

Blueprint 2030 Livingstone Shire Council Economic Growth and Investment Strategy



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Introduction

1.1 A Framework for Economic Growth and Investment

Blueprint 2030 sets the path for future economic growth and investment to support the vibrancy, diversity and sustainability of Livingstone Shire as a location of choice in which to live, work, play and invest.

Informed by a well-developed understanding of Livingstone Shire's economic structure, dynamics and potential, *Blueprint 2030* provides a framework to improve access to investment and support for local businesses and communities to prosper in order to grow a diverse, innovative and vibrant regional economy that will flourish and remain resilient for generations to come.

Blueprint 2030 has been prepared on the premise that Livingstone Shire Council, as the custodian of this plan, will continue to nurture and build key partnerships and alliances with State and Federal government agencies, regional development bodies, tourism organisations, key institutions, local businesses and the community.

Appreciating the importance of Council's strategic partnerships, *Blueprint 2030* presents a clear, actionable and achievable road map for economic development focused on:

- The delivery of essential enabling infrastructure;
- Sustainable population growth;
- The growth and retention of existing businesses and residents;
- New industry investment, growth and diversification in priority sectors;
- The attraction of visitors to the region;
- The development of a skilled and adaptable workforce; and
- Increased local employment for the Shire's residents.

1.2 The Blueprint 2030 Economic Development Objective

Strategic, informed and targeted, the themes and actions presented in this Economic Growth and Investment Strategy have been framed to help fulfil Livingstone Shire Council's and the community's vision as articulated in the *Livingstone Community Plan: Towards 2050*, which is:

Livingstone is welcoming, connected, and resilient with a relaxed community spirit, celebrated for its natural beauty, vibrant culture and thriving economy.

By providing the framework for economic growth and investment, *Blueprint 2030* is designed to help realise Livingstone Shire's economic development objective, for a diverse, growing, innovative and vibrant Livingstone Shire economy. This will be achieved through the growth and retention of the Shire's existing businesses and residents, new investment in the Shire's priority industries, increased visitor attraction and increased employment opportunities for all communities of Livingstone Shire.

Recognising the important role that Livingstone Shire Council and its partner agencies play in nurturing an 'enabling environment' for both public and private sector investment, *Blueprint 2030* contains a number of actions dedicated to building the case for attracting increased and sustained levels of investment from the other tiers of government.

A framework for facilitating and promoting prosperity, *Blueprint 2030* provides Council with the tools to influence the factors that facilitate the resilience, competitiveness and success of local businesses and the capacity of Livingstone Shire to attract new investment, diversify the economy and create the jobs of the future.

Livingstone Shire’ Economic Profile and Prospects

2.1 Economic Attributes

Located 676 kilometres north-west of Brisbane, Livingstone Shire is a premier coastal location offering an enviable lifestyle and work-life balance. Key attributes include:

	Strong industry networks and supply chain links and access to a skilled workforce.
	Quality educational facilities including early childhood education, three nationally recognised high schools, direct access to CQUni (offering TAFE and University courses).
	Abundant affordable quality serviced industrial land and comparatively low property costs.
	A coastal lifestyle defined by over 30 pristine beaches, numerous tropical islands (including Great Keppel Island), rainforest, national parks and vibrant urban communities offering a variety of tourist accommodation, shopping, art, food, recreation and entertainment.
	A pleasant climate with an average daily temperature range of 17.8°C to 27.1°C and an average annual rainfall of 938 mm.
	Good proximity to excellent transport links (road, rail, sea and air) and major Australian markets.
	Locally-based construction capability and a track record in delivering major projects.

These attributes provide the foundations to help stimulate, attract and maintain business activity, investment and employment in Livingstone Shire.

2.2 Key Metrics

	\$1.6 billion in Gross Regional Product (GRP).
	Home to approximately 11,500 jobs.
	A population of 39,125, which is expected to grow by around 16,615 to 55,740 by 2041.
	Median age is 43 years compared to 38 years for Queensland and is expected to increase to 51 years by 2041 compared to 41 for Queensland.
	Unemployment rate of 3.6% compared to a regional Queensland average of 4.7% and a State average of 4.9%.
	An expanding economy with an annual rate of growth of 3.8% over the past three years.
	Strong economic growth forecast for the next three years, led by mining and related activity.
	2,950 local businesses spread across a diversity of industries.
	Livingstone Shire’s top four employers (local jobs) are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction 1,648 jobs (15% of the total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture 1,605 jobs (14%) • Education & Training 1,180 jobs (10%) • Health & Social Assistance 990 jobs (9%)
	Livingstone Shire’s top four contributors to economic activity (industry value-added) are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction \$175m (15% of the total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture \$149m (12%) • Mining \$136m (11%) • Education & Training \$98m (8%)

Sources: ABS Census (2016), economy.id/NIEIR (May 2022), National Skills Commission (March 2022) and Queensland Government Statisticians Office (May 2022)

2.3 Turning a Population and Jobs Challenge into Opportunities for Growth

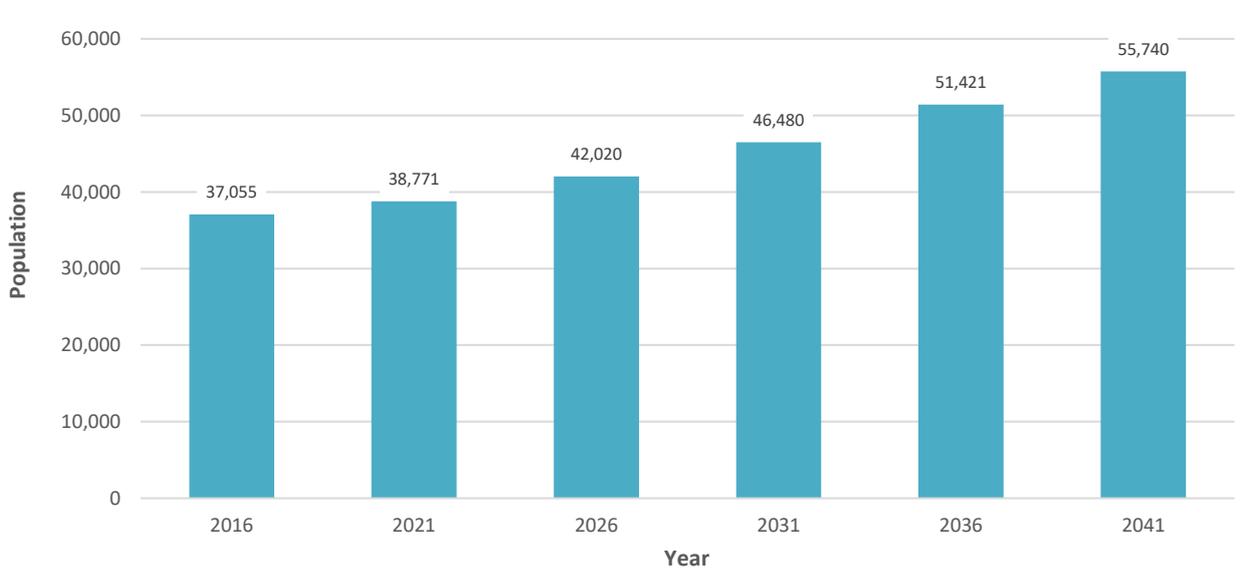
In its efforts to open up economic opportunities, Livingstone Shire Council is focussed on those objectives that will have meaningful and measurable outcomes. Informed by an understanding of both challenges and opportunities for growth, *Blueprint 2030* is designed to help facilitate, support and promote:

- Delivery of enabling infrastructure to facilitate economic activity;
- Retention the Shire's existing population;
- Local business retention and expansion;
- Investment attraction (both people and industry);
- Visitor attraction (tourism);
- Industry diversification and development; and
- A skilled workforce and local jobs.

A region's population is one of its most important resources because it provides the local workforce and plays a key role in determining the attractiveness of living in a region. Population change is a significant factor underpinning the long-term prosperity of Livingstone Shire in terms of economic and social sustainability.

Livingstone Shire's socio-economic profile shows strong population growth albeit accompanied by an aged and ageing population. This is a typical 'retiree profile' that is reflected in a smaller proportion of families, lower incomes, fewer people engaged in the labour force and a higher rate of home ownership when compared to the Queensland average.

Figure 1. Population Projection, Livingstone Shire, 2016-2041



Sources: Queensland Government population projections, 2018 edition; Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population by age and sex, regions of Australia, 2016 (Cat no. 3235.0) with interpretations by SC Lennon & Associates

The fact that population growth is forecast to be strong with a 44% increase by 2041 means there will be demands for goods and services emanating from all cohorts in the population (i.e. young, middle aged and old alike) notwithstanding the stronger demands generated by the older cohorts. To meet these needs both public and private investment will be required in urban goods and services and infrastructure.

Economic development requires a strategic and targeted approach to attract business owners and, perhaps more importantly, their families to want to live and work in Livingstone Shire. Housing diversity and affordability are crucial elements in regional migration decisions, especially for family migration but also for all household types.

Equally important, is the availability of the right mix of education and training, health care and other essential services to support the evolving needs of the Shire’s population.

