**GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT**
(Y/E 30 Jun 18)

- **Cairns**: $8.8B
- **Far North Queensland**: $15.4B

**VISITORS**
(Tropical North Queensland Region)
(Y/E 30 Jun 19)

- **Domestic visitors (spending $2.2B)**: 2.1m
- **International visitors (spending $1.1B)**: 849,000

**WATER**

Cairns and FNQ region’s water run off as a % of:
- 60% Queensland’s total
- 26% Australia’s total
- Average annual rainfall (Far North Region): 1,998mm

**AGRICULTURE**
(Far North Queensland)

- $2.95B Sector value
- $1.81B Export value

**CAIRNS AND FNQ REGION’S WATER RUN OFF AS A % OF:**
- Queensland’s total: 60%
- Australia’s total: 26%
- Average annual rainfall (Far North Region): 1,998mm

**CAIRNS AIRPORT**
(Passenger Movements Y/E 30 Jun 19)

- 686,000 International
- 4.2m Domestic
- 7th Busiest airport in Australia

**UNEMPLOYMENT**

- Cairns City Unemployment: 4.1% (Sep 2019)
- Cairns Region (SA4) Unemployment: 4.8% (Sep 2019)
- Youth Unemployment: 9.6% (Sep 2019)

**GREAT BARRIER REEF**

- One of the seven natural wonders of the world
- 2,300 Kilometres Long
- Covering an area of 344,000 km²
- 1,625 Species of fish (10% of the world’s fish species)
- 600+ Types of hard & soft corals
- $6.4B Annually Economic Contribution

**CAIRNS PUBLIC HOSPITAL**

- 82,714 Total admissions (y/e 30 Jun 19)
- >6,000 Total staff employed

**CAIRNS AT A GLANCE**

- **Resident Population**
  - Cairns City Resident Population: 165,000 (today)
  - FAR North Queensland (FNQ) Resident Population: 286,000 (today)

- **Proportion of population that is Indigenous (highest of any Australian city):** 9.8%

**TERTIARY EDUCATION**
(Cairns Campus)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Persons Employed</th>
<th>Number of Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JCU</td>
<td>3,913</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQUniversity</td>
<td>1,684</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>11,269</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **CAIRNS AIRPORT**
- **Cargo Movements (Y/E 30 Jun 19):**
  - Export: 552,000 tonnes
  - Import: 754,000 tonnes

- **Average annual growth in cargo movements (last 5 years):** 5%
- **Total vessel arrivals (Y/E 30 Jun 19):** 952

- **Cargo Seaport**
- **Average annual growth in cargo movements (last 5 years):** 5%
- **Total vessel arrivals (Y/E 30 Jun 19):** 952

- **CAIRNS AT A GLANCE**
- **GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT**
  - Cairns: $8.8B
  - Far North Queensland: $15.4B

- **CAIRNS PUBLIC HOSPITAL**
- 82,714 Total admissions (Y/E 30 Jun 19)
- >6,000 Total staff employed

- **CAIRNS AIRPORT**
- 686,000 International
- 4.2m Domestic

- **CAIRNS AT A GLANCE**
- **GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT**
  - Cairns: $8.8B
  - Far North Queensland: $15.4B
OVERVIEW OF KEY PRIORITIES

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

Cairns Regional Council is calling on the Queensland Government and Queensland Opposition to commit to the following key priorities for the Cairns region.

**AVIATION**
- Establishment of a flexible $50 million state-wide Attracting Tourism Fund to contribute to the establishment of new international aviation routes for Queensland including the priority routes identified for Cairns.
- $20 million funding commitment to the Cairns Aviation Excellence Precinct development.

**CAIRNS CITY CENTRE MASTER PLAN**
- $33 million commitment from the Queensland 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 CITY DEAL**
- Queensland Government commitment to work with Cairns Regional Council and the Federal Government to establish a 10-year City Deal for Cairns based on the priorities outlined in the Cairns Region City Deal Proposal Document.

**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 Government) funding arrangement for this iconic cultural and tourism infrastructure project.

**CAIRNS METRO/AIRPORT LINK**
- $400,000 in funding to undertake the market needs assessment and business case for this innovative public transport project.

