

# Building Better Communities Beyond 2030



## Fraser Coast community perceptions of economic development:

*A summary of stakeholder consultations  
undertaken as part of the development  
of the Economic Roadmap*

# INTRODUCTION

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The Fraser Coast Economic Roadmap is a blueprint for the region's future economy – to 2030 and beyond. Developed following extensive community consultation over five months, the Economic Roadmap charts a course towards long-term, sustainable economic growth and future prosperity for the Fraser Coast.

The Implementation Plan prepared alongside the Roadmap sets out a range of initiatives that Council will deliver in partnership with the community and the Queensland and Australian Governments.

# CONSULTATION

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As a community-led process to develop a vision for our economic future, the Roadmap was informed by extensive consultation.

According to Council records, 208 people participated in 11 consultations held between October 2018 and March 2019. Consultation sessions were held with the following groups.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fraser Coast Tourism and Events</li><li>✓ Regional Chambers of Commerce</li><li>✓ Queensland Government agencies</li><li>✓ Real Estate Institute of Queensland- Fraser Coast Chapter</li><li>✓ Regional Development Australia Wide Bay Burnett</li><li>✓ Social services providers based in region</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ School leaders- Maryborough</li><li>✓ School leaders- Hervey Bay</li><li>✓ Small Communities Advisory Group</li><li>✓ Urban Development Institute of Australia- Fraser Coast Chapter</li></ul> |
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During February and March 2019, another 27 people provided online feedback through an 'Engagement Hub' on Council's website.



# KEY ENGAGEMENT TRENDS

Engagement participants welcomed Council's 'community-first' approach to the Roadmap. Engagement participants agreed that the community is best placed to identify long-term economic opportunities and challenges.





Key themes emerged throughout consultations. These included:

- ✓ The need for targeted investment attraction efforts and a more cohesive business environment.
- ✓ The need to continue to 'talk up the region' and build a coherent 'great place to do business' narrative.
- ✓ The need for stronger school-training-work pathways in the region.
- ✓ The need for improved infrastructure to cope with population growth.
- ✓ The need for better opportunities for young people.

## FEEDBACK BY THEMES

Engagement participants were asked about their long-term vision for the Fraser Coast. Conceptually, participants were asked "what would you like our region to look like in 2030 and beyond."

Targeted consultation questions were then structured around what short-medium term enabling strategies would be needed to realise that vision. These targeted consultation questions were grouped into four themes- Education, Economy, Population and Community and Infrastructure. A summary of the feedback on these themes is below.

 <b>Education and Job Readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Need to advocate for more tertiary study options at the local USC campus.</li><li>✓ Need to ensure there are enhanced vocational training opportunities in our region.</li><li>✓ Opportunities for more collaboration between schools and the workforce.</li></ul>
 <b>Business Investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Target priority businesses and try to attract these to the region.</li><li>✓ Develop a 'facilitation' service to proponents to simplify Council processes.</li><li>✓ Provide local business support and greater coordination with representative groups.</li></ul>
 <b>Community Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Try to attract young families, professionals and self-funded retirees to the area.</li><li>✓ Develop a plan to attract high skilled workers to fill specific roles.</li><li>✓ Promote our lifestyle and liveability of the region to prospective businesses and residents.</li></ul>
 <b>Enabling Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Connectivity- transport and communications links are critical to economic growth.</li><li>✓ Urangan Harbour precinct needs to move forward.</li><li>✓ CBD redevelopments need to happen.</li><li>✓ Stakeholders strongly support the sports precinct, including future stages.</li></ul>



# EDUCATION AND JOB READINESS

Engagement participants strongly agreed education was a critical element of economic development on the Fraser Coast. Feedback generally focused on the need for increased University and Vocational Education and Training study options, improved cooperation between schools and employers and a greater focus on pre-school enrolment.

*"Education is our way forward in the region. We need to ensure our young are educated to allow job opportunities, but also education can provide significant economic benefit to our region."*



Community Leader, response to Economic Roadmap Consultation, November 2018.