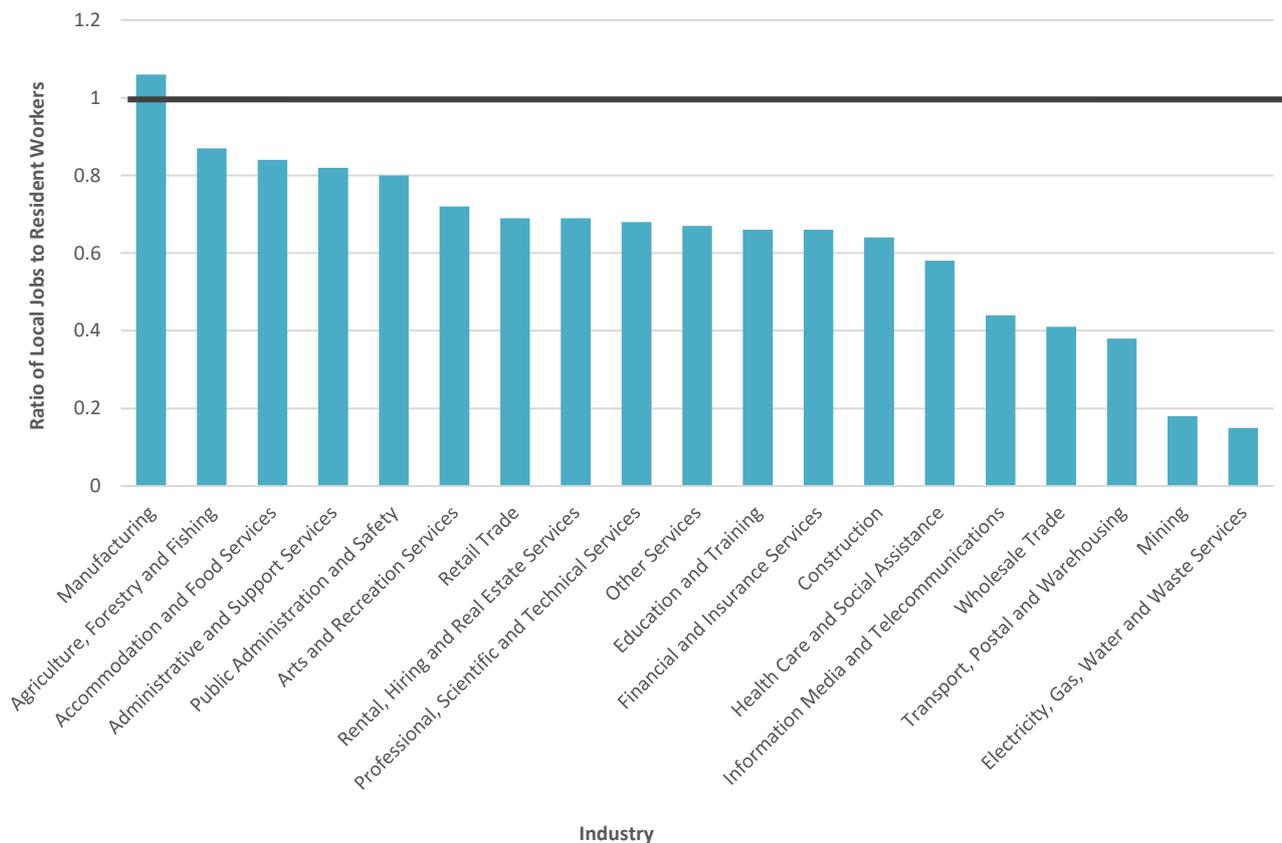
Relative to regional Queensland, employment in Livingstone Shire is dominated by agriculture and construction as well as education and training. This has the effect of reducing the significance of other sectors relative to regional averages.

Livingstone Shire’s ‘jobs challenge’ lies in the fact that the area has fewer local jobs than it does working residents, meaning a proportion of the working population travel outside the area (to Rockhampton primarily) to work. Employment capacity (or Livingstone Shire’s jobs to resident workers ratio) is a way of looking at whether the local economy could theoretically provide jobs for all its residents if they were to choose to work locally.

Livingstone Shire’s jobs to resident workers ratio in 2019/20 was 0.65 (or 65%), meaning that, on the whole, there was a shortfall of jobs to resident workers. This may be a reflection of a local skills mis-match. Only Manufacturing (1.06) had a positive jobs to resident workers ratio.

Other key industries, such as Education and Training (0.66) and Health Care and Social Assistance (0.58) had a significant shortfall of local jobs compared to resident workers in those industries.

Figure 2. Employment Capacity, Livingstone Shire, 2019/20

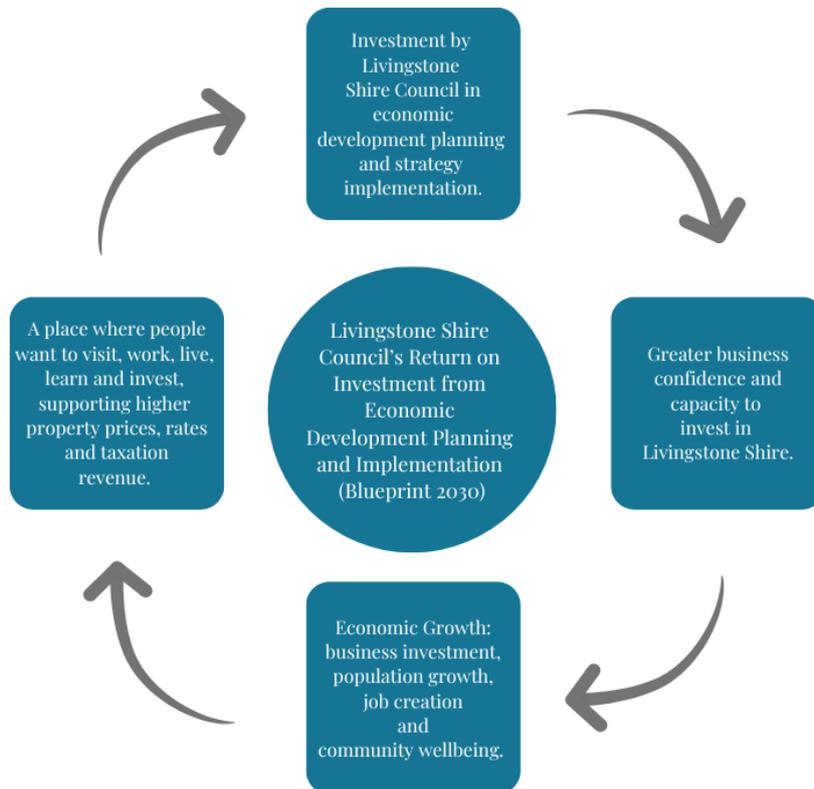


Source: economy.id with interpretations by SC Lennon & Associates

Addressing Livingstone Shire’s population and employment challenge will serve to make the local community more resilient. An increase in population will support local service delivery, attract government funding and support stable, or even higher property prices.

A growing population will also serve to retain existing businesses and attract new investment as confidence in the Shire as a place in which to live, work and invest continues to grow. New investment will generate more opportunities for employment, creating a multiplier effect of more people, more investment and more jobs, along with wages growth and an increase in consumer spending. Increased investment and expenditure will lead to further economic growth and development. That means more rates for Livingstone Shire Council and taxation revenue the State and Federal governments, which in turn leads to a virtuous cycle of more investment and expenditure in the local economy. Simply put, this is Livingstone Shire Council’s (and the community’s) return on investment in a strategic, informed and targeted approach to economic growth and investment as presented in *Blueprint 2030*.

Figure 3. Return on Investment in *Blueprint 2030*



Informed and targeted, *Blueprint 2030* presents themed opportunities for action which are designed to respond to Livingstone Shire’s economic development challenges whilst also capitalising on its strengths and prospects for economic growth and investment.

By putting in place a plan of action to pursue Council’s and the community’s vision is to develop and sustain a diverse, resilient, and thriving economy, *Blueprint 2030* addresses the critical relationship between priority industry sectors, priority projects and the Shire’s economic development potential, creating critical infrastructure needs and associated opportunities for investment.

2.4 Capitalising on Livingstone Shire’s Key Industries for Growth

Livingstone Shire has a robust industry base defined by its strong agricultural sector, which comprises beef cattle, pineapples and a range of tropical fruits. Livingstone Shire is the only place in Australia able to grow pineapples all year round.

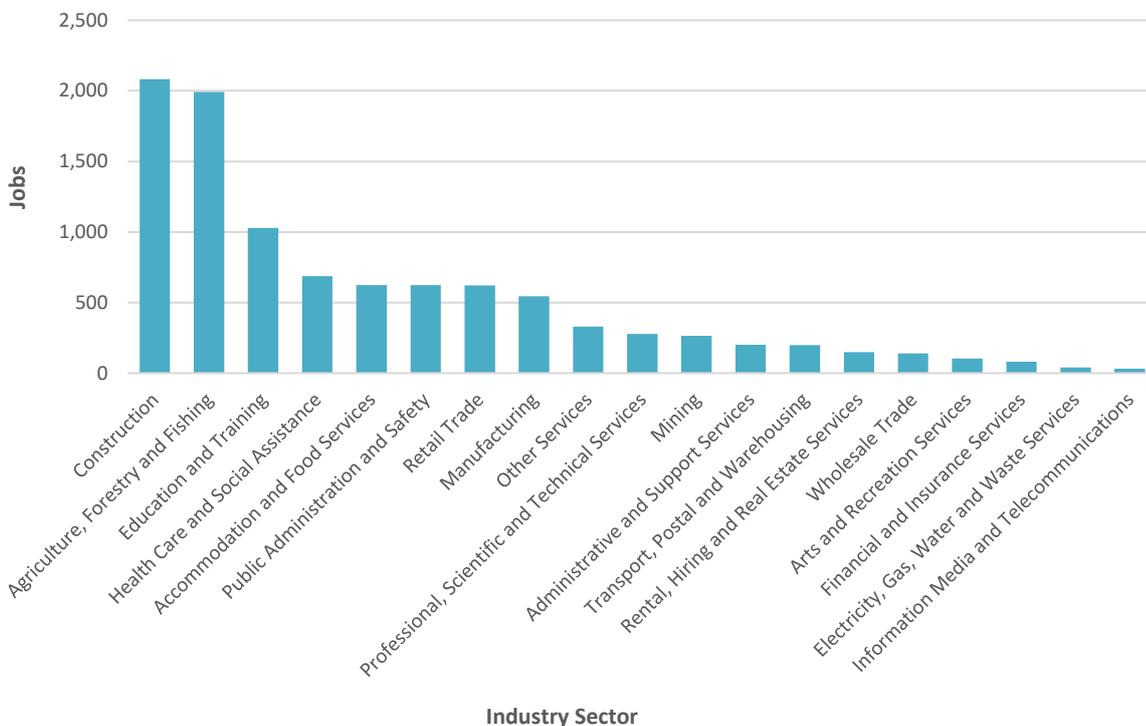
Analysis by economy.id however shows that an increase in jobs in the agricultural sector from late 2018 to mid-2020 has not led to an increase in value-added and is likely to be temporary with employment in this sector forecast to trend down by late 2024. Mining on the other hand, is forecast to provide the largest boost to economic value in the Capricorn Coast during the three-year period to December 2024.