**CAIRNS ROAD NETWORK PROJECTS**
- $370 million for capacity improvements on the Cairns Western Arterial Road (CWAR) linking Smithfield to south Cairns.
- Confirmation of $72 million commitment from the Queensland Government (complementing an existing commitment of $287 million federally) towards enhancements on the Captain Cook Highway between Cairns and Smithfield.
- $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 $45 million commitment from the Queensland Government (complementing an existing commitment of $180 million federally) towards Cairns Southern Access Corridor Stage 5 (Foster Road Intersection) project.

**CAIRNS GROUNDED FOREST CULTURAL CENTRE**
- Consider the wider economic benefits of future expansion of the Cairns Seaport and investigate innovative funding and finance opportunities (subject to relevant business case) to support implementation of the Seaport Master Plan.

**CAIRNS HOSPITAL**
- $100 million to establish the Cairns Health and Innovation Precinct (CHIP); $15 million for upgraded emergency department facilities/infrastructure; and $60 million to fund 70 new beds at the hospital. In addition, $6 million is required for the completion of a detailed business case for the implementation of the CHHHS strategic master plan.

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

**NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HERITAGE CENTRE**
- Funding to support initial concept development and business case preparation for a National Indigenous Heritage Centre located in Cairns.

**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.

**NULLINGA DAM**
- Commitment from the Queensland Government to proceed with the Nullinga Dam project.

**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.

**QUEENSLAND’S FIRST UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL**
- $10 million towards the establishment of Queensland’s first University High School.

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FUNDING**
- Legislative change to enable local governments to choose to introduce a visitor levy/tourism contribution.
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 to the State of Queensland. 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.

A FAIRER SHARE
Capital investment by the Queensland Government is critical to delivering the infrastructure and projects that will support the future prosperity of the Cairns region. Set out on the opposite page are some highlights from analysis undertaken by Cairns Regional Council on Queensland Government budgeted capital expenditure over the eight years ending 2019-20. Over that eight-year period, the Queensland Government budgeted capital expenditure allocation per person for the Cairns region was the lowest of any region outside of SEQ. Cairns deserves a fairer share of investment from the Queensland Government and this document sets out where this investment should be directed.

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). 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 State perspective, investment in the priorities contained within this document aligns with, and will support the implementation of, a number of key Queensland Government strategies and plans including (amongst others): The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014; State Infrastructure Plan 2016; Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031; and Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan. Accordingly, investing in the priorities contained in this document not only contributes to the delivery of the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision, it also supports the delivery of the state-wide strategic objectives of the Queensland Government.
Compared to other Queensland regions, over the past eight years the Cairns region has received a significantly lower share of State Government budgeted capital expenditure. Our region deserves a fairer share.

IF Cairns had the same $ per capita allocation as the Central Queensland region over the past eight years we could have:

- Performing Arts Centres: 45 built
- Dredged Trinity Inlet: 25 times over
- Paid for the Smithfield Bypass: 21 times over
- Paid for the Convention Centre Expansion: 18 times over

WHERE'S OUR SHARE?
BUDGETED CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PER PERSON (EIGHT YEARS TO 19/20)

- Cairns: $16,513
- Townsville: $22,006
- Mackay: $19,538
- Central Queensland: $29,328
- Wide Bay: $17,182
- Toowoomba Darling Downs: $28,013
- Mackay: $19,538
- Central Queensland: $29,328
- Wide Bay: $17,182
- Toowoomba Darling Downs: $28,013
**Priorities for Cairns**

**Unlocking Opportunity and Potential**

### Food Production

- World population expected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050 (up by 2 billion from today)
- Income growth in developing countries is leading to dietary changes also driving up global food demand per capita
- Global food demand expected to increase anywhere between 59% and 98% by 2050

### Cairns Region’s Competitive Advantages

- Physical proximity and connectivity to the Asia-Pacific and beyond
- Significant water resources and run off
- Large tracts of underdeveloped arable land (FNCQ)
- Established agriculture industry
- Established and well connected airport and seaport
- Existing road networks and rail links
- Cairns established as the regional capital and service centre for FNCQ

### Trends/Contributing Factors

- **Food Production**
  - Iconic world heritage listed natural assets (Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest)
  - Direct connection to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
  - Established sports and events tourism destination
  - Established tourism industry and allied sectors
  - International airport
  - Seaport expansion underway to facilitate increased cruise ship visitation
  - ‘Clean green’ reputation

- **Tourism**
  - Significant and rapid expansion of the global middle class population leading to increased discretionary expenditure
  - Global population age profile and propensity for travel both positively impacting tourism and travel
  - Cultural, nature based and sports/events tourism are significant growth sectors
  - International inbound travel to Australia expected to increase by 75% over the period to 2026-27

