety of Queensland Government strategies and policies.

It is recognised that in order to be effective, a City Deal for Cairns needs to be developed in the context of a broader regional strategy to ensure such initiatives are complementary and contribute to the realisation of a long term vision. With this in mind, Cairns Regional Council and key regional stakeholders have worked together to develop the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision ([www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision2050](http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision2050)).

This vision also incorporates the views and priorities of the Cairns community as expressed through the 2016 Our Cairns Survey, a community survey conducted by Cairns Regional Council, which attracted over 6,000 responses.

The Cairns 2050 Shared Vision provides a framework that will deliver economic prosperity, quality of life and liveability for the Cairns community both today, and for the generations that follow. It sets out the projects, investment and policy required for the vision to be realised.

Using the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision as a foundation, Council has again worked with key stakeholders to develop the Cairns Region City Deal Proposal Document ('the Proposal'). A full copy of the Proposal is available on Council's website (<https://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/building-planning-business/advocacy>). The Proposal clearly articulates how a City Deal can unlock Cairns' full potential and deliver significant benefits for the region, the State of Queensland and Australia as a whole. The Proposal identifies six key areas of focus where Cairns has unique competitive advantages that can be leveraged to deliver economic growth and quality of life outcomes:

- Food Production
- Tourism
- Tertiary Education
- Strategic Location
- Skilled and Growing Population
- Renewable Energy

Further details on how these areas of focus align to both Cairns' unique competitive advantages and emerging trends at both a national and global level are set out on pages 6 and 7 of this document.

Linking directly to these areas of focus, the Proposal sets out and further develops 19 key projects/initiatives drawn from the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision that should be incorporated in a City Deal for Cairns.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

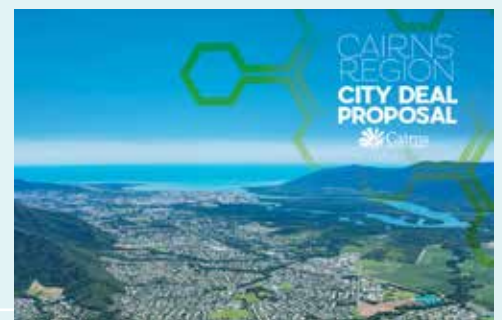
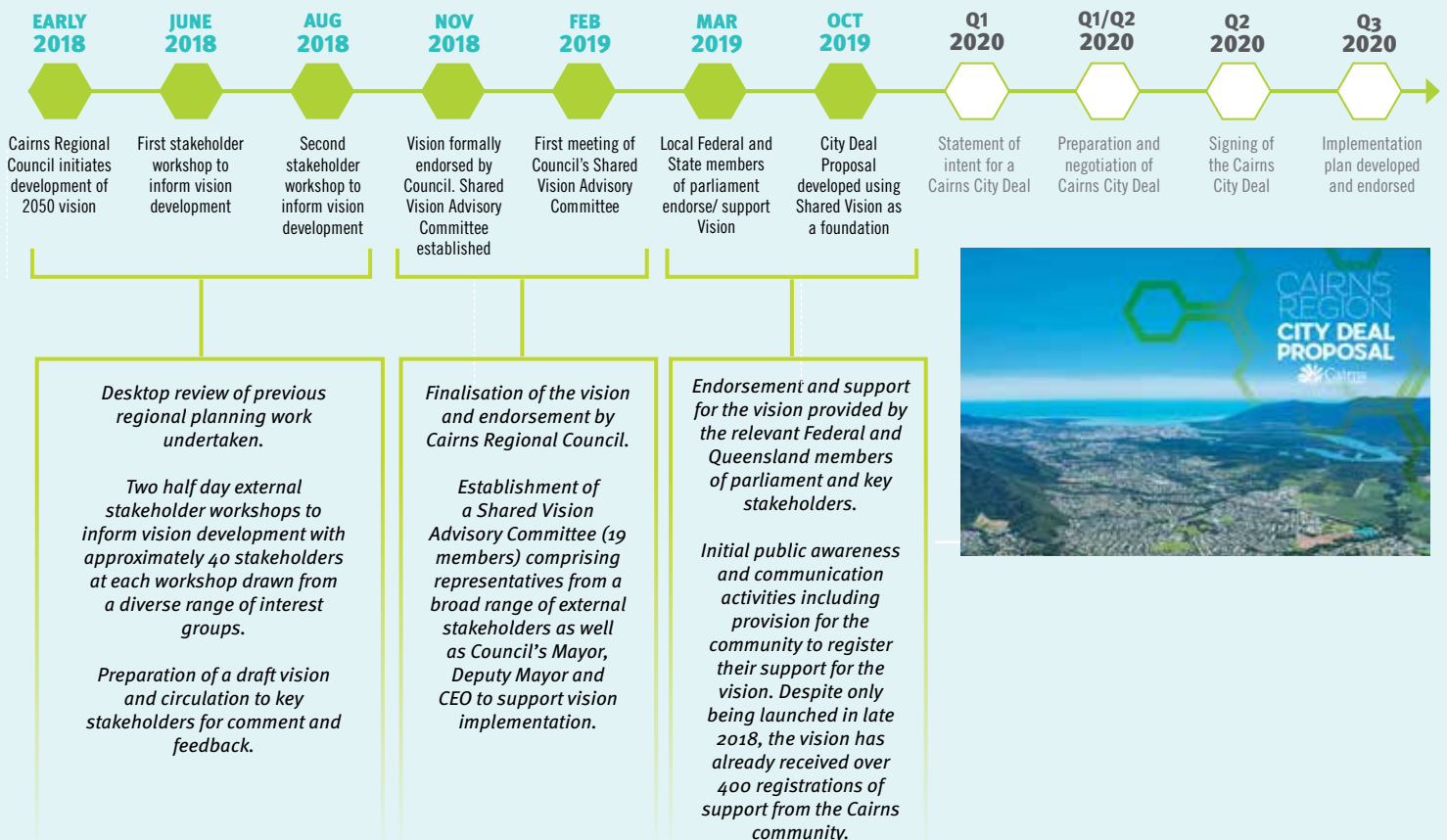
- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Indigenous Advancement Strategy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Pacific Step-up - Stepping up Australia's engagement with our Pacific family
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Smart Cities Plan (2016) and City Deals Policy/Program
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)



# A PROPOSAL BUILT ON A SHARED VISION

The City Deal proposal is underpinned by a significant body of work and consultation led by Cairns Regional Council.

Throughout 2018, Council dedicated significant resources to the development of a shared vision for Cairns. The Cairns 2050 Shared Vision ([www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision-2050](http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision-2050)) provides the framework to deliver long term economic prosperity and liveability for the Cairns community. The vision was developed with two clear objectives in mind: as a basis for direct advocacy to both the State and Federal governments; and as a foundation from which to negotiate and secure a City Deal for Cairns. The timeline provides an overview of the milestones achieved to date as well as the next steps required to secure a City Deal for Cairns.



# Cairns Gallery Precinct

*An iconic new cultural tourism project driving increased visitation, tourism diversification and regional employment*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

\$13.3 million funding commitment towards the estimated capital cost (\$39.8 million) of the Cairns Gallery Precinct as part of the proposed tripartite (Federal, State and Local Governments) funding arrangement for this iconic cultural and tourism infrastructure project.

Cairns is recognised as the Arts and Culture Capital of Northern Australia. The Cairns Gallery Precinct is a project that strongly supports this status and complements recent regional investment in arts and cultural facilities, events and programs. These include the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF), Cairns Performing Arts Centre (CPAC), Munro Martin Parklands (MMP) and Centre of Contemporary Arts (CoCA) refurbishment among others. The project will transform and connect three heritage listed buildings in the Cairns City Centre (the Cairns Art Gallery, 'Old' Court House and former Mulgrave Shire Council offices) and establish a new world class gallery building to create a dynamic and unique gallery precinct with benefits for both the local community and domestic and international visitors.

The project would have a particularly strong connection to the region's Indigenous community and also links/aligns with the National Indigenous Heritage Centre proposal that is outlined on page 32 of this document. The project would also broaden the region's tourism offer and enhance liveability within our community.

A significant proportion of Cairns' population identify as First Nations peoples. Cairns is also the principal connection point for the exchange and celebration of Indigenous art and culture from communities throughout Cape York and the Torres Strait. The Cairns and Great

Barrier Reef region is home to Australia's highest proportion of Indigenous Australians and its greatest diversity of Indigenous cultures. Community demand for the arts, the burgeoning local creative sector, the opportunity to showcase more Indigenous arts, and the need to diversify our tourism offering all contribute to the need for increased scale and diversity of Cairns' visual arts infrastructure.