Livingstone Shire is also home to one of Australia’s most important defence force training facilities at Shoalwater Bay, where the Australian Defence Force and allies, such as the Singapore Armed Forces and United States Military conduct regular training exercises every year.

The recent focus on efforts to support the local economy has to a large degree been driven by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. These unprecedented social and economic impacts mean the need to articulate and guide Livingstone Shire Council’s role in supporting, promoting and facilitating economic development is perhaps more important than ever before.

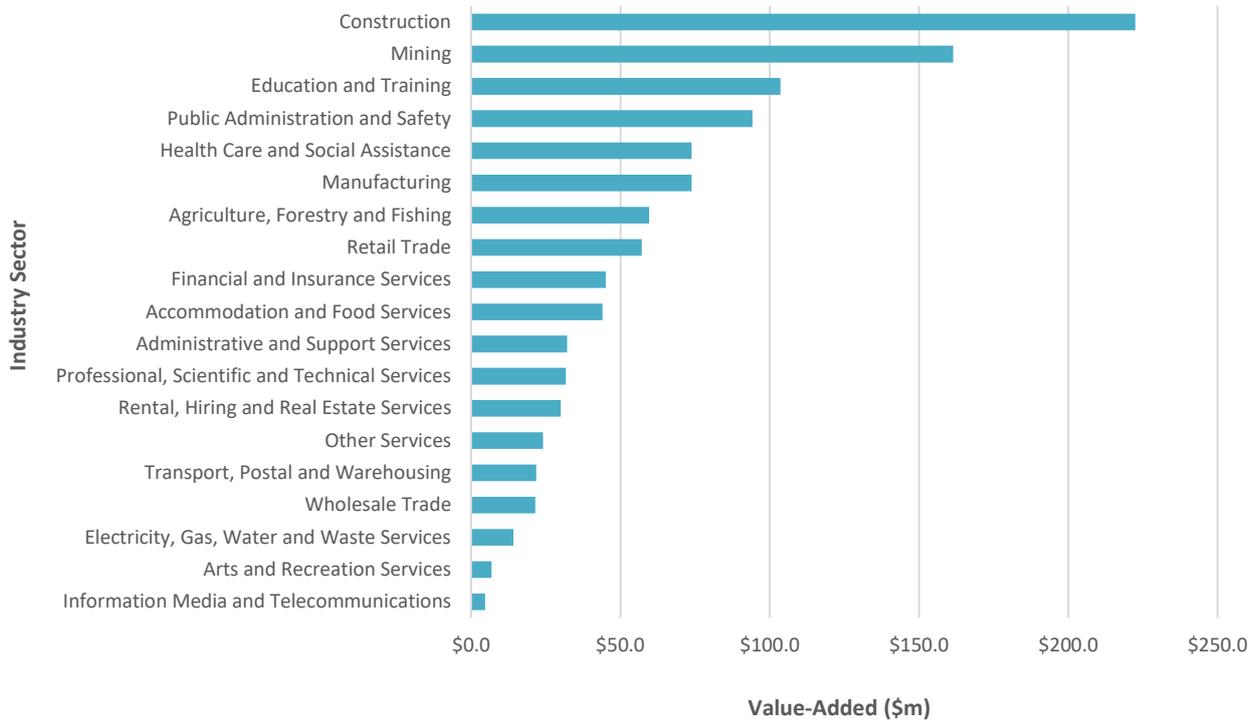
According to economy.id, pre-pandemic, residential building approvals were averaging around \$60 million per annum and non-residential around \$20 million per annum. In 2018 there were two major projects approved – a \$200 million approval of the Capricornia Correctional Centre Upgrade and the \$150 million Shoalwater Bay Training Area Remediation Project. During the pandemic, Livingstone Shire’s Gross Regional Product and jobs fell more than other areas in Queensland.

Figure 4. Employment By Industry, Livingstone Shire, 2019/20



Source: economy.id with interpretations by SC Lennon & Associates

Figure 5. Value-Added By Industry, Livingstone Shire, 2019/20



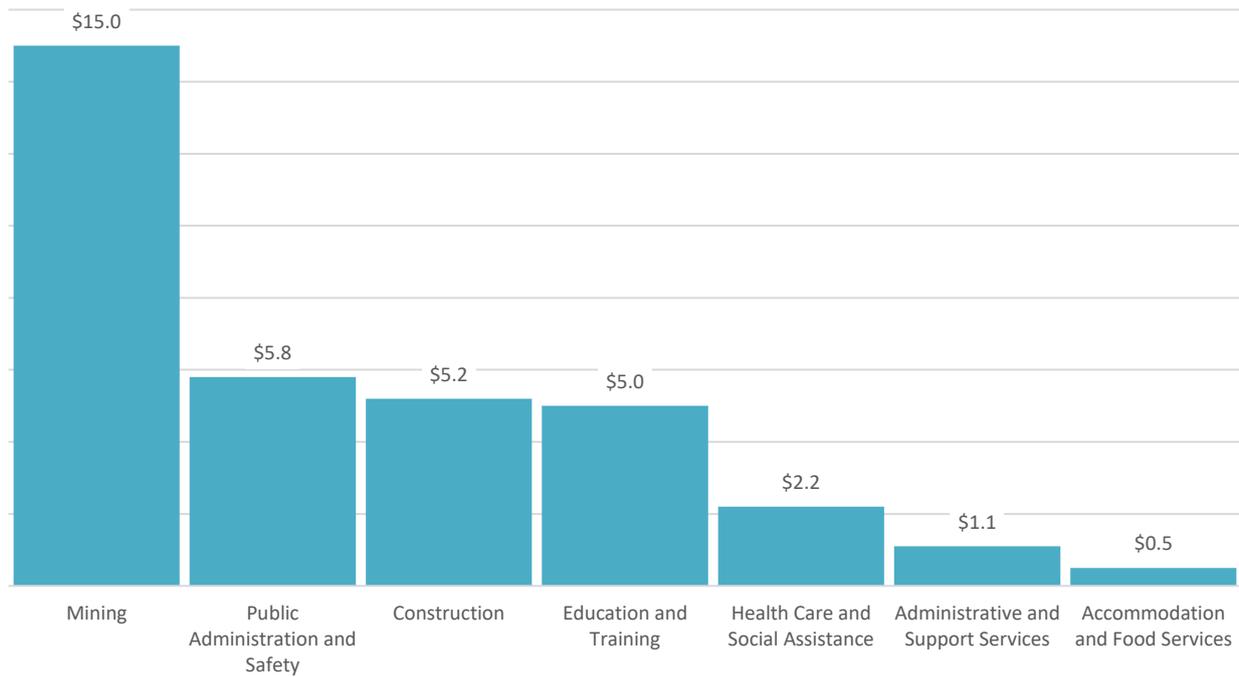
Source: economy.id and NIEIR with interpretations by SC Lennon & Associates

Despite the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, Livingstone Shire’s economy has been recovering, albeit slowly. Analysis undertaken by .id consultants shows that the Livingstone Shire economy will be driven by growth in businesses to serve its growing population in industries including health, education, retail and hospitality.

The continued growth of Livingstone Shire’s population-driven industries will be complemented by new project investments and the development of existing, new and emerging industries that capitalise on the region’s strategic comparative and competitive advantages to serve local, regional and global markets.

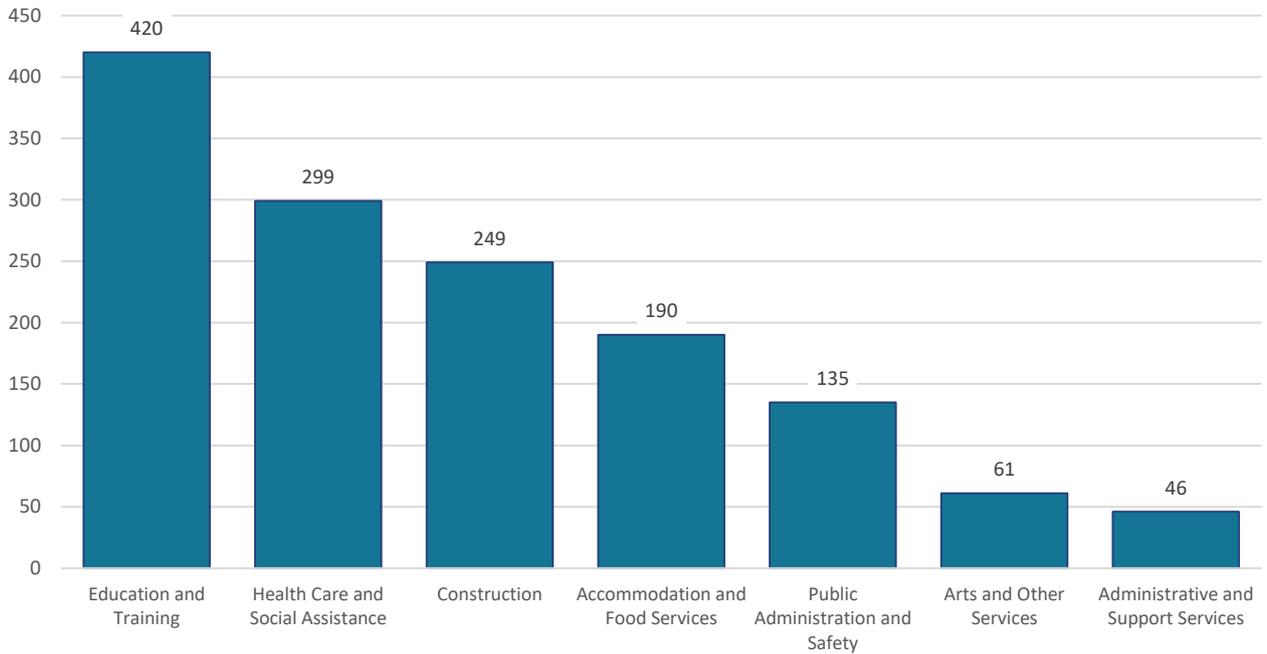
The preceding analysis together with Livingstone Shire Council’s stated economic development objective as articulated in this Economic Growth and Investment Strategy, inform the focus of *Blueprint 2030* on six priority industries.