- **Tertiary Education**
  - Rapid expansion of global middle class expected to drive significant increases in tertiary level education attainment
  - Australia’s international education sector enrolments expected to increase by 45% in the period to 2025
  - 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

### Opportunity Created

- Potential for significant growth in regional agriculture development, production and export to meet increasing global food demand
- Capturing a share of significant global tourism growth by leveraging Cairns’ competitive advantages in cultural, nature based and sports and events tourism
- Servicing significant growth in demand for tertiary and higher level education both domestically and internationally and attraction and retention of human intellectual capital

### What’s Needed to Unlock the Opportunity

- Water infrastructure (storage and distribution)
- Demand and supply chain analysis to identify specific opportunities/markets and potential barriers to production, transport, processing and distribution/export
- Road network investment
- Increased direct aviation connectivity
- Seaport development and expansion
- Integrated transport strategy
- Effective management and funding to support the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest
- Tourism experience and attraction development
- Increased support for destination marketing
- Increased direct aviation connectivity
- Seaport development and expansion
- Infrastructure, services and facilities that support an increased visitor population
- Policy change to deliver sustainable tourism funding
- Investment in Indigenous arts and cultural tourism facilities
- University facility development and expansion
- Innovation precinct establishment
- Increased direct aviation connectivity
- Attainment of University Hospital status for Cairns Hospital

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Cairns Regional Council

6
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.

### Strategic Location
- Increasing regional influence of China and other Asian countries in the PNG and Asia-Pacific region
- Increased foreign policy focus of the Australian government on the PNG and Asia-Pacific region
- Physical proximity to PNG and the Asia-Pacific region
- Existing naval base (HMAS Cairns), marine maintenance facilities and expertise, and established and expanding seaport
- International airport with direct connectivity to PNG and Asia
- Multicultural and diverse population including significant expat PNG population
- Well established business, cultural and social links between Cairns and PNG as well as many Asian and Pacific Island countries

### Skilled & Growing Population
- Significant population growth in Australia’s metropolitan capitals has resulted in an infrastructure deficit and settlement imbalance
- 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
- Direct alignment between a region’s human intellectual capital and the achievement of its economic potential
- Established track record for above average population growth
- Largest region (FNQ) and second largest city (Cairns) in Northern Australia
- Existing multicultural and diverse population
- Superior quality of life and liveability
- Well established universities and vocational institutions

### Renewable Energy
- International commitments to emission reductions are driving record investment in renewable energy projects
- Australian government’s 2030 Emission Reduction Target is a 26-28 per cent reduction in 2005 emission levels by 2030
- Changing social attitudes towards climate change is raising expectations politically for increased renewable energy investment
- Commercial viability of renewable energy alternatives is improving as technological advances see cost reductions and life cycle improvements in equipment and infrastructure
- Significant regional natural resources (water, sun, wind) to support renewable energy development
- Existing alignment between the environment and the economy (e.g. tourism) enhances the region’s ‘clean green’ reputation
- Significant regional renewable energy projects either planned or recently delivered

### Leverage Cairns’ strategic physical location and connectivity to support the delivery of Australia’s PNG and Asia Pacific foreign policy objectives
- Further development of the HMAS Cairns naval base and commitment to ongoing naval maintenance in Cairns
- Policy, investment and personnel deployment to leverage Cairns’ strategic location

### Contribute to the alleviation of population growth constraints in Australia’s metropolitan capitals and support the delivery of economic growth in Northern Australia
- A Cairns region population and migration strategy
- Infrastructure, services and facilities that attract, retain and support a skilled and growing resident population
- Investment in the facilities required to support population growth in a naturally sensitive environment (e.g. waste management)

### Supporting Queensland and Australia’s energy needs through the development of a nationally significant renewable energy sector
- Designation of Cairns and FNQ as a Priority Renewable Energy Zone
- Investment in the transmission distribution network to support further renewable energy generation project development
- Appropriate incentives to encourage investment and establishment of renewable energy operations bases within the Cairns and FNQ region
- Leveraging the ‘clean green’ reputation for the benefit of the region’s tourism and allied industries
Aviation

Supporting economic growth, employment and skills development in the aviation, tourism, international education and high value agricultural export sectors through aviation connectivity and infrastructure development

ROUTE DEVELOPMENT

Air connectivity is key to the economic development of the Cairns region. It opens up new visitor markets, provides opportunities for the export of agricultural produce and promotes growth in the education sector.