Establishment of the precinct will also have significant positive impacts on jobs and economic growth. In addition to the significant economic impact and employment created during construction, once operational, the project will add \$20.7 million per annum to the regional economy (Gross Regional Product) and support 177 ongoing full time jobs through its direct operation and induced tourism expenditure. An independent and comprehensive business case for the project has been completed utilising funding provided by the Queensland Government.

The business case supports the case for project investment with the preferred project option having a Benefits to Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1.19 and a Net Present Value (NPV) of \$13.3 million. Cairns Regional Council is calling for a tripartite funding arrangement to construct and establish the precinct with Federal, State and Local (Council) Governments each contributing one third of the project's total capital cost of \$39.8 million.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Indigenous Advancement Strategy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)



# Cairns University Hospital

*Investing in the infrastructure and services required to keep our community healthy*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Confirmation of the \$60 million announced previously for James Cook University's Cairns Tropical Enterprise Centre (CTEC). Advocacy support to help secure \$100 million in funding from the Queensland Government to establish the Cairns Health and Innovation Precinct (CHIP) and allocation of 80 additional places within James Cook University's Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery programs.



Health and wellbeing are critical foundations to a community's quality of life and are essential if communities are to continue to grow and prosper. The Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (CHHHS) is the FNQ region's largest employer with approximately 6,000 staff delivering a wide range of hospital and health services across the region. The Cairns Hospital is a critical facility within the CHHHS network and caters for approximately 100,000 patient admissions every year. The hospital also deals with a diverse range of health and wellbeing needs of the regional community including the region's significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

Expansion of the facilities and status of the Cairns Hospital, as well as investment in the broader regional services managed by the CHHHS, will be required to meet the future needs of a growing regional population. The region's unique demographics, including significant visitor and Indigenous populations, are also key considerations when planning for the future health needs of Cairns.

The aim is for Cairns Hospital to become a university hospital within

the medium term and for the hospital to continue to expand the higher level of services offered locally. For this objective to be realised, facilities need to be developed which support clinical research and education. The establishment of James Cook University's Cairns Tropical Enterprise Centre (CTEC) is a critical step in the Cairns Hospital achieving university status. The CTEC project has already received a federal funding commitment of \$60 million. The proposed Cairns Health and Innovation Precinct (CHIP) is another piece of critical infrastructure which also supports this initiative and will complement the CTEC facility. A \$100 million commitment is actively being sought from the Queensland Government to enable the design and construction of the CHIP to progress.

The allocation of additional places within James Cook University's Medicine and Dentistry school will also be required to support the hospital achieving university status. Specifically, 80 additional places (50 Commonwealth Supported Places and 30 International Places) within James Cook University's Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery programs will be required.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)





# Cairns Road Network Projects

*Investing in an integrated road network that will support the future economic prosperity, liveability, safety and resilience of the Cairns and FNQ community*

## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Extension of the National Land Transport Network from Draper Street (just south of the Cairns City Centre) to Smithfield and confirmation of the \$287 million in Federal funding allocated to enhancements on this road corridor.

\$21 million for a Strategic Assessment of Service Requirements, Preliminary Evaluation and Business Case development for the Kuranda Range Road corridor to address significant safety, capacity and reliability issues on this strategic road link between Cairns, the Atherton Tablelands and beyond.

Confirmation of the \$180 million commitment from the Federal Government towards the Cairns Southern Access Corridor Stage 5 (Foster Road Intersection) project.

Advocacy support from the Federal Government to secure an investment of \$370 million from the Queensland Government for the upgrade of the Cairns Western Arterial Road.



The road networks both within Cairns and connecting Cairns to regions located to the north, south and west are critical enablers for the regional economy. An effective road transport network contributes to the region's liveability by facilitating efficient travel both within region and to/from outside the region for economic, leisure and social purposes. Safety for all modes of transport is an important consideration as is the resilience of the region's road network to weather events and flooding. There are seven key road network projects (three of which are already fully funded and

underway) that are critical to the delivery of an integrated road transport network for Cairns and to support enhanced connectivity with the surrounding region. The projects all contribute to the priorities contained in the Queensland Government's Far North Regional Transport Plan (Draft) 2018 and a number also align with the Federal Government's Roads of Strategic Importance initiative as they facilitate efficient freight connectivity to the Cairns Seaport and Cairns Airport. Each project is depicted in the adjacent diagram with further commentary in the paragraphs that follow.



— Smithfield Bypass\*

— Kuranda Range Road

— National Highway 1 Draper Street to Smithfield

— Cairns Western Arterial Road (CWAR)

— Cairns Southern Access Corridor Stage 4: Kate St to Aumuller St\*

○ Cairns Southern Access Corridor Stage 5: Foster Road Intersection

— Cairns Southern Access Corridor Stage 3: Edmonton to Gordonvale\*

# KEY PROJECTS

\*denotes road projects already funded and currently underway

# Cairns Road Network Priority Projects



## NATIONAL HIGHWAY 1 DRAPER STREET TO SMITHFIELD

The National Land Transport Network (NLTN) currently terminates at the corner of Comport and Draper Streets (just south of the Cairns City Centre). The road corridor provides key connectivity to the Cairns Seaport, Cairns City Centre, Cairns Airport and Smithfield (including the Cairns Campus of James Cook University). Significant investment in capacity enhancements to this road corridor are required to ensure the efficient movement of freight and people particularly to the city's air and sea ports. Population growth in Cairns' northern suburbs has also seen increased commuter congestion along this route. The Queensland Transport Minister has made a written request to the Federal Transport Minister for the extension of the NLTN to Smithfield as part of the Federal Government's NLTN Determination Review. Cairns Regional Council strongly supports this extension and is advocating to the Federal Government for its approval. Whilst the outcomes of the NLTN Determination Review have not yet been finalised, Council also welcomes the announcement of \$287 million in funding via the 2019-20 Federal Budget delivered in early April 2019 and is seeking further confirmation of this funding allocation in the 2020-21 Federal Budget. Council is also advocating to the Queensland Government for the \$72 million funding announcement made by them in relation to this project to be confirmed in the State Budget for 2020-21.

## KURANDA RANGE ROAD

The Kuranda Range Road links Smithfield to Kuranda and provides critical connectivity between Cairns, the Atherton Tablelands (including Mareeba), Cape York and the Gulf of Carpentaria. The FNQ region's agricultural sector is a key driver of the need for an improved Kuranda Range Road. With a sector value of \$2.95 billion and export value of \$1.81 billion and potential for significant further growth (particularly if the region's enormous water and arable land resources are further developed), a solution to the safety, efficiency and capacity issues are needed to unlock the sector's full economic potential. An Impact Assessment Study of the road by Maunsell McIntyre (now AECOM) in 2000, identified that the road's inadequacies contributed to poor safety, poor economic performance (travel times, vehicle operating costs and inability to accommodate freight-efficient vehicles) and poor reliability.

18 years on, these issues have not been adequately addressed with significant investment now needed to deliver increased capacity, improved safety and to enable the road to deliver its full economic potential for the region. This road corridor has strong alignment with the objectives of the Federal Government's Roads of Strategic Importance initiative given the significant agricultural resources and potential located on the Atherton

Tablelands and beyond. An updated and comprehensive review is required to determine the best way to unlock this road corridor's economic potential whilst at the same time addressing the current safety and reliability issues.

The Queensland Government has announced \$1.25 million towards a planning project in this regard. In addition to this planning project, \$21 million is required to complete a Strategic Assessment of Service Requirements, Preliminary Evaluation and Business Case development to fully investigate options to address the service requirements. The ultimate solution needs to be included within the National Land Transport Network to ensure there is a clear partnership between the State and Federal Governments for future investment in this road corridor. It is noted that this road is included in the Cairns to Darwin corridor under the Federal Government's Roads of Strategic Importance initiative.