Figure 6. Livingstone Shire’s Main Contributors to Industry Value-Added (\$b) to 2024



Source: economy.id and NIEIR with interpretations by SC Lennon & Associates

Figure 7. Livingstone Shire’s Main Contributors to Jobs Growth to 2024



Source: economy.id and NIEIR with interpretations by SC Lennon & Associates

Livingstone Shire’s Priority Industries for Growth and Investment

Livingstone Shire’s future economic development will be underpinned by innovation in traditional sectors of employment including technology-driven agri-business and food production, modern manufacturing, construction, diversification and development of the region’s tourism sector, new investments in industries including renewable energy and defence as well as opportunities to develop emerging ‘knowledge-based’ industries which are allied with the region’s driver industries including professional, scientific and technical services.

Livingstone Shire Council’s priority industries for investment, which will drive the economy of the future, include Agriculture and Food Technology; Modern Manufacturing; Tourism; Construction and Infrastructure Services; Defence and Military Training; and Energy Transition. Each of these priority industry sectors is profiled below.

Figure 8. Livingstone Shire’s Priority Industries



Agriculture & Food Technology



Modern Manufacturing



Tourism



Construction & Infrastructure Services



Defence & Military Training



Energy Transition

3.1 Agriculture and Food Technology

Overview

Agriculture is a longstanding strength of the region. Livingstone Shire is well-known for its production of Pure Gold Pineapples and is the only location in Australia able to grow pineapples year-round. Importantly, the region has a climate and the soils to grow a much wider range of food products, if markets can be identified. Livingstone Shire has several food product manufacturers that have recently increased their investment in business operations and jobs.

Cattle production is the most valuable agricultural activity in the Shire, comprising approximately 70% of all agricultural production, by value. Nearly all the existing product is processed through two local abattoirs, (one in Livingstone and one in Rockhampton) and exported. There are immediate opportunities to build on the region's reputation as the "Beef Capital of Australia" by creating local brand awareness and supplying local and select export markets via partnerships in value-added processing.

What Success Looks Like

Livingstone Shire becomes a hub for agriculture and value-added food product manufacturing in Central Queensland. With developed supply chain routes, Livingstone Shire develops a reputation as a prime location to grow and manufacture food products.

Outcomes Sought

- A tangible increase of farm-gate, farm-to-plate dining experiences and associated food and agri-tourism opportunities linking to the existing Capricorn Coast Food Trail.
- Education and investment in regenerative agriculture and livestock farming to increase profits and reduce environmental impacts.
- Expansion of existing tropical fruit and pineapple production, organic and permaculture production and investment in complimentary food manufacturing such as juice production.
- Enhanced awareness of the "Beef Capital of Australia" brand, particularly with local restaurants and identified export sectors.
- An increase in the number of beef industry related events and research in the region to consolidate the beef capital reputation beyond the single triennial event.
- Stronger connections with industry bodies including Queensland Farmers' Federation, National Farmers' Federation, AgForce and Growcom to progress advocacy at the State and Federal Government levels.
- The introduction of new Ag-tech initiatives that will attract a new market of cattle producers and horticulturalists, supporting more efficient water use, sustainable farming and the introduction of high-value finishing grass and grains into operations.
- Expanded partnerships with CQ University to identify and implement pathways for training and research opportunities for local producers.
- An increase in the supply and diversity of local food production to shorten supply chains (e.g. buy direct from producer), reduce 'food miles', transport costs and build local food security to foster resilience during disaster and/or pandemic events.

3.2 Modern Manufacturing

Overview

Modern manufacturing includes both advanced design, engineering and metal manufacturing, and food product manufacturing. Both are key sectors of employment and one of the largest industry value-add contributors to the local economy. Livingstone Shire is home to growing manufacturing companies CQ Fibreglass Direct and All Industries Group, along with food product manufacturing companies Keppel Brand and JBS Meatworks.

The future of manufacturing is in highly specialised products and processes in areas such as automated farming / ag-tech, agri-business, biopharmaceuticals, mining and processing technologies, aerospace and defence. In Livingstone Shire, the future of manufacturing depends on capitalising on these emerging sectors, particularly in agri-food, modern machinery and equipment manufacturing, maintenance and repairs. These modern manufacturing activities rely heavily on new and emerging skills as well as the capacity for firms to innovate in order to grow.

Livingstone Shire Council, working with the other tiers of government, education providers and industry is committed to strategies which address skills gaps, new technology uptake, innovation and critical research.

What Success Looks Like

Livingstone Shire will be recognised as a region that is welcoming to new business ventures and it is easy to establish and grow manufacturing enterprises.

Outcomes Sought

- A functioning relocation strategy and campaign that is adaptable to shifting market preferences and evolving workforce requirements.
- Livingstone Shire Council presents a welcoming, supportive and adaptable approach to the business community and potential investors.
- Stronger connections with Tier One resource industry companies to ensure greater uptake of local manufacturing capability on major projects and therefore expansion of local company capabilities and capacity to compete for other projects within and external to the region.
- Increased capacity of local manufacturers defined by productivity improvements and increased global competitiveness delivering greater access to emerging and diversified growth opportunities.
- Increased private investment in food manufacturing to establish Livingstone Shire as one of the primary centres for food manufacturing innovation and production in Queensland.
- Ongoing financial and non-financial assistance from State and Federal Government agencies to continue to develop Livingstone Shire's modern manufacturing industry.

3.2 Tourism

Overview

Livingstone Shire, through the 'Capricorn Coast' brand is an emerging coastal destination and gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef. Tourism experiences are gradually expanding and diversifying in response to evolving visitation demographics but the potential for substantial expansion is considerable.

Livingstone Shire is already home to several major festivals and events including CQUni Village Festival, The Yeppoon Tropical Pinefest, Yeppoon Running Festival, Yeppoon Triathlon Festival and Emu Park Festival of the Wind, all designed to capitalise on and highlight the outstanding natural and built resources the region has to offer. The proposed new convention centre offers the potential to substantially expand this offering.

The region's primary visitor markets are Queensland-based families with children, dual income families with no kids (DINKs) and self-funded retirees, although the growing representation of both interstate and international visitors indicates considerable growth potential. The region's outstanding local assets include Great Keppel Island, Capricorn Caves, Byfield National Park, and long stretches of stunning coastline.

What Success Looks Like

Livingstone Shire will have a reputation as a 'must experience' destination based on multiple tourism and quality of life charms. A variety of accommodation options and experiences will be available to suit any taste and any budget. The region will benefit from superior marketing and promotion.

Outcomes Sought

- A vibrant local business community that responds more positively to both visitor and community needs and preferences, accompanied by improved staff training to deliver exceptional customer service experiences.
- The Discover Capricorn Art Trail and Taste Capricorn Food Trail will be supplemented by additional themed experiences.
- Local nature-based and tourism operators will have strong profiles.
- Adventure tourism trails will appeal to a broad range of interests and accommodate different modes of mobility.
- There will significant growth and development of Indigenous cultural tourism as a hallmark of Livingstone Shire's visitor economy.
- Game-changer projects such as the revitalisation of Great Keppel Island, Capricorn Resort and Surf Lakes are realised.
- Barriers and costs for agri-tourism and experiential tourism product development will be significantly reduced.
- More resources will be dedicated to connecting with local agri-tourism operators to develop and grow agri-based tourism opportunities.
- There will be a greater diversity of holiday and motel accommodation to support convention and event functions.

3.4 Construction and Infrastructure Services

Overview

Construction is Livingstone Shire's largest employer and one of the major contributors to industry value-added. Over 1,600 people are employed in the sector, contributing more than \$600 million to Livingstone Shire's economy. Sector performance is aided by major projects across Central Queensland, which unfortunately creates a boom – bust employment cycle, resulting in poor retention of workforce between these major projects.

Current and pending major projects include Rookwood Weir, Rockhampton Ring Road, duplication of the Rockhampton-Yeppoon road, renewable energy projects at Clarke Creek, Moah Creek and Boulder Creek and expansion of the Shoalwater Bay Training Area. Still to come are the Keppel Bay Convention Centre, Surf Lakes, Great Keppel Island revitalisation, as well as several residential and industrial land developments including the Mint Apartments, as well as multiple new tenants at the Gateway Business and Industry Park and the Capricorn Coast Homemaker Centre.

With residential building approvals exceeding \$100 million again in the 2021-2022 financial year to date, the construction industry will remain one of the major contributors to Livingstone Shire's economy for a long time to come. Delivery of local construction is being severely hampered by a dearth of skilled tradespeople and qualified professionals in engineering, surveying, architecture, interior design, landscaping, finance and legal services. The challenge is to attract and retain these industries to continue growth-enabling development.