A daily international wide-body flight to Cairns is potentially a $200 million a year export business, with $100 million of international visitor spend, $50-150 million of agricultural produce sales, and the potential to deliver more than 650 new jobs for the region. There are additional flow-on benefits as other trade is enabled by new air routes. These benefits are widely dispersed across businesses in the region. Currently, more than 80% of international visitors through Cairns Airport travel on domestic flights. Due to the number of international passengers flying in on domestic routes, domestic capacity is also constrained.

Limited direct international aviation capacity is a key constraint to the region’s tourism economy. Analysis by Tourism Research Australia for the year ended 30 June 2019 indicates international tourism visitation to Tropical North Queensland (TNQ) reduced by 1.7% compared to the prior year. This contrasts with a 3% increase in international visitation at the national level over the same period. Increasing direct international aviation together with tourism product development and direct investment in destination marketing is required to address this worrying trend for the TNQ tourism sector.

There is significant international visitor growth that would be unlocked by additional capacity without reducing passengers on existing flights. To unlock this growth, Cairns Airport is targeting four new priority routes: one each from the Middle East and Southeast Asia (to serve Europe); one from China, and one from North America. Together, these four new air routes would provide $800 million per year in additional economic benefit to the Cairns economy. More international services direct to Cairns will create more capacity for domestic visitors and encourage international visitors to stay longer and spend more whilst in the region.

But whilst the case for new international aviation routes into Cairns is compelling, temporary ‘start up’ funding packages are required to de-risk initial establishment for the airlines involved and secure these new routes in an extremely competitive international market.

The demonstrated success of the contestable Attracting Tourism Fund leveraged both private sector and other levels of Government investment in key tourism infrastructure. In this case, we would suggest a dedicated focus on regional aviation to encourage greater dispersal of economic benefits across the State. Increased dispersal also increases the potential to extend average length of stay in Queensland helping the State to regain lost market share in visitor nights.

Cairns Regional Council and Cairns Airport are calling on the Queensland Government to establish a flexible $50 million state-wide Attracting Tourism Fund to contribute to the establishment of new international aviation routes for Queensland including the priority routes identified for Cairns.
An international flight to Cairns is a $200 million pa export business.

There is unmet demand for at least four new daily flights worth $800 million pa in economic benefit.

A new route has around US$30 million in start-up costs.

A commitment of $50 million to a flexible state-wide Attracting Tourism Fund is sought.
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 534,673m² 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 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, the Queensland Government announced a $2.5 million investment for Hawker Pacific to expand 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 demonstrates success from a State investment in the industry.

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. In addition, Queensland already has a strong focus on growing the aviation sector through the MRO Taskforce and Aerospace 10-Year Roadmap.

The airport is home to the CQUiversity 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Years</th>
<th>2020-2030</th>
<th>2030-2038</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cairns Airport investment</td>
<td>$32</td>
<td>$22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended State investment</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated total cost</td>
<td>$52</td>
<td>$22</td>
</tr>
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**Estimated benefit to local economy from new jobs (over period of development)**

$2.1 billion

$3.3 billion
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.

Priorities for Cairns:

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 Queensland 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.

Strategic Alignment
This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Queensland Government strategies and initiatives:

- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- Advancing Tourism 2016-20
- Queensland Tourism and Transport Strategy 2018
- Tourism and Events Queensland Strategic Plan 2018-2022
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
- Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan
- Advancing Tourism in North Queensland 2016-20
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

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).

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.
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) 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

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 30 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. This proposal calls 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.

$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.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Queensland Government strategies and initiatives:

- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- Advancing Tourism 2016-20
- Queensland Tourism and Transport Strategy 2018
- Tourism and Events Queensland Strategic Plan 2018-2022
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
- Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan
- Advancing Tourism in North Queensland 2016-20
Cairns Hospital
Investing in the infrastructure and services required to keep our community healthy

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 the proposed Cairns Health and Innovation Precinct (CHIP) supports this initiative and aligns with James Cook University’s Cairns Tropical Enterprise Centre (CTEC) project. The CTEC project has already received a federal funding commitment of $60 million. A $100 million commitment is now required from the Queensland Government to enable the design and construction of the CHIP to progress. In addition, Cairns Hospital will need a further $60 million in capital funding to refurbish areas that are vacated into the CHIP to create 70 additional beds to meet demand and expand clinical services until 2027.