### CAIRNS SOUTHERN ACCESS CORRIDOR – STAGE 5: FOSTER ROAD INTERSECTION

The Cairns Southern Access - Stage 5 project is part of the National Land Transport Network and involves a grade separation upgrade at the Bruce Highway and Foster Road intersection in Cairns. This project will build on the existing commitments made along the Cairns Southern Access Corridor (including the Stage 3 and Stage 4 projects currently underway). The project has an estimated capital cost of \$225 million and will improve capacity and traffic flow including movements in and out of nearby suburban streets. It will also improve road safety by reducing congestion around the intersection and facilitate the efficient flow of passenger and freight traffic. An announcement of \$180 million in Federal funding was made in the 2019-20 Federal Budget delivered in early April 2019 and Council is calling on this funding announcement to be reconfirmed in the 2020-21 Federal Budget. Whilst a \$45 million funding allocation to this project has been included in the Queensland Government's Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2019-20 to 2022-23, Council is advocating for this funding allocation to be confirmed in the State Budget for 2020-21.

### CAIRNS WESTERN ARTERIAL ROAD

The Cairns Western Arterial Road provides an important linkage to the north, west and south of Cairns via its connections to the Captain Cook Highway, Kuranda Range Road and Bruce Highway respectively. The road corridor alleviates traffic flows through the Cairns City Centre by providing an alternate 'bypass' route to the National Highway 1 route that traverses through the Cairns City via Sheridan Street. Whilst elements of the Cairns Western Arterial Road are 'dual laned' in each direction, further investment is required to ensure this road corridor can deliver to its full potential supporting the efficient and safe movement of freight and people. Cairns Regional Council has identified a range of upgrades on this road corridor that would significantly enhance its capacity and improve connectivity and safety. Projects include 'dual laning' of the northern section of the road, through to upgrades to McCoombe Street to deliver improved connectivity with the Bruce Highway to the south. An estimated investment of \$370 million from the Queensland Government is required to deliver these enhancements and unlock this road corridor's full potential. Council is advocating directly to the Queensland Government to secure this critical investment and would welcome the advocacy support of the Federal Government in this regard.



### COMMITTED ROAD PROJECTS

The four projects mentioned previously will complement the following three projects already funded and currently underway in the Cairns region:

#### SMITHFIELD BYPASS

The 3.8-kilometre-long bypass between the McGregor Road roundabout and the Cairns Western Arterial Road and Captain Cook Highway roundabout will provide an alternative route to the Captain Cook Highway. The project is currently underway and scheduled for completion in late 2020.

#### BRUCE HIGHWAY CAIRNS SOUTHERN ACCESS CORRIDOR STAGE 3 EDMONTON TO GORDONVALE

The project will deliver significant enhancements on this road corridor including the 'dual laning' of the Bruce Highway in both directions between Edmonton and Gordonvale. Early procurement works have started and construction is expected to commence in early 2020 with project completion scheduled for mid-2023.

#### BRUCE HIGHWAY CAIRNS SOUTHERN ACCESS CORRIDOR STAGE 4 KATE STREET TO AUMULLER STREET

This project will deliver capacity improvements to the Southern Access Corridor between Kate Street and Aumuller Street and additional improvements from Comport Street to Kenny Street. The project is underway and expected to be completed in mid-2021.

### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Roads of Strategic Importance Initiative

# CQUniversity City Campus and Impact Plan

*Delivering improved tertiary education access for the Cairns and FNQ community and supporting international education industry development and Cairns City Centre activation*



CQUniversity is undergoing rapid growth in the Cairns region. By adopting a collaborative partnership approach to expansion, CQUniversity has been able to help build capacity across a range of industries and community initiatives. In 2017, CQUniversity released a community impact plan consisting of six primary projects. Most of the projects in the 2017 plan were completed (to varying degrees) by the end of 2018, requiring the development of an updated CQUniversity 2019 Cairns Community Impact Plan. Three projects identified in this impact plan are outlined over the following pages.



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

\$50 million towards the establishment of a new permanent city centre campus, \$25 million (with a further \$20 million to be sourced from industry) towards Asia Pacific Aviation Hub development and \$25 million towards the establishment of Queensland's first University High School.

## PERMANENT NEW CITY CENTRE CAMPUS

CQUniversity seeks \$50 million to establish a permanent, purpose-built CBD campus capable of accommodating 2,500+ students. The new, permanent campus will deliver an expanded range of training, education and research offerings that will diversify and grow the local economy and skilled workforce, while stimulating greater international student numbers in the Cairns CBD. This will cement CQUniversity's presence in Cairns with a permanent CBD campus capable of absorbing forecast student growth, while galvanising Cairns' identity as an agile, innovative two-university city.

CQUniversity has witnessed tremendous growth in Cairns since first opening a modest study hub in 2012. Student numbers have grown persistently; averaging 20% year-on-year through to 2018, with a 30% leap in enrolments in the past 12 months alone. CQUniversity has approximately 1800 students currently. CQUniversity's growth is having a profound impact on the higher education participation rates of local students, narrowing the gap with metropolitan student participation rates. CQUniversity's current (leased) CBD campus is at capacity, with little flexibility

to absorb further growth. The nature of CQUniversity's current lease arrangement doesn't provide the stability or security CQUniversity needs for further investment and growth in Cairns.

CQUniversity requires a permanent, purpose-built CBD campus capable of accommodating 2,500+ students to continue being an educator of impact in Cairns. Community and industry engagement will be the defining philosophy of the new campus, with an 'open-door' campus model being employed. This will further help to engage local students from low socioeconomic and/or disadvantaged backgrounds – a student base of which CQUniversity outperforms every other Australian university in terms of enrolment proportion and student support. But most importantly, this permanent new campus will finally galvanise Cairns' identity as an agile, innovative two-university city with a highly skilled, professionalised workforce. This permanent new campus will give CQUniversity the security it needs to invest further in education in Cairns.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- National Strategy for International Education 2025
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Pacific Step-up - Stepping up Australia's engagement with our Pacific family
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)





## STAGE 2 AND 3 CQUNIVERSITY ASIA PACIFIC AVIATION HUB

CQUniversity seeks \$45 million in funding (\$10 million government and \$35 million public private partnership) for the second and third stages of its ambitious Asia-Pacific Aviation Hub working in partnership with Cairns Airport. This funding would allow CQUniversity to secure a second hangar at the Cairns International Airport, new laboratory facilities including specialist space for Aviation Accidents Forensics, new flight simulators including a high-fidelity, world class flight simulator capable of attracting global commercial flight training business, and the roll-out of new aviation courses: Bachelor of Accident Forensics, Bachelor of Airline and Airport Management, Bachelor of Airworthiness, and Aviation Masters and Research Programs.

As a direct result of CQUniversity's commitment and investment into this emerging industry to date, Cairns is on-track to become a leader for world-class aviation training in the Asia Pacific region. The city is a strategic gateway point to the Asia Pacific; a region of rapidly growing populations and economies. The city's key role in airborne freight and passenger traffic between Northern Australia and the Asia Pacific is undeniable, with direct links to China, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Indonesia.

The international airport recorded over 5.2 million passenger movements in 2018 – an increase of 26% over ten years, with international passenger movements increasing by 4% in the past year alone. At the same time, the number of airlines operating in Australia increased by 28% to 55 in the five years to 2017, with the Asia Pacific region experiencing a similar boom in its aviation industries. Boeing is predicting a shortfall of 810,000 commercial airline pilots over the next 20 years, with 261,000 specifically required to service the Asia Pacific region. With Australia being a preferred destination for qualifications in aviation studies, Cairns is the perfect base for this new endeavour.

CQUniversity has been investing in new facilities and courses to position Cairns as a leader for world-class aviation training in the Asia Pacific region in recent years. Stage 1 investment (\$5 million) saw CQUniversity transform the Tom McDonald Building at Cairns International Airport into the CQUniversity Asia-Pacific Aviation Hub. CQUniversity's investment included a new flight simulator and associated software, and the development of two new aviation courses: Bachelor of Aviation (Flight Operations) and Graduate Diploma in Aviation (Flight Operations).

The combined second and third stages of the project seek \$45 million, comprising:

**\$10 million** (Government funding) for Stage 2. This includes new laboratory facilities to provide specialist space for human factors research, new flight simulators, and the roll-out of new aviation courses including Bachelor of Accident Forensics, Bachelor of Airline and Airport Management, Bachelor of Airworthiness, and Aviation Masters and Research Programs.

**\$35 million** Stage 3 comprised of:

- \$15 million (Government funding) for a second hangar at Cairns International Airport including fit-out to deliver an Aviation Accidents Forensics Laboratory. This facility would enable CQUniversity to introduce its Bachelor of Accident Forensics course to Cairns for the first time.
- \$20 million (industry funding) from a commercial aviation partner to install a world-class high-fidelity flight simulator and associated software. These facilities would not only be used to train CQUniversity aviation students, but would attract pilots from the international aviation industry seeking higher-level commercial training opportunities.