## Feedback on the Education theme focused on the following:

- ✓ 'We need for USC to provide more courses- need to have the opportunity to complete the whole degree at the Hervey Bay campus'
- ✓ 'Student accommodation would provide significant economic benefit for our region'
- ✓ 'We need to make preschool education more accessible'
- ✓ 'There needs to be better pathways from schools to university, schools to work and schools to training'
- ✓ 'There's an opportunity to bring international students to the area and make the Fraser Coast like Cairns and Townsville as 'Education Cities'
- ✓ 'We should take advantage of our growing health sector and provide additional medical training opportunities'

# SUGGESTED ACTIONS

## EDUCATION AND JOB READINESS

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- ✓ Advocate for the expansion of the USC campus at Hervey Bay to allow a full suite of degree programs- and the opportunity to complete these courses in Hervey Bay.
- ✓ Identify and promote alternate course offerings to suit our region at the USC campus (eg Marine services).
- ✓ Advocate for additional vocational education opportunities for our young people.
- ✓ Develop and assist in implementation of pathways from school to work.
- ✓ Develop a mentors program for students with experienced business people.
- ✓ Explore ways to foster greater cooperation between schools and education providers.
- ✓ Develop a business case for University student accommodation in Hervey Bay.
- ✓ Explore opportunities to develop additional medical training facilities in the Fraser Coast.
- ✓ Promote the importance of early childhood education across the community.
- ✓ Explore opportunities to deliver programs to attract and retain quality teachers.
- ✓ Promote post-secondary education opportunities to domestic and international students.
- ✓ Promote business education training opportunities to local businesspeople.





# BUSINESS INVESTMENT

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Engagement participants offered diverse ideas and suggestions on ways to grow our economy. Feedback focused on delivering effective regional investment marketing, the importance of having strong business support networks and in having relevant training sessions readily available.

*"There is a huge opportunity to build on our solid base. Promoting our ideal lifestyle, through to our strong and innovative industries. We just need to market this outside our region to get the message out!"*



