Our Vision

The Burdekin Shire Council Economic Development Strategy 2015-2020 has been developed to transform the shire and take advantage of the emerging economic opportunities, explore new directions for our future and commit to creating a prosperous economy for the region.

This strategy reinforces economic development as a priority for Council. We are committed to being a key driver for our Shire’s economic future and are aware that without action there is a risk our local economy may stagnate.

To achieve the economic change required, we are focused on five key strategic themes to create a dynamic and diversified economy. For each theme, the strategy outlines various objectives, designed to prepare for our region’s future. These themes are:

- Enable Economic Infrastructure
- Attract Investment
- Strengthen Networks
- Encourage Innovation
- Empower Future Generations

Ultimately, the success of the strategy will see improvements in liveability, which can also be described as quality of life. This Plan is not just for Council, but can be useful for other levels of government and the business community as it:

- defines the economic vision of the Shire; and
- highlights the key strategic themes and underlying strategic objectives.

Each year a range of projects and activities, consistent with the strategy, will be undertaken.
Themes & Objectives

Enable Economic Infrastructure - *Building the physical capital*

**Strategic Objectives**
- Expand irrigated agricultural land
- Expand supply of industrial land
- Enhance the transportation network
- Improve and increase the waste water treatment capability

*Project Champions: Talbot Cox & Darren West*

**Attract investment - Investing in strategic industries**

**Strategic Objectives**
- Prepare specific advice to attract new and encourage reinvestment
- Increase the diversification of industry
- Focus on value-adding
- Develop the aquaculture industry

*Project Champions: Lyndy McCathie & Dan Horan*

**Strengthen Networks - Enhancing social capital**

**Strategic Objectives**
- Support business and industry networks
- Collaborate on matters of State or National significance
- Assist local organisations in building an entrepreneurial culture
- Continue to be project champions for regional leadership in agribusiness

*Project Champions: Gary Spotswood & Jim Collins*

**Encourage Innovation - Putting technology at the heart of economic development**

**Strategic Objectives**
- Build a digitally connected community to enhance business performance
- Support increased adoption of research and development
- Support continued growth and development of existing industries
- Support the development of a small business innovation centre

*Project Champion: Gordon Edwards*

**Empower Future Generations - Developing confidence & ability**

**Strategic Objectives**
- Establish relationships with key agribusiness educational institutions
- Pursue the creation of Burdekin scholarships and business awards
- Promote traineeship and apprenticeship schemes to local industry
- Facilitate a Young Leaders Network

*Project Champions: Carmel Dal Ponte & John Moloney*
Overview of the Burdekin Economy

The Burdekin region is highly specialised around agribusiness - especially the growing of cane and sugar production. There are opportunities to grow and diversify this sector including the supply of infrastructure such as irrigation assets, to expand the total hectares under irrigation.

A continual supply of industrial land will be required together with wastewater management, especially for food processors. Transportation networks need to be improved, especially roads and bridges. Aquaculture is a growing sector in the Burdekin economy and additional investment funds will be required for this sector and others in the region.

Most of the projects derived from this plan require collaboration to succeed and this means networks particularly with business, will be strengthened. Constant innovation will be a vital ingredient for success and we recognise the need for more research and development in the Burdekin.

An enhancement in liveability will bring with it an increased retention of young people. Ultimately it will be their leadership, skills and vision that will drive improved outcomes. This is why this strategy includes “Empowering Future Generations” as one of its foundation themes.

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