Further investment is also required in the following areas:
- New/upgraded emergency department facilities and infrastructure at the Cairns Hospital. There were 74,667 presentations to the emergency department at the Cairns Hospital in 2018/19, a 24% increase over the preceding five years (the Cairns Hospital emergency department is the fifth busiest in Queensland). A $15 million commitment is required from the Queensland Government to implement these urgent upgrades.
- $6 million to complete a detailed business case for implementing the CHHHS Strategic Master Plan.
- Ongoing investigation into the potential to provide higher level services locally at the Cairns Hospital that are currently only available “outside of region” (e.g. neurosurgery).
- Continued development of specific models of care to address chronic disease, particularly in the region’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Queensland Government strategies and initiatives:
- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- Our Future State: Advancing Queensland’s Priorities (2018) plan
- Queensland Department of Health Strategic Plan 2016-2020
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service Strategic Plan 2018-2022
Cairns Metro/Airport Link
An innovative public transport solution connecting the Cairns Airport to the City Centre

The Cairns Metro concept would provide for a direct and high frequency public transport link between the Cairns Airport and the Cairns City Centre including the proposed Trinity Wharf Cairns (Global Tourism Hub). The adjacent diagram provides an overview of the proposed route for the service (approximately 7.5 kilometres long) and the key stops/attractors along that route. Cairns is a regional city with unique potential for such a service given the region’s high visitor population (almost 3 million visitors per year) and the fact the Cairns International Airport is the seventh busiest airport in Australia with in excess of five million passenger movements each year. The Cairns community has expressed a desire to see innovative public transport options progressed.

The Cairns Metro concept could potentially see the deployment of electric tram-like vehicles or alternate innovative transport solutions. The project could also link to the future expansion of a wider public transport network to the north and south of the city centre and contribute to the delivery of a wider transport strategy for the region. The project links directly with several of the priorities included within this proposal document as a number are physically located on or adjacent to the proposed route.

Cairns Regional Council has engaged with the Queensland Transport Minister, the Hon Mark Bailey, regarding the project and Council has also worked collaboratively with representatives of the Department of Transport and Main Roads (‘TMR’) to identify the steps required to further develop the concept. A business case is now required to determine the market demand for such a service, investigate the alternative options for servicing that demand, and undertake commercial, financial and economic analysis for the preferred option.

$400,000 in funding is required to fund the preparation of the business case for this exciting public transport project.

COMMITMENT REQUIRED
$400,000 in funding to undertake the market needs assessment and business case for this innovative public transport project.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
This priority aligns with and supports the implementation of the following Queensland Government strategies and initiatives:
• State Infrastructure Plan 2016
• Advancing Tourism 2016-20
• Queensland Tourism and Transport Strategy 2018
• Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
• Far North Regional Transport Plan (Draft) 2018
• Advancing Tourism in North Queensland 2016-20
An innovative public transport solution connecting the Cairns Airport to the City Centre

**CAIRNS AIRPORT LINK**

- Domestic Terminal
- International Terminal

**Key Attractors**
- Cairns North Sporting Precinct
- Cairns Hospital & Health Precinct
- Cairns Central Shopping Centre
- Cairns Performing Arts Centre
- Cairns Aquarium

**Proposed CBD to Airport Route**
- Active transport links
- 400m catchment
- 800m catchment

**Key Accommodation Region**

- Cairns Airport Terminals
- Cairns North Sporting Precinct
- Cairns Hospital
- Cairns Performing Arts Centre
- City Centre Bus Terminal
- Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal

**Distances**
- 0km Cairns Airport Terminals
- 3km Cairns North Sporting Precinct
- 4.5km Cairns Hospital
- 5.5km Cairns Performing Arts Centre
- 6km City Centre Bus Terminal
- 7km Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal

**Others**
- Esplanade Parklands & Sports Precinct
- Esplanade & Lagoon
- University Campuses
- Reef Fleet Terminal
- Cruise Liner Terminal
- Convention Centre
- Proposed Global Tourism Hub
- Proposed Global Art Gallery Precinct
- Northern Esplanade Playground
- Botanic Gardens and Tanks Arts Centre
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**

- **$370 million** for capacity improvements on the Cairns Western Arterial Road (CWAR) linking Smithfield to south Cairns.