**Maryborough resident, response to Economic Roadmap Consultation, January 2019.**

**Feedback on the Economy theme focused on the following.**

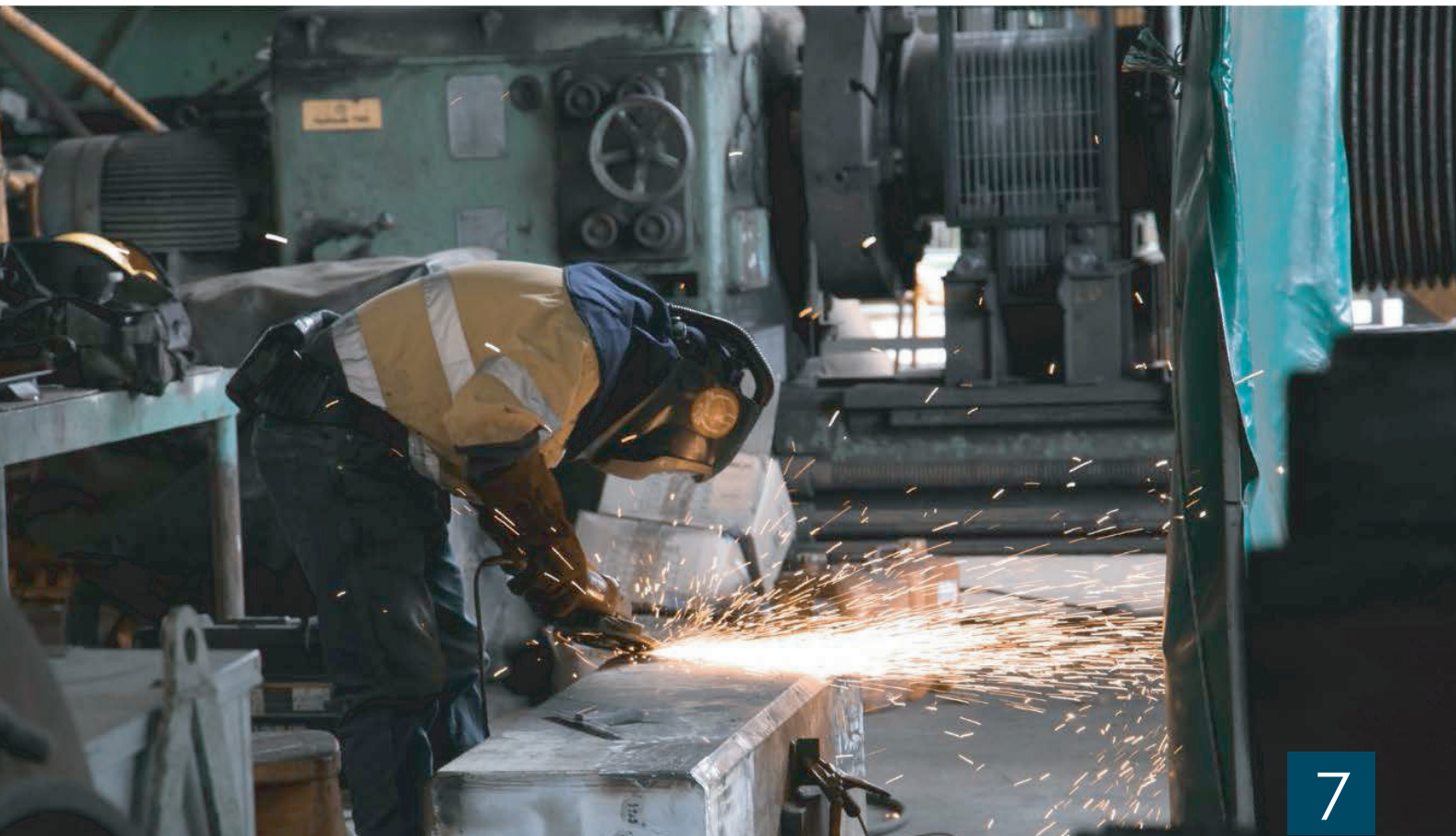
- ✓ 'We need to identify our investment opportunities for the region and have a coherent plan'
- ✓ 'We need to take advantage of our health sector and look at opportunities to grow this sector further'
- ✓ 'Council should continue to provide incentives for larger investments that promise long-term economic benefits'
- ✓ 'We must support local business to grow and be sustainable'
- ✓ 'We need to identify innovation opportunities to support and grow the region'

# SUGGESTED ACTIONS

## BUSINESS INVESTMENT

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- ✓ Provide a 'one-stop-shop' for investment and business relocation enquiries in Council.
- ✓ Work with Queensland and Australian Government agencies to promote inward investment.
- ✓ Investigate agricultural diversity including agri-tourism and supply chain opportunities.
- ✓ Develop a Fraser Coast ambassadors program to promote the region throughout Australia and Internationally.
- ✓ Identify marine-based business opportunities that align with our marine environment.
- ✓ Develop opportunities for innovation, entrepreneurship and start-up businesses.
- ✓ Implement the actions in the Drone Strategy.
- ✓ Encourage RV's and caravans to stay in rural townships.
- ✓ Identify further business opportunities for Fraser Island or industries to support the island.
- ✓ Improve support for digital linkages between people and business.
- ✓ Grow our events in the region including sports events and large scale events.
- ✓ Consider diversification opportunities in the agriculture sector.
- ✓ Better promote the region as a tourism destination.
- ✓ Attract more eco-tourism businesses in the region.
- ✓ Continue developing the Hervey Bay Esplanade to entice tourists and people to move to the region.
- ✓ Develop a strategy to lure high-end retirees and professionals to move to the area.
- ✓ Council to engage with government agencies to promote appropriate business support and capacity building training.





# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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Engagement participants discussed the region's high liveability and why they love living on the Fraser Coast. Feedback focused on the demographic challenges of an ageing population and challenges associated with a significant out-migration of young people aged 15-24.