What Success Looks Like

Livingstone Shire Council creates the environment that supports the development of new jobs and it contributes to construction activity by developing and selling/leasing Council owned-land assets for residential, industrial and commercial uses. With this in mind, Livingstone Shire will be a sought-after location for major national and global companies to base their operations and it will be home to industry professionals across all aspects of the construction and infrastructure industry.

Outcomes Sought

- The infrastructure and construction pipeline required to attract national construction companies and related service businesses is planned for and able to be implemented when needed.
- Adequate land is zoned and serviced to support the warehousing, storage and trade servicing facilities needed to meet the demands of an expanding local construction and infrastructure industry.
- Livingstone Shire businesses have access to support and training to improve their capacity to supply services to major construction projects.
- Livingstone Shire Council plays a key/enabling role in job creation and economic contribution to the construction industry by purchasing locally and adding a preference rating to local suppliers when evaluating tender responses.
- Growth in complimentary industries (engineering, surveying, architecture, interior design, landscaping, finance and legal services) is enabled through opportunity promotions and marketing.

3.5 Defence and Military Training

Overview

Shoalwater Bay Training Area encompasses nearly half of the Livingstone Shire local government area. Recognised as one of the best training facilities in the world, it is the only area in Australia where the army, air force and navy can engage in joint military exercises. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) and allies including the Singapore Armed Forces and United States Military conduct regular training exercises at this location each year.

Livingstone Shire (as the home of the Shoalwater Bay Training Area) is positioned to support the development of new Defence Force capability and is actively advocating for this expansion as a member of the Central Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (CQROC) through the CQROC Defence Strategy.

This advocacy includes the proposed establishment of a new School of Armour in the Shoalwater Bay Training Area. The case for the Federal Government relocating the School of Armour to Shoalwater Bay involves reducing reliance (and impacts) on the civilian road network, reducing transport costs, increasing operational efficiencies and addressing the problems resulting from having such a key defence asset within an entirely urbanised area (currently located at Enoggera Barracks in Brisbane's northern suburbs).

Establishment of a School of Armour, RAAF Rockhampton and Army Barracks in the advocacy plan will boost the Rockhampton and Livingstone Shire economies by \$3.3 billion and create over 16,000 new jobs. If this occurs, the multiplier effects on the regional economy will be substantial.

What Success Looks Like

As a hub for the Australian Defence Force, Central Queensland enables the ADF to meet critical capability requirements including quicker threat response times, increased training functions and a more secure and self-reliant supply chain. The scale of the local economic impact will necessitate a substantive increase in economic development support functions to optimise opportunities and to ensure an orderly and efficient transition to a larger, more diverse Livingstone Shire economy.

Outcomes Sought

- Establishment of an ADF School of Armour in the existing Shoalwater Bay Training Area (additional \$423 million in GRP to the local economy and 2,132 FTE jobs).
- Establishment of a logistical equipment and combat supply storage and maintenance hub in Livingstone Shire.
- Relocation of Defence Force personnel and families to the region with concomitant increases in residential development and related services, flow-on economic impacts and a concerted and sustained effort to resolve skills shortages in civilian industries such as health, education, construction and other priority industries.
- Attraction of additional niche defence suppliers including advanced and precision manufacturing, research and development, diagnostics and prognostics, specialist engineering and design, weapons system support and military training simulation industries.

3.6 Energy Transition

Overview

Substantial investment in mining in Central Queensland provides significant investment opportunities for service companies resident in or considering locating to Livingstone Shire. Beyond traditional energy sources, the region is also ideal for supporting a more diversified energy mix centred on wind and solar and increasingly, hydrogen.

While mining support services or METS (mining equipment, technology and services) will continue to provide an important foundation for the Livingstone Shire economy into the foreseeable future, the continued development of this important sector will require a pro-active response to the seismic global forces at play and the opportunities being created by the emergence of a new energy economy.

There is an opportunity to be at the forefront of this shift and emphasis should be placed on being amongst the first at the table. Already, Central Queensland is investing billions of dollars into green hydrogen projects and the exploration of minerals needed for renewable industries.

Livingstone Shire's comparative and competitive advantages in this regard include its strategic location, wealth of industrial land and industrial expertise, capacity to innovate, mature transport and logistics sector and strong industry supply chains and construction capacity.

What Success Looks Like

Livingstone Shire is the location of choice for employees working in the mining industry, constituting a base for a multitude of mining industry specialists and technicians.

The Shire and surrounding region will also be a preferred investment location for mining and renewable energy support service industries and Livingstone Shire will leverage the changes necessitated by decarbonisation to build a sustainability-based economy.

Outcomes Sought

- Increased investment by businesses supporting mining and Central Queensland's new energy economy.
- Livingstone Shire Council responds proactively, aggressively and strategically to opportunities emerging from energy sector transitions.
- The Gateway Business and Industry Park accommodates the expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new manufacturing, engineering, and other mining/energy industry support services.
- Road, rail and air networks are enhanced to improve efficiencies and connectivity to the national supply line network.

Livingstone Shire’s Priority Projects for Growth and Investment

Blueprint 2030 recognises the important relationship between investing in enabling infrastructure and key projects which will serve to realise Livingstone Shire’s economic development objective, to grow and retain existing businesses (and residents), attract new industry investment and support growth in a diversity of priority industry sectors.

In providing a framework for prosperity, *Blueprint 2030* stems from a holistic approach to Livingstone Shire’s economic development on the understanding that economic development is ultimately about improving a community’s collective quality of life and is characterised by the mutually-reinforcing connection between community wellbeing, culture, environment and the economy.

To this end, Livingstone Shire Council is planning for key projects which will help transform the region’s economy. It has already invested heavily in projects such as the Gateway Business and Industry Park and Capricorn Coast Homemaker Centre to help spark economic activity and grow the region’s economy. Council is planning other key projects as well, several of which are well advanced in concept development, consultation and business case preparation. Some of these projects are solely Council-led but most will require investment from other levels of government and the private sector to deliver.

Council’s direct investment and ongoing support for these priority projects reflects its continuing commitment to develop and sustain a diverse, resilient and thriving economy as per the *Livingstone Community Plan: Towards 2050*. Each priority project is detailed as follows and is supported by key initiatives presented in the *Blueprint 2030* Implementation Plan.

4.1 Council-led Projects

Stage 2 Capricorn Coast Homemaker Centre and Depot Relocation

The Capricorn Coast Homemaker Centre Masterplan was developed by Council in 2016 to ensure the optimal development of a prime, central-Yeppoon site and to accommodate uses not currently in the market. Currently occupied by its operations depot, Council’s long-term vision is to relocate all components of the depot and use the land to create a destination retail location for hardware, home improvement and other complementary large-format retail uses to enhance the region’s retail sector and provide growth opportunities for new and expanding local businesses.

Stage One of the Homemaker Centre was released to a national property company in 2019 and has been successfully developed to accommodate several tenants, the largest being Bunnings. Construction of Stage One provided a significant boost to the local economy, with enduring benefit deriving from the approximately 70 full-time local jobs created and the retention of spending locally. The success of Stage One and general regional growth has prompted other large-format retailers and developers to enquire after future stages of the Homemaker Centre and Council is exploring relocation options for the depot so that development of subsequent stages can occur.

Gateway Business and Industry Park Estate (“The Gateway”) Stages 2, 3 and 4

The Gateway Business and Industry Park is a 56-hectare master-planned industrial precinct developed by Council, strategically located adjacent to the connecting road between Yeppoon and Rockhampton. The precinct was developed to address a market shortage of suitable land. Key assets and connections of The Gateway include:

- Proximity to coal mining country (many local businesses have relationships with the industry);
- B-Double access;
- Strategic access to road, rail and air freight links;
 - Air: 35 minutes to Rockhampton Airport -international heavy lift freight capacity and daily passenger services connecting Central Queensland to Brisbane, Townsville and the Gold Coast
 - Road: 5 minutes from the Yeppoon Town Centre, and 20 minutes to Rockhampton
 - Rail: Nearby rail facilities offer freight and passenger connectivity to major centres and the major resource rich areas of Emerald, Longreach and mining centres
- Located at the beginning of a primary entry route to the Shoalwater Bay Training Area; and
- Great highway exposure.

The Gateway includes a variety of premium lots ranging in sizes from 2,000 sqm through to 2.3 hectares. Lots are being delivered in stages and can be tailored to meet requirements for different sized business. Flexible contract terms and settlement periods are also available.

Causeway Lake Restoration

Causeway Lake has long been an important recreation asset on the Coast. Various efforts have been undertaken over the years to assess what is needed to not only restore the precinct's former glory but to fully leverage its potential. State funding over the last couple of years has enabled this assessment work to begin, yet more will be needed in the form of due diligence and final design work to understand precisely what it will cost to deliver a pragmatic, ROI-based Causeway Lake Renewal Masterplan.

Traditional uses have markedly declined due to shallowing of the lake from upstream and ocean sedimentation. As the only calm water asset in the region, the Causeway is essential for a multitude of training and safe water recreation functions, including sailing, swimming, paddle-boarding, boating, water skiing, boat licensing, fishing, canoe, kayak, etc. Re-activation of the lake will create a major asset for locals and will be a substantial draw for visitors, diversifying regional attractions and the appeal for visitors to come and stay longer in the region.

Yeppoon Town Centre Rejuvenation - \$14.6 million

Yeppoon constitutes the primary service and tourism hub for the region. The Yeppoon Town Centre Revitalisation Strategy is premised on improving streetscapes through the installation of substantially more trees and supportive landscaping within the town centre public realm, centred on James Street between Anzac Parade and Braithwaite Street (including cross streets). The need for enhanced shade and visual amenity is paramount. Upgrades to Normanby Street and Adelaide Street will also be undertaken to improve road surfaces and parking.