- Confirmation of **$72 million** commitment from the Queensland Government (complementing an existing commitment of $287 million federally) towards enhancements on the Captain Cook Highway between Cairns and Smithfield.

- **$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 **$45 million** commitment from the Queensland Government (complementing an existing commitment of $180 million federally) towards the Cairns Southern Access Corridor Stage 5 (Foster Road Intersection) project.

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.
PRIORITIES FOR CAIRNS

KEY PROJECTS

- Cairns Southern Access Corridor
  - Stage 4: Kate St to Aumuller St*
  - Stage 5: Foster Road Intersection
- Cairns Western Arterial Road (CWAR)
- Smithfield Bypass*
- National Highway 1 Draper Street to Smithfield
- Cairns Southern Access Corridor
- Kuranda Range Road

*denotes road projects already funded and currently underway
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. We note that the Queensland Government has previously allocated $100,000 in the 2019-20 budget to undertake planning to upgrade this road. It is now time to action this planning through commitments for project delivery.

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). As a result, the section of the National Highway 1 that connects the southern fringe of the Cairns City to Smithfield via Sheridan Street is unable to benefit from the 80/20 (Federal/State) funding arrangements that apply to roads within the NLTN. 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 recognised the strategic importance of this road corridor and 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, an announcement of $287 million in funding via the 2019-20 Federal Budget delivered in early April 2019 and a separate announcement of $72 million from the Queensland Government are welcomed but need to be confirmed as commitments within the formal budget process.

PRIORITY FOR CAIRNS

COMMITTED ROAD PROJECTS

The four projects outlined on the adjacent pages 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.
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 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 the project has been included in the Queensland Government’s Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2019-20 to 2022-23.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

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

- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- Future-proofing the Bruce (Highway) policy document 2017
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
- Far North Regional Transport Plan (Draft) 2018
- Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan
- Queensland Tourism and Transport Strategy 2018
Cairns Seaport

Effectively planning for the long-term needs of the Cairns Seaport and committing the investment required to realise the Seaport’s full economic potential

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.

The growth in port industries and the Cairns Seaport to meet the future demand will be supported by investment in infrastructure. A number of projects are already either underway or planned which will contribute positively to the Seaport’s capacity and capability. These include:

The Cairns Shipping Development Project - The $127 million project provides for the widening and deepening of the existing Trinity Inlet shipping channel together with wharf side upgrades. The project will facilitate cruise ship growth for vessels up to 300 metres, with a forecast demand of up to 150 cruise ships per annum through the Port of Cairns by 2031. The project is substantially underway with completion expected in 2020.

Navy Capability Infrastructure Sub-program (HMAS Cairns) - There are a series of upgrades (both wharf and land side) planned for the HMAS Cairns naval base in readiness for the base homeporting a number of the navy’s new Arafura Class Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) which are expected to enter service progressively from 2020. Works at the HMAS Cairns base are expected to commence in late 2022 and run to 2025 with an anticipated project value of $162 million.

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.

STRAategic ALIGNMENT

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

- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan
- Advancing Tourism 2016-20
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2021
- Advancing Tourism in North Queensland 2016-20

COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Consider the wider economic benefits of future expansion of the Cairns Seaport and investigate innovative funding and finance opportunities (subject to relevant business case) to support implementation of the Seaport Master Plan.
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 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 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 Queensland Government to join Council and the Federal Government in a tripartite funding arrangement (one third each) for the project’s capital cost.

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

**Strategic Alignment**

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

- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
- Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan
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 16 of this document.

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

**Commitment Required**

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

**Strategic Alignment**

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

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2019-2022
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- 10-Year Roadmap for the Arts, Cultural and Creative Sector (Discussion Paper)
- Advancing Tourism 2016-20
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
- Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan
- Advancing Tourism in North Queensland 2016-20
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

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
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

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.
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

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

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 Queensland Government strategies and initiatives:
- The Queensland Plan:Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- State Infrastructure Plan 2016
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
- Advancing North Queensland – Investing in the Future of the North (2016) plan
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).
Queensland’s First University High School

A unique partnership between tertiary and secondary education facilities that will support development and retention of the region’s human intellectual capital

COMMITMENT REQUIRED

$10 million toward the establishment of Queensland’s first University High School.