## QUEENSLAND'S FIRST COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL



CQUniversity and Cairns State High School seek \$35 million in funding (\$25 million Federal and \$10 million State) to establish Queensland's first Comprehensive University High School. The funding will deliver new teaching facilities and comprehensive university educational offerings at Cairns State High School. This Cairns State High School/ CQUniversity Comprehensive University High School proposal delivers innovative education pathways and employment pipelines at fundamental levels. As a Queensland first, the Comprehensive University High School unites CQUniversity (Queensland's only dual-sector university delivering formal training across the broader VET/Degree spectrum) with Cairns State High School's school curriculum, courses and pedagogy.

The proposed Comprehensive University High School VET/Degree core programming focuses on the Sciences, Aerospace, Engineering, and Performing Arts disciplines supporting the government's STEAM agenda and encouraging more young people into areas of critical workforce need. By incorporating CQUniversity VET and Degree-level offerings and student support within the current school curriculum, students will commence VET/Degree qualifications at school with a continuous, seamless pathway to post-schooling study on site under an innovative Queensland first model.

A breakdown of the model's components, offerings and associated facilities include: Master plan; Trades, Engineering & Aerospace Centre of Excellence; Allied Health Laboratories; Centre of Excellence for Teaching; Arts Technologies Theatre; Centre for Cultures and Knowledges.



# Draper Road Water Treatment plant

*Supporting population and economic growth and effectively providing for the future urban water needs of the Cairns community*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Commitment from the Federal Government to join Council and the Queensland Government in a tripartite funding arrangement (one third each) for the capital cost of the Draper Road Water Treatment Plant and associated intake.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- National Water Industry Development Fund
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)

Security of supply of water for urban use will be critical if the Cairns region's population and economic growth potential are to be realised. The proposed project incorporates a new water treatment plant to be located on Council land near Draper Road, Gordonvale and the associated water intake infrastructure required to enable the plant to draw water from the Mulgrave River. The plant will also treat water from Behana Creek. It has been identified by Cairns Regional Council's Water Security Advisory Group (WSAG) as a key priority to meet the short to medium term water security needs of the Cairns community (Cairns Region Water Security). The capital cost of the project is estimated to be in the vicinity of \$210 million and is scheduled for construction in Council's capital works program over the four years ending 30 June 2026.

The Queensland Government Statistician's Office (QGSO) has recently released population projections for the period 2016 to 2041. These projections indicate that over 70% of Cairns' population growth forecast in the 25 years to 2041 is expected to occur in the area between Gordonvale and Cairns (Cairns South SA3 region). The Draper Road Water Treatment Plant and the associated intake will be critical pieces of infrastructure required to effectively service this population growth. In addition, the Queensland Government has also recently announced the Cairns South State Development Area (SDA). The 856 hectare SDA was established to provide land for regionally significant industrial development and to facilitate economic growth, diversification and job creation within the Cairns economy.

The Draper Road Water Treatment Plant

will be a key piece of infrastructure required to support effective SDA development.

Recognising the significance of the capital investment required to deliver this project and the critical nature of the region's long-term water security, Cairns Regional Council has recently lodged a Stage 1 (Problem Identification and Prioritisation) Application with Infrastructure Australia. This application seeks to have the Cairns Region Water Security added to Infrastructure Australia's Infrastructure Priority List as an initiative of national significance. In support of this application, Council commissioned independent advisory firm Marsden Jacob and Associates (MJA) to quantify the costs associated with not appropriately addressing Cairns' future urban water needs. The MJA analysis assessed the welfare costs associated with increased water restrictions as well as the reputational impacts to the region's tourism industry and increased operational costs to Council of a 'do minimum' scenario. MJA estimated the monetised cost (2019 NPV of costs incurred over a 40 year period) to range between \$286.9 and \$626.3 million.

Council is continuing to progress planning for the project with treatment process, testing, concept design, procurement model selection and project manager and team selection expected to occur in 2020 and 2021. Given the critical nature of this project and the significant capital investment required, Council is calling on the Federal Government to join Council and the Queensland Government in a tripartite funding arrangement (one third each) for the project's capital cost.



# HMAS Cairns & Cairns Seaport

*Supporting the implementation of the Federal Government's Pacific Step-up policy, the future development of the Cairns Seaport and the Cairns marine industry sector more broadly*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

\$170 million across the forward estimates for the Navy Capability Infrastructure Sub-program upgrades to the HMAS Cairns naval base in readiness for the homeporting of four new offshore patrol vessels.

Designation of Cairns as a Regional Maintenance Centre of strategic importance in the delivery of naval maintenance and sustainment services.

Funding allocations across the forward estimates for the HMAS Cairns Mid Term Refresh and HMAS Cairns Redevelopment projects.

Funding allocations to support Stages 2 and 3 of upgrades to the Cairns Marine Maintenance Precinct.

Changes to the Coastal Trading (Revitalising Australian Shipping) Act 2012 so the chartering of foreign superyachts in Australian waters attracts GST on charter value only (not vessel value).

Cairns Seaport is a critical enabler for the city of Cairns and the broader FNQ region. The Port is also strategically located from a naval, marine logistics and marine tourism perspective with close physical proximity to Asia, PNG and the Pacific. Importantly, the Port is part of the community, and it is infrastructure of State and National importance. The Port has served as the natural consolidation and redistribution centre for supplies shipped to the coastal communities north of Cairns as well as the Torres Strait Islands and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Cruise shipping, freight and logistics, marine maintenance, commercial fishing, super yachts, navy and marine based tourism are just some of the many users and stakeholders reliant on the Seaport.

Cairns Regional Council is calling on the Federal Government to support the future development of the Seaport through the strategic upgrade of the HMAS Cairns naval base and delivery of a number of other policy and investment priorities.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Australian Defence Force Posture Review (2012)
- Defence White Paper (2016)
- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Pacific Step-up - Stepping up Australia's engagement with our Pacific family
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)







## HMAS CAIRNS

The HMAS Cairns Naval base is situated in Portsmouth on the northern shore of the Trinity Inlet. With responsibility extending from Thursday Island to Rockhampton, the base has approximately 900 civilian and Navy personnel and is the homeport for nine Navy vessels. HMAS Cairns' primary responsibility is to provide maintenance, logistic and administrative support for Cairns based units and to provide refit and training support for neighbouring Pacific Island nations (Pacific Class Patrol Boats). The strategic importance of the HMAS Cairns base has been underlined by the recent announcement of a partnership between the US and Australia to redevelop the Lombrum naval base on Manus Island. In addition, four of the Navy's 12 new Arafura Class Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) are expected to be homeported at HMAS Cairns.

Continued investment in the HMAS Cairns base not only strengthens Australia's border security and defence capabilities but also has significant flow on economic benefits to the Cairns region and supports skills development in the marine maintenance sector. The economic

contribution from this sector is relatively stable and not subject to the impact of fluctuations in economic conditions and other factors such as interest and foreign exchange rates. As a result, this sector plays an important role in supporting regional economic resilience. Cairns Regional Council is calling for Federal Government commitments in the following areas:

- Navy Capability Infrastructure Sub-program – As part of this program, there are a series of upgrades (both wharf and land side) planned for the HMAS Cairns naval base in readiness for the base homeporting four of the new OPVs. Works at the HMAS Cairns base are expected to commence in late 2022 and run to 2025 with an anticipated project value of around \$170 million.
- Regional Maintenance Centre Designation– Cairns has a well-established naval and marine maintenance sector with a broad cross section of facilities and capabilities. The sector currently services naval vessels from a number of Australian bases as well as the United States and Pacific Islands. The Cairns Seaport's physical proximity to Papua New Guinea and the broader Asia Pacific region means it is strategically located to serve as a naval maintenance and sustainment base. Cairns should be designated as a Regional Maintenance Centre (RMC) of strategic importance and be the primary sustainment and maintenance base for appropriate naval vessels operating in the region. Such a designation and associated investment will continue to ensure Cairns maintains and develops a regional workforce with the capacity and capability to maintain naval vessels.
- HMAS Cairns Mid Term Refresh - This proposed \$22 million project will provide mid-life refurbishments to critical infrastructure at the base as part of the North Queensland Mid Term Refresh Program. Subject to Government and Parliamentary approvals, construction is planned to commence in early 2021 and be completed by early 2023.
- HMAS Cairns Redevelopment – A further (and significant) redevelopment of the HMAS Cairns base has been earmarked for the second half of the decade with an anticipated project value of circa \$313 million.