The strategy includes provision for improved seating and gathering spaces, pedestrian level lighting, public art and placemaking enhancements that in combination create the perfect people environment. A quality streetscape will enhance the town centre experience for locals and visitors, increase their duration of stay and thus the economic success of town centre businesses. A vibrant, attractive and distinctive town centre environment is essential to the region's brand recognition.

Yeppoon Aquatic Centre - \$13 million

The Yeppoon Aquatic Centre will be a year-round health and wellbeing aquatic destination, featuring the best in fitness aquatic facilities, a new 50m competition pool, new administration/amenities building, showers and change rooms, learn to swim capabilities, café, amenity and accessibility upgrades, a grassed spectator area, car parking and landscaping improvements. The existing Cooee Bay Sporting Complex hosts the only 50 m competitive swim facility in Yeppoon, the next closest being 40 minutes away in Rockhampton. It is surrounded by supporting sports facilities and a PCYC indoor/outdoor centre with accommodation for groups of up to 112 people. The existing pool facility is beyond repair and has to be rebuilt. Administration and change room amenities are similarly outdated and in need of replacement.

Pathways between the complex and neighbouring sporting facilities are part of the plan. Aquatic centres are important for enhancing social cohesion and improved health and wellbeing. These centres mean more to communities than just a place to swim; they provide an essential service as a hub for people to come together. The Australian government under the Community Development Grants Programme has provided an in-principle commitment of \$13 million to the project.

CQROC Defence Strategy – Central Queensland’s role in Enabling the ADF to Shape, Deter and Respond

Australia’s strategic environment is changing and the ADF is considering how best to respond. One option includes shifting military facilities closer to emerging security threats in the South Pacific.

Specific opportunities for the region include establishing a centralised armoured vehicle depot in the Shoalwater Bay Training Area and relocating the Army’s School of Armour at the same time.

Co-location will reduce the movement of over-size and over-mass vehicles from Brisbane to Central Queensland on the Australian civilian road network and support growth in the Army’s training requirements for new armoured vehicles. Operational efficiencies will be realised by co-locating repair and maintenance activity in region.

These projects alone would increase Gross Regional Product in Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast by \$423 M and 2,132 jobs (FTE). If the Army’s 7th Brigade (which has outgrown its home at Gallipoli Barracks in Brisbane) were to establish in either Rockhampton or Livingstone Shire, it is estimated that this would increase GRP by an additional \$1.9 billion and create approximately 9,500 full-time equivalent jobs in the region.

New Council Civic Centre

Council staff currently operate from several locations, a situation which undermines organisational effectiveness and customer service. Consolidation of Council’s administrative functions and the library to one centralised location in the Yeppoon town centre will improve public access to Council services and the efficiency of Council operations. This has the added benefit of freeing up several Council owned properties for repurposing for higher and better use. More than anything, positioning over 300 employees in the Yeppoon town centre will generate a substantial increase in local spend in nearby retail outlets.

Rail Trail Extension – Stage One: Yeppoon Road to Mackays Road

The Capricorn Coast Pineapple Rail Trail (Braithwaite Street to Yeppoon Road) has been developed on a section of disused rail corridor that connects Yeppoon to the neighbouring city of Rockhampton. Council and the community would like to see the trail extended along the balance of the rail corridor to create a truly outstanding asset for long distance walkers, runners and cyclists. The trail cuts through a diversity of landscapes and is considered to be one of the best undeveloped rail trail opportunities in Queensland.

Livingstone Shire Council has developed a master plan for the balance of the rail trail, acknowledging the immense draw that this would provide to locals and active visitors. Importantly, it would provide a massive boon to several small attractive rural communities intersected by the trail. The extension of the rail trail through this proposed next stage would add an additional 6.8 kilometres to the existing trail 4.5-kilometre trail. Extending the trail through to Mount Chalmers would be a total investment of over \$10 million.

4.2 Other Government and Private Sector-led Projects

Surf Lakes Capricorn Coast Wave Pool Resort - \$187 million

A \$187 million surfing wave pool resort “Surf Lakes” will make the Capricorn Coast the next surfing mecca. Surf Lakes employs a revolutionary new technology that creates substantially more wave action than other prototypes on the market, providing waves from beginner to elite status - at the same time.

Stage One is Council-approved and includes camping and glamping sites, cabins, a restaurant, a learn-to-surf lagoon, skate park, scuba pool and solar farm. Stage Two will include a boutique hotel, aqua park and village green. This is a transformational project that will bring over 100,000 new visitors to the region annually and employ over 229 full-time equivalent positions as well as provide annual economic activity of approximately \$17.4 million.

Rejuvenate Woppa (Great Keppel Island) \$30 million

Great Keppel Island sits on the Southern Great Barrier Reef, a short 30-minute ferry ride from the mainland. It is one of the most attractive beach-endowed islands along the entire Queensland coast with 17 white sand beaches adjacent to crystal clear water, as well as a few reefs. The major resort infrastructure was sold to Tower Holdings in 2008 who closed the resort shortly after. Tower Holdings’ efforts to sell the lease rights since then have all ended in failure.

In 2017 the Queensland Government made an election commitment of \$25 million as a recovery package for the island and an additional \$5 million was added under the *Building Our Regions Program*. In late 2021, the state government initiated a community based master-planning effort to inform prioritisation of common-user infrastructure and define a clear future vision for the island.

Keppel Bay Convention and Sporting Hub

Set to begin construction in late 2022 this project includes redeveloping the existing beachfront sailing club into a 500-person conference and function centre, including a master sailing hub. The focus of the project is to provide a purpose-built multi-use convention centre tailored to attract national conventions and accommodate local meeting and gathering space needs.

The project also entails upgrades to sailing operations, storage, amenities and training space. Currently there is nothing in either Livingstone or Rockhampton regions that can host major conventions and trades shows. This facility will significantly increase the region’s ability to attract business and leisure events and bolster demand for new short-term accommodation.

Capricorn Integrated Resort

The project involves the construction of an integrated resort community including tourism, recreational and residential precincts approximately 9 km north of Yeppoon. The revised project proposal is for a 1,784 room 5-star resort. It will include a golf course, 14,500 sqm of function, retail and food and drink outlets and the creation of a new residential community of 1,526 dwellings.

Improved Maritime Infrastructure

Demand for better/more boat ramps and parking areas continues to grow despite upgrades over the last five years. The pressure on existing facilities, particularly on weekends and public holidays, is intense. Demand has gained momentum in response to the introduction of commercial Net Free Zones and the subsequent improvements in fish stock. Infrastructure shortfalls have been identified on numerous occasions through various reports and studies most specifically concerning open-water access, all tide protected boat ramps with safe access. The next steps are for DTMR to undertake a needs analysis of what maritime infrastructure upgrades are required in the Capricorn Coast region.

Blueprint 2030 Implementation Plan

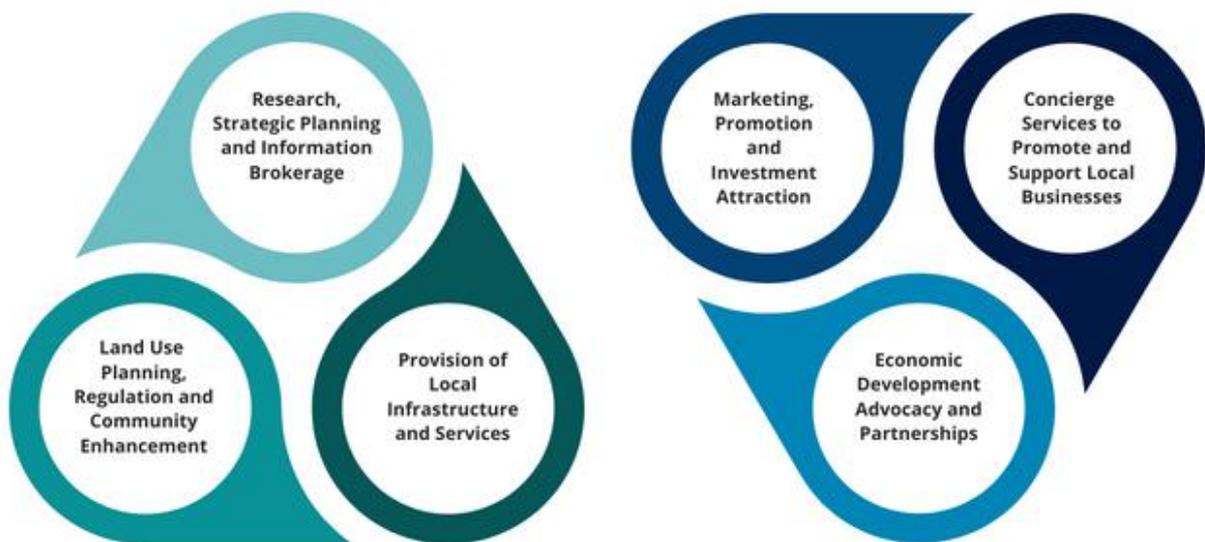
5.1 Council's 'Core Business' to Promote Economic Growth and Investment

While businesses drive economic activity and employment creation, Livingstone Shire Council recognises that it has a vital role to play in regional leadership and advocacy, supportive infrastructure, and the promotion and enabling of local economic development.

Council works with other tiers of government, non-government bodies, industry stakeholders and the community to help promote the Capricorn Coast as a location of choice for people to live, work and play.

Having regard for Livingstone Shire Council's collaborative partnerships and its commitment to help the businesses and distinct communities of the Capricorn Coast reach their full potential, there are six core areas of economic development activity which underpin Council's role in the implementation of *Blueprint 2030*, as illustrated below.

Figure 9. Livingstone Shire Council's Six Core Economic Development Activities



Each theme as described below represents an activity area of Livingstone Shire Council, where it works as either the lead agent or in a support role in partnership with other key agents of change.