PRIORITIES FOR CAIRNS

CQUniversity and Cairns State High School seek $35 million in government ($25 million Federal and $10 million State) funding 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

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

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

- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031
Sustainable Tourism Funding

Providing the funding necessary to support destination marketing and tourism industry development in an increasingly competitive international market

International inbound tourism represents an area of significant opportunity for both Australia as a whole and for the Cairns region. The following factors underline this potential opportunity:

- Significant and rapid expansion of the global middle class population leading to increased discretionary expenditure.
- Global population age profile and propensity for travel both positively impacting tourism and travel.
- Cultural, nature based and sports/events tourism are significant growth sectors and align well with Cairns and Tropical North Queensland’s (TNQ’s) existing strengths.

Despite this positive outlook, the Cairns and TNQ region’s market share of Australia’s inbound international tourism visitation has been trending downwards for some time. The region’s market share of domestic visitation has remained relatively static. Factors such as international perceptions of reef health/management and direct international aviation connectivity represent challenges in this regard and are the subject of specific projects outlined elsewhere in this proposal.

Sufficient and sustainable funding for destination marketing of the Cairns region and tourism industry development is of critical importance if we are to compete effectively in what is a highly competitive international market. The implementation of a modest visitor levy has the potential to raise significant funding in this regard and provide a reliable and growing source of funds for investment.

At a high level, the proposed visitor levy would operate as follows:

- Levy set as a percentage of short-term accommodation revenue (hotels, motels, hostels, caravan parks, online accommodation providers such as Airbnb etc.) and charged by the accommodation provider to the visitor/occupant.
- Levy payable by the visitor/occupant either in advance or on checkout to the accommodation provider.
- Levy reported and remitted by accommodation providers to the Cairns Regional Council on a monthly or quarterly basis with a potential retention of an appropriate amount of levy collections by accommodation providers to offset the costs of collection and administration.
- Levy proceeds separately accounted for by the Cairns Regional Council and invested directly in support of Cairns destination marketing and tourism industry development.

The amendment of existing or introduction of new State legislation would be required to facilitate levy introduction. Whilst a legislative change at the State level is the enabler, the decision on whether to introduce such a levy would rest with each individual local government having regard to their own particular circumstances. Though not prevalent in Australia, there are numerous examples of the successful implementation of visitor and tourism levies elsewhere in the world. Cairns Regional Council is calling on the Queensland Government to provide local governments with the ability to introduce such a levy through legislative change.

Commitment Required

Legislative change to enable local governments to choose to introduce a visitor levy/tourism contribution.

Strategic Alignment

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

- The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision 2014
- Advancing Tourism 2016-20
- Advancing Tourism in North Queensland 2016-20
Additional Priorities

In addition to the Key Priorities outlined in this document, set out over the following pages are a series of additional priorities that are consistent with the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision and would also support the long term economic prosperity and liveability of the Cairns region.

**Extension of Relevant Funding Programs**

**WORKS FOR QUEENSLAND**
The $600 million Works for Queensland (W4Q) program supports regional councils to undertake job-creating maintenance and minor infrastructure projects. Cairns Regional Council commends the Queensland Government on this successful and important initiative, which supports employment and community outcomes in regional Queensland. Council is calling on the Queensland Government to commit to a funding allocation of $200 million per annum towards this program over the budget year and forward estimates with councils having two financial years within which to expend the annual funding allocation on eligible projects.

**BUILDING OUR REGIONS**
Building our Regions is a $365 million multi-year targeted regional infrastructure program for Local Government projects. In the 2019-20 Queensland Budget, an allocation of $70 million was made for round five of this program. Cairns Regional Council is calling on the Queensland Government to commit funding allocations to the continuation of this funding program across the forward estimates contained in the Queensland Budget for 2020-21.

**EVENTS FUNDING**
Cairns has a proven track record of hosting major events with examples including the Ironman Asia Pacific, Sir Elton John’s ‘Once in a Lifetime’ performance at Cazalys Stadium, the Mountain Bike World Championships, Festival 2018 (Commonwealth Games), the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair and the 7 Cairns Marathon. Many of these events have been the result of collaboration between TEQ, TTNQ and Cairns Regional Council. Recognising the significant economic impact major events can have, Council is calling on the Queensland Government to commit further funding towards major event attraction over the budget year and forward estimates.

Council also requests that a specific allocation of this fund be made to supporting major events in regional Queensland with increased promotion of regional areas (such as Cairns) as a destination of choice for major events. For Cairns, the focus should be on events that take advantage of our proximity and connectivity to Asia, showcasing our natural assets, encouraging mass community participation, and promoting our Indigenous culture.