## CAIRNS SEAPORT



### Cairns Marine Maintenance Precinct

As highlighted previously, Cairns has an established track record in the delivery of marine maintenance and sustainment services with a skilled workforce and industry base operating within the Cairns Marine Maintenance Precinct. A Stage 1 funding package of \$24 million was announced in April 2019 supporting upgrades at three of the precinct's key facilities: BSE Cairns Slipway, Tropical Reef Shipyard and Norship Marine. Stage 1 works are currently underway. Further funding of \$125 million is being sought to support Stages 2 and 3 of the Cairns Marine Maintenance Precinct upgrade to complement the planned redevelopment and expansion works at HMAS Cairns as well as improving the sector's capacity and competitiveness more broadly.



### Superyachts

Superyachts are defined in the international market as luxury vessels with a master and crew, carrying 12 guests or fewer (not including crew), and with a minimum length of 24 metres. The Queensland Government's Queensland Superyacht Strategy 2018-23 indicates that superyachts in Australian waters are estimated to have a capital value of between \$4.7 billion and \$10.9 billion. Cairns is a major superyacht destination and has significant capabilities in superyacht maintenance, refit and repair. In 2018, 59 superyachts visited Cairns with an average length of stay of approximately 36 days (source: Superyacht Group Great Barrier Reef).

On 5 December 2019, the Special Recreational Vessels Bill passed through the Federal Parliament. The passage of the Bill will ensure that foreign superyachts chartered in national waters will be charged GST on the value of the charter only. Previously, foreign superyachts operating in national waters had to be imported to be chartered resulting in the imposition of GST on vessel value plus duty where applicable. This legislative change will be a significant enabler for the industry increasing the sector's international competitiveness and supporting further economic and employment growth. Implementation of the other policy priorities contained in the Queensland Government's Queensland Superyacht Strategy 2018-23 would complement this recent legislative change and further support sector growth.



### Seaport Master Plan

Master planning is also an important initiative that will inform the long-term strategic direction of the Seaport and identify key priorities for future investment. Ports North has commenced the Master Planning 2019 project, which will look at the 30-year period to 2050. The master planning will inform land use and guide infrastructure and operational decisions in a sensible and balanced way. The project will consider economically feasible future growth pathways, the protection of environmental values, and ensure the region's ports are growing compatibly with the communities in which they are located. Protection of World Heritage values associated with the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area will also be a key consideration. This master planning is expected to be completed in the first half of 2020. The master planning will guide future infrastructure investment at the Cairns Seaport in the context of broader port capabilities and capacity throughout the region. For any such infrastructure investment, the wider economic benefits of future expansion of the port should be considered including investigating innovative funding and finance opportunities subject to relevant business cases. The master plan may highlight future opportunities for the Federal Government to further support Seaport development through investment and/or policy change.

# National Indigenous Heritage Centre

*Establishing a centre of national significance to preserve, showcase and celebrate Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, heritage and culture*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Funding to support initial concept development and business case preparation for a National Indigenous Heritage Centre located in Cairns.

Cairns has the highest proportion of population that is Indigenous of any city in Australia. Cairns is also the only region with direct connectivity to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Protecting and preserving our Indigenous history, heritage and culture is not only an essential part of our community's identity, but it also provides employment opportunities and social benefits for the region's First Peoples.

One of the great gaps that exists within our national community has been an inability to reconcile our past and to unite, accept and embrace a 'many cultures one country' philosophy. This could be demonstrated through the establishment of a National Indigenous Heritage Centre (of art, history, research, dance, language, education, story-telling and more) that unites all Australians.

Cairns/TNQ provides an authentic location for the establishment of such a National Indigenous Heritage Centre. The centre would become an iconic part of Australia's heritage and culture and ultimately achieve similar status to

attractions such as the Australian War Memorial and Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame.

The National Indigenous Heritage Centre would aim to:

- Protect, celebrate and preserve the unique cultural heritage of Australia's Indigenous peoples.
- Embrace a 'many cultures, one country, one world' philosophy.
- Create Indigenous business enterprise and employment opportunities.
- Be an engaging, 'must see' world-class attraction for locals and tourists.
- Be a key regional enabler supporting the promotion and sharing of Indigenous culture and heritage within the Far North Queensland region including Cape York and the Torres Strait.

This project also links/aligns with the Cairns Gallery Precinct proposal that is outlined on page 14 of this document.

To progress this important initiative, funding will be required to support the initial concept development and business case preparation.

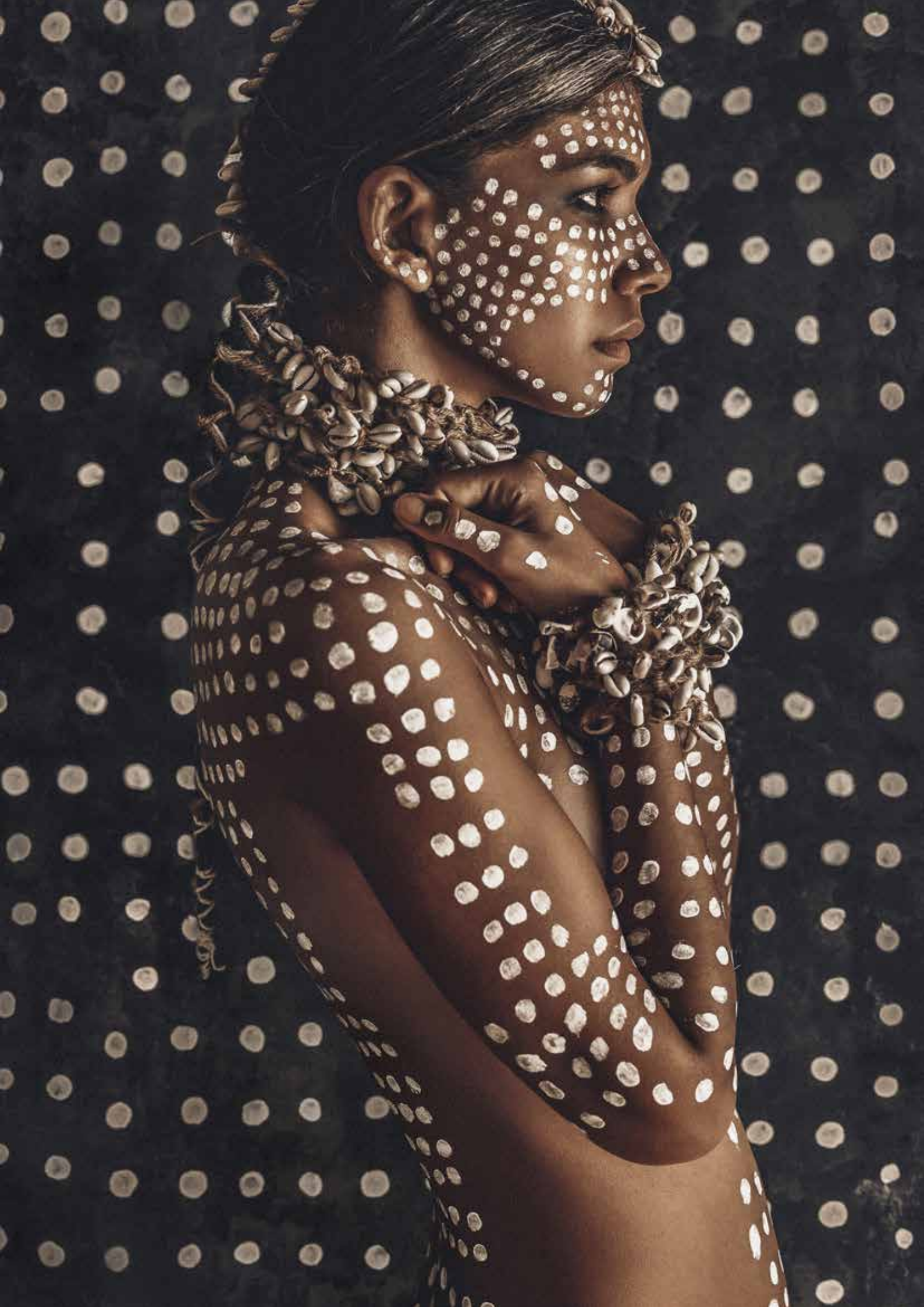
## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Indigenous Advancement Strategy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)







# Northern Beaches Leisure Trail

*An iconic shared-use walking and cycling link connecting Palm Cove to the Cairns City, which delivers substantial economic and liveability benefits to the Cairns community*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Provision of funding towards the estimated \$20 million to \$30 million total capital cost of delivering the remaining connectivity components of the Northern Beaches Leisure Trail.