Council's strategy implementation partners include key State and Federal Government agencies, regional development bodies, industry representative bodies, key institutions and the community.

Research, Strategic Planning and Information Brokerage

One way that Livingstone Shire Council supports economic activity is through the important roles that it plays in researching and disseminating information on the local economy and related matters, policy development and strategic planning (e.g. economic development planning, tourism planning, community and corporate planning) and as a broker of information between Council, other tiers of government, key institutions, industry and the community.

Land Use Planning, Regulation and Community Enhancement

Strategic land use planning, development controls, building and other regulations are perhaps the most powerful tools that Councils have to facilitate and enable economic development. Livingstone Shire Council endeavours to maintain a regulatory and land use planning environment that is as supportive of business opportunity and investment as possible. There is, however, always room for improvement and the Council is very open to working with the business community in identifying and responding to identified “areas for improvement”. Livingstone Shire Council pays close attention to ensuring that adequate land and floorspace is available for commercial and industrial development and for other economic activity. Council understands that a liveable community is essential for attracting and retaining the regional workforce and as such also supports its towns and villages through general placemaking, master planning, development control, place activation, landscaping, urban improvements and community enhancement programs.

Provision of Local Infrastructure and Services

Livingstone Shire Council, in conjunction with State and Federal Government agencies, regional development organisations and infrastructure and service providers collectively establish and maintain the ‘enabling environment’ for economic activity. These enablers include local roads; developable residential, commercial and industrial land; the form and function of the region’s towns and settlements; community services and facilities including sporting, cultural and recreational facilities. At the regional level, the enablers of economic development include those attributes that Council is not directly responsible for, but which it influences through its regional economic partnerships and advocacy and lobbying efforts including, for example, regional transport and communications infrastructure; power and water; health care and social assistance services; education infrastructure and workforce skills / human capital. Council collaborates with regional stakeholders to ensure that the fundamental enablers for investment and economic development are addressed by planning for and providing regionally significant infrastructure in an informed, planned and co-ordinated manner.

Concierge Services to Promote and Support Local Business

Livingstone Shire Council, in its role as economic development information-broker or ‘concierge’, liaises with business and industry as well as representative organisations and peak industry bodies to understand local needs and priorities and addresses those priorities through planning, program and project delivery. As a frequent first point of contact for the business community, Council has a role to play in informing businesses of State and Federal Government business assistance and grant programs on offer. It can also facilitate access to business support programs, training workshops and investment forums offered by other agencies and organisations. This role is particularly relevant considering the current and likely ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Marketing, Promotion and Investment Attraction

Livingstone Shire Council facilitates investment by promoting what the local area and wider region has to offer prospective investors in a strategic and targeted fashion. Working in collaboration with Capricorn Enterprise as the lead regional tourism organisation, it promotes the Capricorn Coast’s ‘tourism offer’ as well as identifying local infrastructure investment needs through an informed approach to destination management. Both parties aggressively promote these needs to State and Federal funding agencies.

Economic Development Advocacy and Partnerships

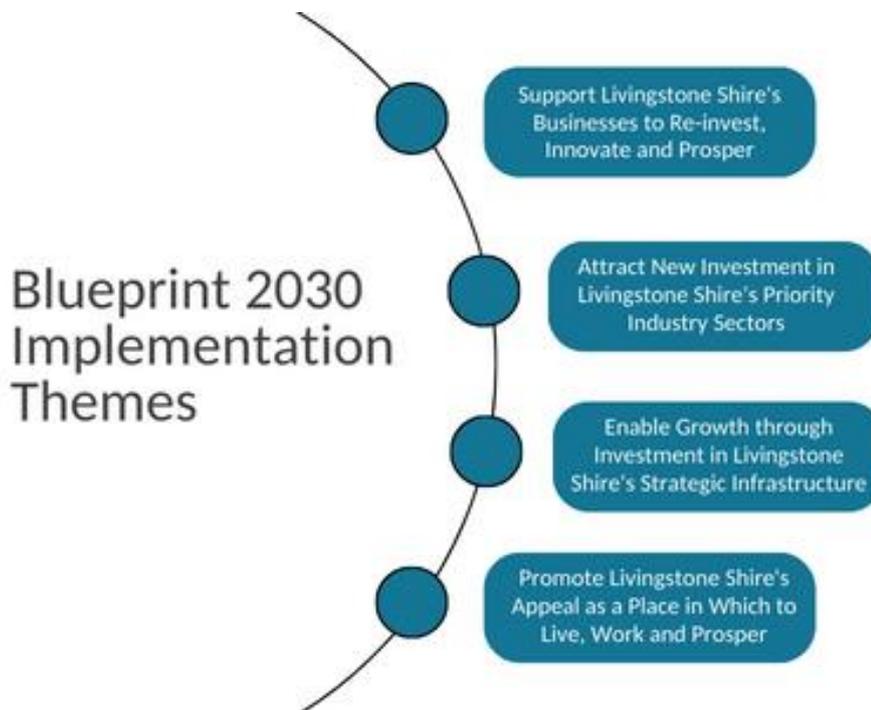
No one organisation has the knowledge, know-how or resources to effectively pursue a local or regional economic development agenda alone. Positive collaborative partnerships are an essential ingredient of success. Livingstone Shire Council and its partners in industry, government and the non-government sector provide a unifying voice for communities and businesses when lobbying State and Federal Governments on key economic and infrastructure issues. Council plays a key role in these efforts through identifying strategic priorities and preparing business cases to inform government funding for key projects. Council's core areas of economic development activity, as described above, inform the suite of actions designed to promote, facilitate and support economic growth and investment in Livingstone Shire, as presented in the following implementation plan.

5.2 Implementation Plan

While business and industry drives economic activity and employment creation, Livingstone Shire Council recognises that it has a vital role to play in the leadership, organisation, delivery and promotion of investment and economic activity. The themes and actions presented in the following pages reflect Livingstone Shire Council's important role as a promoter, supporter and enabler of investment and economic growth.

Having regard for Council's collaborative partnerships and its commitment to help the Shire's businesses and communities reach their full potential, there are four core activity areas which frame Council's *Blueprint 2030* implementation plan, as illustrated below.

Figure 10. Blueprint 2030 Implementation Themes



Each theme represents an activity area of Livingstone Shire Council, where it works as either the lead agent or in a support role in partnership with other key stakeholders including State and Federal government agencies, regional development bodies, tourism organisations, institutions such as education and training providers and not-for-profits, local businesses and the community, to promote, support and facilitate economic growth and investment in Livingstone Shire.

Theme 1: Support Livingstone Shire's Businesses to Re-invest, Innovate and Prosper

Rationale

A hallmark of *Blueprint 2030* is its emphasis on facilitating new investment and growth from business and industry already located in the Shire. It is generally accepted that around 70% of investment in any region is made by existing firms (i.e. established businesses plus newly established firms or 'start-ups', and already established foreign-owned companies). Hence, locally-based enterprises often present the greatest potential to take advantage of opportunities for growth and development.

Livingstone Shire Council encourages and facilitates local investment by providing information and support for existing local businesses through efficient delivery of supportive regulatory and land use planning functions and direct engagement and collaborative relationships with local businesses. Council also regularly engages with the Shire's businesses by attending and hosting business and industry events, networking functions, business awards and training programs.

Livingstone Shire Council actively supports prospective, and emerging micro, small and medium sized businesses in their endeavours to innovate through access to relevant programs and when possible, the provision of Council-owned meeting spaces to foster the exchange and incubation of ideas and business tactics.

Actions

- 1.1 Formalise and resource a 'business investment concierge' role, to be provided by Council. Allocate human and financial resources to the establishment and operation of a dedicated and staffed virtual business help desk, providing local businesses with access to available business information and advisory services. This service will be valuable for assisting businesses at all stages of establishment but will be particularly important for alleviating the challenges of new business establishment, helping to make the pathway to growth and prosperity easier.
- 1.2 Review the Planning Scheme and associated Council regulatory processes to enable a merit-based (Return-On-Investment) entrepreneurial and accelerated approach to the review of community-significant construction projects and development proposals. Merit-based ROI qualifications include economic diversification, job creation, innovation and addressing urgent or long-standing community needs such as housing supply and diversity or town centre development.
- 1.3 Engage with Livingstone Shire's businesses through the Capricornia Chamber of Commerce, to inform a program for planning, hosting and attending selected business events, networking functions, business awards, trade shows, conferences and training programs that meet the needs of the Shire's existing businesses.
- 1.4 Design and deliver programs to support the Capricorn Coast's tourism and hospitality sector through a diversity of support measures, including, for example, continued investment in place improvements to enhance and activate public spaces, facilitating retail pop-ups and supporting strategic promotional campaigns which have the collective buy-in of local businesses.
- 1.5 As a business investment 'solutions broker', encourage local manufacturers to innovate and grow by connecting them with the business support services offered by the Rockhampton Manufacturing Hub. Work with those businesses that have already benefited from the Manufacturing Hub Grants Program to encourage others to participate.