**Great Barrier Reef/ Wet Tropics Rainforest (Management Structure/Funding)**
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 the GBR had an asset value of $56 billion, contributed an estimated $6.5 billion annually to the Australian economy and supported 64,000 jobs. The preservation and effective management of the GBR and WTR 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. Cairns Regional Council is calling on all levels of Government to work together to:

- Review the current management structures for the GBR and WTR with a view to achieving consolidation and simplification.
- Agree on an appropriate funding model (including quantum of funding) for GBR and WTR management and preservation recognising the significant social and economic value of both assets.
Queensland Superyacht Strategy 2018–23 (Funding)
The Queensland Superyacht Strategy 2018-2023 was finalised by the Queensland Government in 2018 and recognises the significant potential of the superyacht industry to deliver jobs and economic growth for the state of Queensland. Cairns Regional Council supports the Queensland Superyacht Strategy 2018-2023 but is calling on the Queensland Government to commit specific funding allocations for strategy implementation in the priority areas of policy development, infrastructure, destination promotion and supply chain development.

Study Cairns (Funding)
International education is a key growth sector of the Cairns economy and supports regional economic diversification. The sector is high yielding with the length of stay of international students being significantly longer than domestic and international tourists. Family and friends visiting international students while they study in Cairns also provides a boost to the local economy. Study Cairns represents organisations, institutions and businesses in Cairns that are dedicated to providing help and support to students when they are studying in the Cairns region. Study Cairns also actively promotes the region’s education sector to international markets. The current Queensland Government funding commitment to Study Cairns expires on 30 June 2021. Cairns Regional Council is calling on the Queensland Government to confirm an extension of its funding for Study Cairns beyond June 2020 to support the continued development of the international education sector in the Cairns and FNQ region.

Trinity Wharf Cairns (formerly Tropical North Global Tourism Hub)
In 2017, the Queensland Government announced a proposed Global Tourism Hub for Tropical North Queensland with a preferred site on Port North’s strategic port land within the Cityport precinct at Wharf Street, Cairns. The preferred site is adjacent to the Cairns City Centre. A multi-phase procurement process is being conducted by the Queensland Government in relation to the project with detailed proposals submitted by proponents in late June 2019. Assessment of proposals is currently underway with an announcement on the preferred proponent expected in late 2019/early 2020. Cairns Regional Council is seeking Queensland Government commitments to the following:
- Identification and announcement of the preferred project proponent by Q1 2020.
- Regular engagement and consultation with regional stakeholders as assessment progresses and commitments to ensure economic benefits, appropriate city centre integration and public realm benefits are defined and delivered.
- Reinvestment (in the Cairns region) of any casino taxes and levies flowing to the Queensland Government from the development.

Uniform (Electricity) Tariff Policy
The aim of the Uniform Tariff Policy (UTP) is to ensure, wherever possible, that customers of the same consumption class should pay no more for their electricity merely because of their geographic location in Queensland. UTP will deliver electricity as an essential service, on a fair basis, regardless of location and encourage economic development in regional Queensland. Continuation of the principles underlying the UTP are critical to the region’s ongoing competitiveness. Higher electricity and energy prices are continually identified by businesses operating throughout the Cairns and FNQ region as a key constraint to growth. Confirmation of the extension of this policy for the budget year and over the forward estimates is critical to ensuring consumers are able to access electricity at a fair and reasonable price thereby supporting ongoing jobs and economic growth.

Wangetti Trail
The Wangetti Trail is a proposed 76 kilometre dual use (mountain biking and hiking) trail stretching along the coastal plains and mountain hinterland between Palm Cove and Port Douglas. The trail will be one of Australia’s leading adventure based ecotourism experiences, attracting visitors on an international scale. The trail will provide walkers and mountain-bike riders with a wilderness bushland and ocean experience, showcasing the beauty of the Wet Tropics Rainforest, national parks and the Great Barrier Reef. Capital costs for implementation are expected to be in the vicinity of $41 million. Cairns Regional Council welcomes the Queensland Government taking the lead on this exciting new tourism development and the allocation of $2.9 million in the Queensland Budget for 2019-20 towards the project. Council is seeking further allocations of funding towards the project in the 2020-21 budget and across the forward estimates to support implementation as well as confirmation that the trail will be dual use (mountain biking and hiking) for its entire length.
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 and sign on to help us secure an even better future for the Cairns community.