The Northern Beaches Leisure Trail (NBLT) has been a long-term priority of Cairns Regional Council for some time. The ultimate aim of the project is to provide a shared-use (walking and cycling) link between Palm Cove and the Cairns City including connecting all of the Northern Beaches suburbs located between those two destinations. The project has significant benefits including:

- Improved safety through the provision of a fully off road route, particularly between communities and for local school student movements.
- Increased leisure opportunities and attractors to foreshore facilities at the beach suburbs.
- Development of inter and intra suburb pedestrian/cycling connections.
- Delivery of an iconic tourist route and promotion of other local tourism opportunities such as Cattana Wetlands, Earl Hill, Palm Cove, and eventually the Wangetti trail.

Conceptual work on the preferred alignment of the NBLT started in earnest in 2014 culminating in 2015 with a preferred alignment having a large percentage of the path along the foreshore from Machans Beach to Palm Cove.

A substantial part of the NBLT has been fully constructed with the beachfront trail elements of all Northern Beaches suburbs completed including Palm Cove, Clifton Beach,

Kewarra Beach, Trinity Beach, Yorkeys Knob, Holloways Beach, and Machans Beach. The connection between Palm Cove and Clifton Beach is nearing completion. Planning is well underway for both the Kewarra Beach to Trinity Beach and Machans Beach to Holloways Beach connections.

Planning has also commenced on the section of the NBLT south from Machans Beach to link with the existing Aeroglen and Stratford cycling and walking paths. This link will traverse across road reserve through Machans Beach, and zoned Esplanade along the northern bank of the Barron River. A safe crossing of the Barron River is anticipated to be provided as part of the upgrade to the Captain Cook Highway from Aeroglen to the Caravonica roundabout.

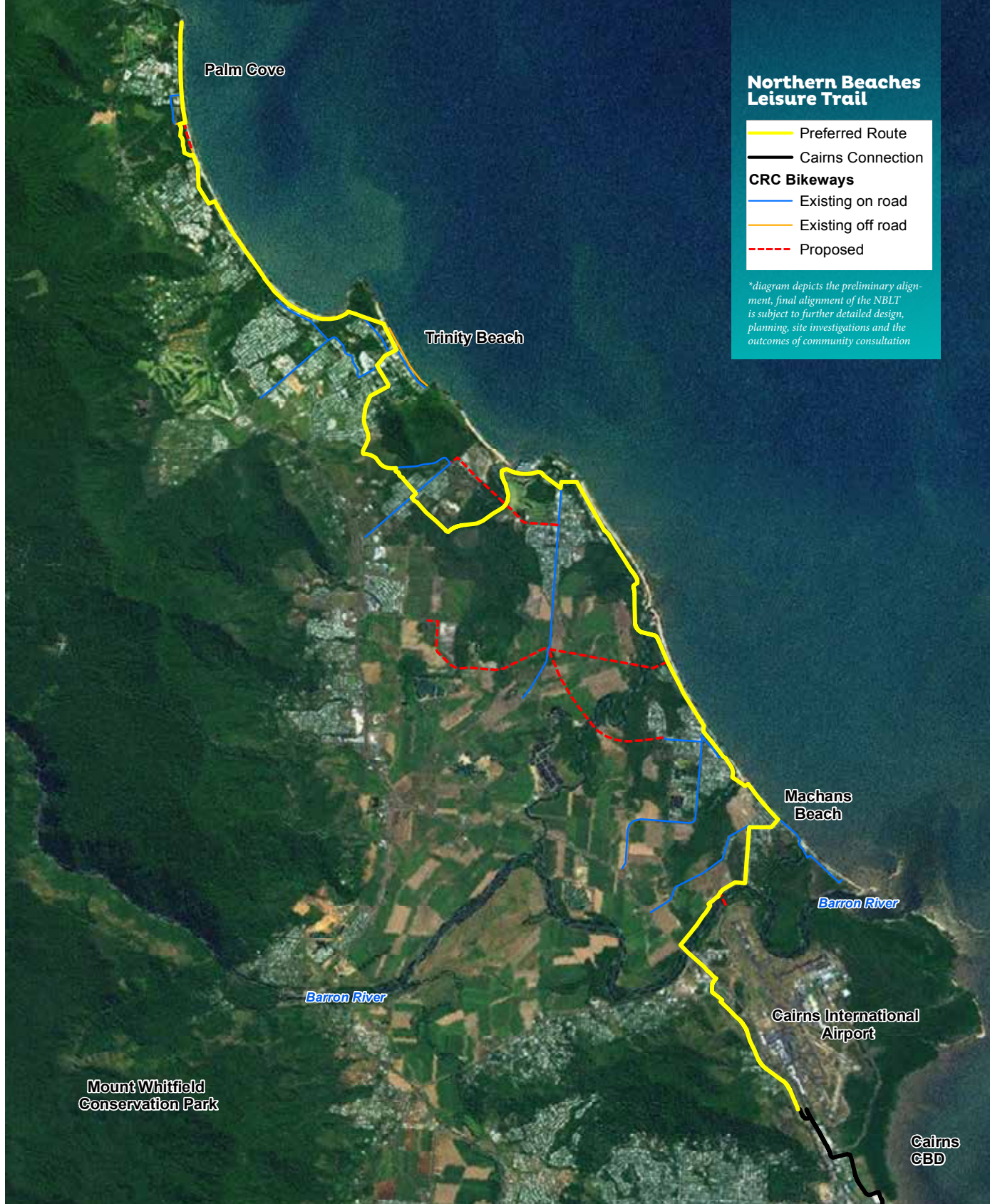
Once completed, significant connectivity will be provided with safe, mostly off-road cycling and pedestrian access from Palm Cove through to the Cairns City Centre. The NBLT will also connect to the existing paths through Stratford and Freshwater to Redlynch all the way to Redlynch Valley Estate. This will provide enhanced commuter routes for workers and school students to a number of schools, additional passive and active recreational opportunities, and provide new tourist options for visitors staying in either the Cairns City Centre or Northern Beaches.

The final alignment of the NBLT continues to evolve as staged works progress and the results of further

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)



planning, design, site investigations and community consultation become available. Whilst large elements of the foreshore sections of the route are either completed or in progress, funding to deliver significant elements of connectivity between suburbs (in particular Clifton Beach to Kewarra Beach, Kewarra Beach to Trinity Beach,

Trinity Beach to Yorkeys Knob, Yorkeys Knob to Holloways Beach and Machans Beach to the existing cycle/pedestrian network to the south of the Barron River) has not yet been secured and will be necessary to fully realise the project's significant benefits. Whilst planning and design continues, Council estimates the cost of these remaining connectivity

works (which include a number of bridges, boardwalks etc.) to be in the vicinity of \$20 million to \$30 million. Council is advocating to both the Queensland and Federal Governments to commit capital funding to support the delivery of this important project for both the Cairns community and the region's tourism economy.

# Nullinga Dam

*A multigenerational infrastructure project that will unlock the full potential of the FNQ region’s agricultural sector and support the long-term urban water security of Cairns*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Join Council in advocating to the Queensland Government for the project to proceed and a Federal Government commitment for the provision of joint (with the Queensland Government) capital funding to support project delivery.

Water security and quality are key priorities underpinning the future development of the Cairns region and Northern Australia. With 60% of Queensland’s annual water run-off and significant tracts of underdeveloped arable land, the FNQ region’s agricultural potential is enormous. To unlock this potential, it is imperative that there be investment in the infrastructure required to harness the region’s water resources. Urban water security is also an important strategic issue that needs to be addressed in order to meet the challenges of a Cairns population that is expected to nearly double in the next 30 years. Based on historical growth rates, the FNQ region’s population is expected to reach half a million people by the middle of the 21st century.

The proposed Nullinga Dam project, located on the Walsh River on the Atherton Tablelands with a capacity of 518,000 ML and an annual yield of up to 74,000 ML, has been proposed as a critical piece of water supply infrastructure that will:

- Stimulate and expand irrigated agriculture in the region by supplementing existing water supplies.
- Support the long term urban water security necessary to cater for the Cairns region’s growing population.
- Support further expansion of the region’s export and distribution industries thereby contributing to job growth and increased economic activity across the FNQ region more generally.