*"We have an amazing story to tell of the great opportunities in our region for young families through to professionals and the elderly. We need to promote these opportunities and our enviable lifestyle."*



**Real Estate Agent, response to Economic Roadmap Consultation, February 2019.**

**Feedback on the Population and Community theme focused on the following.**

- ✓ 'We need to target population growth through professionals, families and high-end retirees'
- ✓ 'We have an obesity problem- there needs to be more physical activity by our community'
- ✓ 'Want to encourage migrants to build our population and improve cultural diversity'
- ✓ 'Should more actively promote our lifestyle to lure new residents to the Fraser Coast'



# SUGGESTED ACTIONS

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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- ✓ Develop a strategy with our major businesses to attract highly-skilled workers to the region.
- ✓ Use our large number of people who have moved to the region to promote the Fraser Coast as a great place to live, work and invest.
- ✓ Work with our community groups to build their capacity and membership bases.
- ✓ Look at opportunities to attract people from diverse cultures to the region.
- ✓ Develop a strategy to keep our young people and families in the region while trying to attract young families.
- ✓ Use our Maryborough 'heritage' as a promotional opportunity.
- ✓ Take further opportunities to build on our health sector.
- ✓ Identify opportunities to deliver more activities for younger people on the Fraser Coast.
- ✓ Promote the Fraser Coast's value propositions for young families and professionals.
- ✓ Identify ways to attract our young people back to the Fraser Coast at an earlier age.
- ✓ Identify ways to promote our proud indigenous history and identify opportunities to build on this.
- ✓ Develop a jobs retention strategy to keep our young people here and entice professionals to the region.
- ✓ Identify new industries which might bring people to the region.





# ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Engagement participants discussed the importance of 'enabling infrastructure' being delivered, to provide long-term economic and community benefits to the region. Feedback was strongly supportive of the infrastructure in Council's 10-year capital works plan and the recently announced infrastructure projects funded by the Queensland or Australian Governments.

*"We need to be strategic in the infrastructure we develop to ensure that it provides for our community but also ensures an economic benefit for the region"*



**Property Developer, response to Economic Roadmap Consultation, December 2018.**

**Feedback on the Infrastructure theme focused on the following.**

- ✓ 'Transport connections need to be delivered when we need them'
- ✓ 'Council must advocate strongly to ensure we get a fair share of funding towards infrastructure that enables our economy to grow'
- ✓ 'We need reliable and fast telecommunications services to allow business to grow'
- ✓ 'Our tourism infrastructure needs to keep improving- the moment we stand still we go backwards compared to other coastal communities'

# SUGGESTED ACTIONS

## ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

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- ✓ Consider transport infrastructure improvements, the Bruce Highway is the main one- but the Maryborough-Hervey Bay Road and other regional roads need addressing.
- ✓ Advocate for more affordable, more frequent and better timed flights to the Fraser Coast.
- ✓ Advocate to government for infrastructure projects identified in the 'Hinkler Deal'.
- ✓ Consider opportunities for infrastructure to support cruise ships coming to the Fraser Coast region.
- ✓ Provide infrastructure which supports new business investment in the region. E.g. Astro Aero- Investment at the Hervey Bay Airport.
- ✓ Identify infrastructure requirements which may allow our Health Sector to continue to grow.
- ✓ Advocate and support Government to see the Urangan Marina progress.
- ✓ Develop further stages of the Sports precinct at Hervey Bay.
- ✓ Advocate to see appropriate telecommunications and technology opportunities available to new and existing business.
- ✓ Council follow through with actions set within plans for the Esplanade at Hervey Bay.
- ✓ Council needs to progress with the Hervey Bay CBD revitalisation plans.
- ✓ Council to continue to advocate for the education precinct as part of the Hervey Bay CBD revitalisation.
- ✓ Council should investigate water security options for agricultural certainty.
- ✓ Council needs to advocate for the Maryborough TAFE site to be utilised for investment.