A detailed business case for the project was undertaken by Building Queensland and released in August 2019. Whilst the business case concluded that the dam is ‘not economically nor financially viable’, Council is concerned that this conclusion was based on flawed assumptions including:

- The adoption of a 30-year appraisal period for project benefits - dams are multigenerational projects that deliver benefits over centuries not decades.
- No value placed on urban benefit – despite the dam being part of Cairns’ long-term water security strategy, no value was placed on the urban benefits the dam would deliver.
- Calculation of agricultural benefit – the

agricultural benefit of the project was calculated based on what users would be willing to pay for water entitlements rather than quantifying the economic benefits (both direct and indirect) the increased agricultural production enabled by the dam would deliver.

- No value placed on community resilience benefits – Nullinga Dam would provide significant risk mitigation against the potential impacts of climate change and drought. No value was placed on this benefit.
- Project capital cost – The project’s estimated capital cost increased from \$323 million in the preliminary business case to between \$714 million and \$1,068 million in the detailed business case (an increase of between 121% and 231%). This substantial increase has contributed significantly to the business case conclusions and warrants independent review and verification.

Perhaps most importantly, the business case was premised on a full cost recovery approach where the costs of dam establishment and operation are to be fully recovered from water users. Investment in critical long-term infrastructure projects such as Nullinga Dam must be part of the core role of State and Federal governments. This direct investment approach is adopted for other items of economic enabling infrastructure such as roads where governments invest significant sums of money without recovery from users. Governments benefit indirectly from enabling infrastructure projects such as dams and roads through the additional economic benefits they generate which ultimately results in additional tax revenue, increased employment (contributing to reduced unemployment benefits) and the benefits improved economic prosperity and liveability contribute to sustainable and thriving regional communities.

On this basis, Council is calling on the Queensland Government to commit to proceeding with the Nullinga Dam project. Council is seeing advocacy support from the Federal Government in this regard as well as a commitment to provide capital funding for the project in partnership with the Queensland Government.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- National Water Industry Development Fund
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region’s 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)



# Population and Migration Strategy

*Supporting the growth of a skilled population base to deliver economic outcomes in Northern Australia*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Completion of a detailed population and migration strategy for the Cairns region to deliver the skilled population base needed to unlock the region's full potential.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)

In August 2018, the Australian population reached 25 million people. Recent population growth in Australia has significantly exceeded forecasts, which has resulted in an infrastructure deficit and settlement imbalance particularly in major capital cities such as Sydney and Melbourne where the majority of population growth has been concentrated. This rapid population growth presents significant challenges in major cities such as dealing with increased traffic congestion and delivering new infrastructure in already heavily populated areas. Policy that supports population growth and migration to regional cities such as Cairns can be part of a solution, which not only relieves the pressure on our nation's major capitals, but also supports continued economic development in Australia's regions and Northern Australia in particular.

Cairns already has a track record of sustained population growth with an average annual growth rate of 2.3% achieved in the 15 years to 2016, above both the Queensland and national population growth rates over the same period. Growth has largely been driven by net economic (employment) migration to the region with superior quality of life and liveability also supporting population attraction and retention. Today, Cairns and the FNQ region have a population of 165,000 and 286,000 respectively. But the continued growth of a skilled population base will be required in order for the region to achieve its full economic potential.

Cairns has unique competitive advantages when it comes to attracting and retaining international and domestic migrants including:

- An existing diverse and multicultural community and population.
- Strong connectivity and accessibility

by virtue of the city's well-established international airport.

- Low unemployment and a strong private and public investment pipeline.
- Superior quality of life and liveability.

Cairns Regional Council is calling for the development of a long-term population and migration strategy for the Cairns region including:

- Analysing the historical and forecast trends in regional population growth and migration.
  - Forecasting medium to longer term trends in the regional economy and the impacts of these trends on future employment and workforce requirements.
  - Forecasting future workforce requirements for priority industries and identifying and quantifying potential skills gaps and actions to address including consultation and collaboration with the region's university and higher education sectors.
  - Establishing population growth targets for the region including for priority skills sectors.
  - Consideration and analysis of a wide range of actions and incentives that can support migration (international, intrastate, interstate) to the region with an emphasis on priority skills sectors.
  - Assessment of the 'liveability' factors that contribute to population attraction and retention and related actions to support enhanced liveability.
  - High-level consideration of the key infrastructure and service requirements to support further population growth.
- The strategy will ultimately inform policy to support future population growth and economic development for the Cairns region.



# Priority Renewable Energy Zone for Cairns and FNQ

*Harnessing the region's significant natural resources and establishing FNQ as a leader in renewable energy generation, research and innovation*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Designation of the Cairns and FNQ region as a Priority Renewable Energy Zone and implementation of the policy and investment required to support regional renewable energy development.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)
- Renewable Energy Target (RET) scheme

International commitments to emission reductions and changing social attitudes towards climate change are driving record investment in renewable energy projects. The Australian Government's own 2030 Emissions Reduction Target provides for a 26-28 per cent reduction in 2005 emission levels by 2030. The Queensland Government's target is for 50% of the State's energy to come from renewables by 2030.

The International Energy Agency predicts that renewables will have the fastest growth in the global electricity sector, providing almost 30% of power demand in 2023, up from 24% in 2017. During this period, renewables are forecast to meet more than 70% of global electricity generation growth, led by solar PV and followed by wind,

hydropower, and bioenergy.

The Cairns and FNQ region has an abundance of natural resources (sun, wind and water) that can be harnessed for renewable energy generation. There are a number of significant renewable energy projects either already operating or planned in the region including:

- Stanwell's Barron Hydro hydroelectric generator located 20 kilometres north west of Cairns with a capacity of 66MW (operational).
- Ratch Group's Mt Emerald Wind Farm wind energy generation project located on the Atherton Tablelands and comprising 53 wind turbines with a capacity of 180MW (operational).
- Conergy's Lakeland Solar and Storage Project located approximately 240 kilometres north west of Cairns with a capacity of 12.5MW (operational).





- MSF Sugar's Tableland Green Energy Power Plant located on the Atherton Tablelands which utilises sugarcane fibre (known as bagasse) to produce renewable energy. The plant has a production capacity of 24MW (operational).
- Genex Power's proposed Kidston Pumped Storage Hydro Project located in the Etheridge Shire south west of Cairns with an expected capacity of 250MW (planned).

The Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO's) Integrated System Plan (ISP) identifies the Far North Queensland and North Queensland Clean Energy Hub as two potential renewable energy zones within a pool of 34 potential candidates. The Cairns and FNQ region has significant potential to support further renewable energy project development.

Not only does such development support delivery of the region's and nation's energy security and emission reduction targets, it also aligns with the region's 'clean and green' image with Cairns the gateway to two World Heritage Listed natural assets in the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest.

To unlock the region's potential for further renewable energy development, Cairns Regional Council is calling for the following:

- Designation of the FNQ region as a Priority Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).
- Appropriate incentives to encourage further investment in renewable generation projects located in the Priority REZ and to also encourage renewable energy companies to establish operational/'head office' bases in region.

- Establishment of Cairns as a gateway to and knowledge hub for the region's renewable energy sector.
- Investment in the National Energy Market (NEM) transmission network to facilitate the efficient connection and transport of renewable energy generated in the Priority REZ to consumers.
- Support for renewable energy research, development and innovation ideally in conjunction with the region's university sector. This could include research and analysis on potential micro grid and energy storage solutions that could contribute positively to the region's energy security and resilience (particularly during natural disasters such as cyclones).

# Priority Regional Recycling and Reprocessing Hub

*Effectively managing the region’s waste resources and establishing Cairns as a leader in materials recycling, processing and innovation*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Designation of Cairns as a Priority Regional Recycling and Reprocessing Hub together with funding to support recycling and processing infrastructure development and expansion as well as the investigation of innovative commercial opportunities for the use of recycled materials.

Waste management in Australia is in transition. There is a significant attitudinal shift within Australian society regarding the ways in which we manage waste. There is a growing acceptance that our current rate of consumption of natural resources is not acceptable and that we need to be more efficient in managing and recovering our resources in a way that minimises the environmental and public health impacts from waste. There are also significant commercial opportunities presented from the effective recovery and reprocessing of waste materials that have the potential to contribute positively to the regional economy. The recent introduction by the Queensland Government of the Container Refund Scheme (CRS) and Waste Levy represent policy changes that will also support waste recycling and reprocessing.

Situated at the gateway to two iconic World Heritage Listed natural assets in the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest, Cairns has a moral obligation to be a leader in the development of waste management solutions that not only minimise environmental impacts but also provide commercial, economic and employment opportunities from implementing innovative recycling and reprocessing solutions. In 2018, Cairns Regional Council adopted its Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2018-2027. The vision within that strategy is for ‘Innovative waste management providing economic, social and environmental benefits for the Tropical North Queensland Region’.

The strategy has five core strategic objectives:

- Provide education and awareness
- Reduce waste
- Maximise resource recovery
- Secure our future needs
- Advocacy and collaboration

Strategy implementation is progressing including the multi-million-dollar upgrade to Council’s Materials Recovery Facility, which will see diversion from landfill rates increased from 50% up to 85%. The facility already recycles significant waste materials from a number of neighbouring councils and has the potential to further meet the waste recycling needs across the FNQ region more broadly.

Specific recycling and value added processing opportunities exist for plastics, glass, rubber (including tyres) with innovative solutions also required for emerging waste streams such as solar panels, lithium batteries and other technology equipment. The fact that Cairns is already home to two well established universities and a number of secondary recycled materials processors means there is opportunity to undertake research and investigate innovative solutions for the reprocessing of recycled materials. Cairns Regional Council is calling for the designation of Cairns as a Priority Regional Recycling and Reprocessing Hub with key actions in support of this designation including:

- Funding to support further infrastructure investment in materials recycling facilities to support increased diversion from landfill and provide the necessary ‘feedstock’ for recycled materials reprocessing.
- Provision of funding to support concept and business case development for innovative recycled materials reprocessing and other solutions such as biofuels.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Emerging population, decentralisation and migration policy
- National Waste Policy (2018)
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Reef 2050 Plan
- Region’s 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)



# Reef and Rainforest Management

*Effectively managing and investing in our region's two most important and internationally significant natural assets*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Commitment to undertake a detailed independent review of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) and Wet Tropics Rainforest (WTR) management structures and GBR/ WTR funding (quantum and structure) requirements for long term management and preservation of these critical ecosystems.

Cairns lies at the gateway to two of the world's greatest natural wonders in the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) and Wet Tropics Rainforest (WTR), both of which are World Heritage Listed. As well as the GBR's unquestionable environmental value, it also underpins significant components of the Cairns region's economy, in particular tourism. Recent analysis by Deloitte Access Economics estimated that:

- The asset value of the GBR is \$56 billion.
- The GBR provides support for 64,000 Australian jobs.
- The GBR generates \$6.4B in revenue annually.

The WTR also provides significant economic benefits to the regional and national economies through tourism in particular. The international growth of nature and adventure based tourism underlines the critical importance the GBR and WTR will continue to play in the future economic prosperity of the Cairns and broader FNQ region.

The condition and factors affecting reef health need to be better understood and addressed as does adverse domestic and international perceptions of the health of the GBR. Crucially, a significant proportion of the river systems flowing into the GBR have their sources within, or flowing through, the World Heritage Listed WTR. The health of the Rainforest has a direct impact on river catchments and marine ecosystems with flow-on impacts on water quality and the health of the GBR.

Responsibility for management of the WTR has been devolved to the Wet Tropics Management Authority. The Australian and Queensland Government's respective responsibilities in cooperating to protect and conserve the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) were inceptioned in the Emerald Agreement in 1979, and most recently updated in the Great Barrier Reef Intergovernmental Agreement 2015.

The existing management structures for the GBR and WTR are overly complex and lack clarity of purpose and responsibility. The level of funding to support GBR and WTR preservation and management also needs to be reset. A single, de-politicised World Heritage management body (such as a commission) would ensure transparency, accountability and effectiveness. A review of the management structure and funding sends a powerful message that this nation has the boldness, vision and leadership to do what it is necessary to protect these two global icons.

The preservation and effective management of these two iconic natural assets must be recognised as a strategic priority of national and global importance if their significant social, community and economic benefits are to be secured for future generations.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Draft Wet Tropics Strategic Plan (2018)
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Reef 2050 Plan
- Tourism 2020 (Strategy)



# Strengthening Australia's Relationship with PNG and the Pacific

*Cairns is strategically located to support the delivery of the Federal Government's Pacific Step-up policy*



## COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Support for a joint PNG/Cairns team entering the NRL competition. Placement of Office of the Pacific personnel in Cairns. Support further investigation of future potential air links between Cairns and Lae.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Australian Government strategies and initiatives:

- Australian Defence Force Posture Review (2012)
- Defence White Paper (2016)
- Foreign Policy White Paper (2017)
- Northern Australia Agenda
- Pacific Step-up - Stepping up Australia's engagement with our Pacific family
- Region's 2030 Unlocking Opportunity (2017)

The Pacific Step-up has been identified as one of Australia's highest foreign policy priorities. Cairns is strategically positioned to support a number of the Federal Government's initiatives and activities in this regard. Cairns is the closest Australian city to Port Moresby, less than a 90 minute flight away, with a large expat community of Papua New Guineans calling Cairns home. Cairns has a strong economic, cultural and social connection with PNG including a long established sister city relationship with Lae, PNG's second largest city. Cairns has also played a pivotal role in supporting the ongoing deployment of the Pacific Patrol Boat Program. Under this program, 22 Pacific Class patrol boats were donated by the Australian Government to twelve South Pacific countries where they are operated by militaries, coast guards and/or police forces. Cairns based - marine businesses have supported the program through the provision of refit and maintenance services. The city is also home to

Tradelinked Cairns-PNG-Pacific, a regionally focussed network established to facilitate the engagement of businesses trading between Cairns and its near international neighbours. In addition, Cairns' well established and connected Airport and Seaport also provide opportunity to further connect and strengthen Australia's relationship with PNG and the wider Pacific.

A number of opportunities exist for Cairns to play an important role in Australia's Pacific Step-up policy, continuing to build on Cairns' already well established connections within the Asia-Pacific region.

## STRENGTHENING OUR TIES WITH PNG THROUGH SPORT

Perhaps no single act from an Australian government would do more to strengthen the economic, social and cultural connection between Australia and PNG, than bringing a PNG rugby league team into the National Rugby League (NRL)



competition. And no other city would be a more appropriate location for an Australian home ground, than Cairns. The PNG Hunters and Northern Pride (Cairns) rugby league teams are already part of the Queensland Rugby League (QRL) competition. Rugby league is an effective way to build stronger ties between Australia and PNG at a time when other powers are jockeying for influence. A foreign policy initiative supporting NRL expansion, and giving Papua New Guinea a helping hand to operate within the national league, would build immense soft diplomacy power for Australia. The NRL says a review is currently looking at the structure of the league, and that PNG would be considered as part of any expansion review. In addition to rugby league, there is also opportunity to further strengthen sporting ties with PNG and the Pacific through the hosting of competition and training camps in Cairns across a range of relevant sporting codes.

### **OFFICE OF THE PACIFIC**

The Office of the Pacific has been established within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to support the delivery of the Pacific Step-up policy and strengthen Australia's bilateral relationships with our Pacific neighbours. Cairns Regional Council is calling for the Office of the Pacific to base personnel from the office 'on the ground' in Cairns to leverage the city's already strong relationships with PNG and our Pacific neighbours as well as our existing air and sea connectivity.

### **IMPROVED AIR CONNECTIVITY**

Air Niugini has operated a ten times per week service between Port Moresby and Cairns utilising Fokker aircraft for some time. With the support of the Queensland Government, Cairns Airport and Council, Air Niugini has recently enhanced this service by operating a larger Boeing 767-300ER aircraft on the

route twice per week. This enhancement will provide a valuable airfreight link between Cairns, Port Moresby, Hong Kong as well as a number of other destinations in Asia. In addition, and with the support of Council, Tradelinked Cairns-PNG-Pacific has been investigating the potential opportunities that direct air links between Cairns and Lae may deliver. An agreement between the Governments of PNG and Japan will see the upgrading of Lae (Nadzab) Airport to international status taking place with financial support from Japan. The upgrade is expected to be completed in 2020-21. With a number of significant resource and infrastructure projects occurring in the Lae region, the establishment of a direct air link between Lae and Cairns would further strengthen the trade, economic and social ties between the two sister cities.



**For more information:  
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The priorities and projects contained in this document have been drawn from the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision. The development of this vision was led by Cairns Regional Council in consultation with key regional stakeholders. The vision provides a framework to secure long term economic prosperity and liveability for the Cairns region. To find out more about the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision visit [www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision2050](http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/vision2050) and sign on to help us secure an even better future for the Cairns community.

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