- 1.6 Foster stronger connections to Tier One resource industry companies to ensure greater uptake of local manufacturing capability on major projects and therefore expansion of local company capabilities and capacity to compete for other projects within and external to the region.
- 1.7 Connect businesses to relevant State and Federal government programs for business development and mentoring for intending and newly established businesses.
- 1.8 Partner with local meat producers and processors to enhance “Beef Capital of Australia” brand awareness, particularly with local restaurants and identified export sectors.
- 1.9 Pursue additional beef industry related events and research in the region to consolidate the beef capital reputation beyond the single triennial event. Livingstone could host many of these.
- 1.10 Create a partnership with industry bodies Queensland Farmers’ Federation, National Farmers’ Federation, AgForce and Growcom to progress advocacy at the State and Federal Government levels.
- 1.11 Expand partnerships with CQ University to identify and implement pathways for training and research opportunities for local agricultural producers.
- 1.12 Explore opportunities for investment in regenerative agriculture and livestock farming to increase profits and reduce environmental impacts.
- 1.13 Review Livingstone Shire Council’s online information portal to ensure currency of information on topics relevant to existing and prospective local businesses.
- 1.14 Collaborate with potential partners to explore the feasibility of establishing a Business Start-up Program and Workspace in Yeppoon to support prospective and establishing local entrepreneurs. Identify potential workspace locations and program funding sources.
- 1.15 In collaboration with the Queensland Local Content Leaders Network (QLCLN), explore existing local content / local buy programs to improve Livingstone Shire Council’s support for and promotion of local procurement objectives. Continue to support local business and industry through a procurement process that adds a ‘local buy’ rating during evaluation

Theme 2: Attract New Investment in Livingstone Shire's Priority Industry Sectors

Rationale

Investment is fundamental to economic development, and access to markets is a key determinant of long-term economic growth. Livingstone Shire Council is focussed on attracting external investment by promoting what the local area and wider region has to offer prospective investors in a strategic informed and targeted fashion.

Livingstone Shire Council does not have the resources to support all industry sectors and therefore focuses on those industries that will deliver the greatest return on investment for the region. As the economy continues to grow and diversify, it is likely that these priority sectors will also need to change, particularly in capturing emerging trends.

Livingstone Shire Council maintains strong relationships with its key partners such as Capricorn Enterprise, Trade and Investment Queensland, RDA Central and Western Queensland, industry peak bodies and others to optimise support for these priority sectors.

Working in collaboration with Capricorn Enterprise, Council pro-actively promotes the region's 'tourism offer' as well as planning for and prioritising necessary local infrastructure investment to support the development of future tourism services.

Actions

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| <p>2.1 In collaboration with Capricorn Enterprise and with the support of Trade and Investment Queensland, establish an investment enquiry protocol for Livingstone Shire, articulating roles, responsibilities and processes for managing and registering investment enquiries to ensure a professional, efficient and one-stop process for responding to prospective investors.</p> | <p>2.5 Seek out private investment in food manufacturing and establish Livingstone Shire as one of the primary centres for food manufacturing innovation and production in Queensland.</p> |
| <p>2.2 Curate a welcome to Livingstone document to be combined with business concierge services. Utilise new <i>Discover Capricorn</i> social media channels to market and promote key messages to target audiences.</p> | <p>2.6 In Council's capacity as a business investment concierge, engage with Trade and Investment Queensland and other key agencies to ensure Livingstone Shire's priority industry sectors and investment priorities are clearly articulated and communicated to prospective investors from interstate and overseas.</p> |
| <p>2.3 Ensure Council has the capacity through the allocation of human resources and access to up-to-date information, to provide prospective investors with customised site selection services for those seeking industrial land or commercial floorspace.</p> | <p>2.7 Advocate for new investment in Livingstone Shire through Council's supportive regulatory and planning system, its business information and advisory services support functions and its advocacy role.</p> |
| <p>2.4 Attract new businesses to the region by highlighting the region's cost and lifestyle advantages relative to the capital cities and Gold and Sunshine Coasts.</p> | <p>2.8 Design and deliver a strategy focused placemaking, wayfinding, signage and interpretation to prominently acknowledge and celebrate Livingstone Shire's Traditional Owners, their culture and their relationship to the landscape and its components.</p> |

- 2.9 Collaborate with key stakeholders to develop action plans to deliver major investment project proposals including the Great Keppel Island Rejuvenation Project, Capricorn Integrated Resort and Keppel Bay Convention and Sporting Hub. Identify the barriers, solutions, cost/benefits, key players, necessary resources and advocacy needs to implement key projects.
- 2.10 In partnership with CQROC, advocate to the Australian Government and other key stakeholders the key messages in the Central Queensland Defence Plan: Implementation Plan.
- 2.11 Continually research, monitor and assess Livingstone Shire’s priority projects, to inform regularly updated, targeted and tailored advocacy documents for presentation to the State and Federal governments. Regularly updated advocacy documents should outline project needs, opportunities, priorities for investment and the overall business case, that is, the anticipated social and economic benefits to the communities of the Shire and region. An aggressive, well considered advocacy plan will be essential.
- 2.12 Conduct a post-occupancy check-in with newly relocated businesses to welcome them and connect them with Council services (and other services) and local business and industry networks.

Theme 3: Enable Growth through Investment in Livingstone Shire's Strategic Infrastructure

Rationale

Livingstone Shire Council plays an important role in establishing and maintaining the 'enabling environment' for investment. This refers to the services, infrastructure and support mechanisms required to facilitate positive change.

Council works to ensure that the fundamentals for investment attraction and economic development are addressed by planning for and providing local infrastructure and services within its remit.

At a broader level, Council collaborates with its regional stakeholders to ensure that the fundamental enablers for investment and economic development are addressed by planning for and providing regionally significant infrastructure in an informed, planned and co-ordinated manner.

Livingstone Shire Council has an important role to play in attracting government investment in enabling infrastructure by identifying strategic priorities and preparing business cases to inform government funding for key projects.

Actions

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| <p>3.1 Continue to investigate, plan for, release and promote the availability of quality, serviced industrial land in Livingstone Shire to meet the anticipated requirements of existing and emerging new industries.</p> | <p>3.4 Investigate and prioritise Internet connectivity shortfalls and mobile phone blackspot areas and use the information to partner with government agencies and service providers to ensure that high-quality mobile phone and Internet coverage is provided to all communities of Livingstone Shire.</p> |
| <p>3.2 As members of the Central Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (CQROC) collaborate to progress regionally significant "game changing" infrastructure.</p> | <p>3.5 Continue to press State and Federal government funding agencies to ensure alignment of business cases for priority physical and community infrastructure projects with agency priorities and funding opportunities.</p> |
| <p>3.3 Continue to engage with Surf Lakes Capricorn Coast by providing ongoing planning, promotional and advocacy support for enabling access infrastructure for the proposed Capricorn Coast Wave Pool Resort.</p> | <p>3.6 Pro-actively engage with the renewable energy sector and key agencies including the Australian Renewable Energy Agency Trade and Investment Queensland and the Queensland Department of Energy and Public Works to leverage Livingstone Shire's suitability as a location for renewables and industry support services.</p> |

Theme 4: Promote Livingstone Shire's Appeal as a Place in Which to Live, Work and Prosper

Rationale

A region's population is one of its most important resources and population change is a significant factor underpinning Livingstone Shire's long-term economic resilience. Despite a strong economy, a relatively modest rate of unemployment and a healthy level of population growth, Livingstone Shire's ageing population places a constraint on the capacity of the area to prosper. Compounding this, attracting and retaining skilled workers to Livingstone Shire has been a challenge.

Lifestyle is a foundation of Livingstone Shire's point of difference and efforts to promote the area should continue to focus on what the Shire has to offer prospective businesses and residents as a place in which to live, work and invest. Council is committed to maintaining a standard of community infrastructure and services that supports and enhances the liveability of the Shire. Investment in and promotion of these assets is central to supporting the development of Livingstone Shire as a location of choice in which to live, work and play.

Central to the needs of business and industry is a skilled and adaptable workforce. Capacity-building for a sustainable local workforce requires Livingstone Shire, as a community, to equip itself with the skills, knowledge and capabilities needed to adapt to a changing economic environment.

Building workforce capacity will provide Livingstone Shire with the opportunity to help shape and manage its own physical, social, economic and cultural environment in response to State, national and global economic trends and influences.

Actions

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| <p>4.1 Establish a dedicated <i>Discover Capricorn Coast</i> social media channel across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn for Council's Economic Development Unit to deliver frequent, clever, topical messages to key target audiences including local businesses, residents and visitors.</p> <p>4.2 Secure the government funding and logistical support needed to deliver major infrastructure projects including the Yeppoon Town Centre Rejuvenation Project, Great Keppel Island Revitalisation, Causeway Lake restoration and redevelopment, regional boat ramps and the expansion of Rosslyn Bay Harbour. These projects are important catalysts for investment across all sectors of the local economy.</p> | <p>4.3 Progress Stage 2 of the Capricorn Coast Homemaker Centre project to free-up commercial land in the centre of Yeppoon, to allow expansion of the Homemaker Centre creating new opportunities for big box retail opportunities and associated employment.</p> <p>4.4 Secure government funding support for the Yeppoon Aquatic Centre Project as a catalyst project underpinning the town's lifestyle appeal.</p> <p>4.5 Advocate for government funding to support the next phase of the Causeway restoration and redevelopment project in support of restoring Causeway Lake as a major regional recreation asset underpinning the Capricorn Coast's appeal as a place in which to live, work and play. Funding is needed to commission due diligence and final design studies (including an overall business case). Following this work, considerably more funds will be needed to execute the findings of these reviews.</p> |
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- 4.6 Partner with the State Government and CQUni to develop a collaborative program that precisely articulates Livingstone Shire's existing and emerging skills gaps by engaging with established local businesses, representative industry organisations, government agencies and the region's education and training providers. Once identified, create a relocation campaign to address these gaps - adaptable across all industries.
- 4.7 Work with relevant government agencies, education and training providers and the Central Queensland region's resource sector companies regarding current expansion and development projects, to map current and anticipated skills requirements and identify potential training programs to support employment opportunities for Livingstone Shire residents.
- 4.8 In response to the findings of Livingstone's 5 Year Housing Demand Analysis, prepare a Capricorn Coast Housing Strategy documenting priorities for investment.

5.3 Informing Priority Actions and Resourcing Requirements

Effective implementation of *Blueprint 2030* must be cognisant of available resources and the capabilities of Livingstone Shire Council to progress the initiatives identified. To allow for effective implementation over time, the actions presented in this document are to be prioritised by Council and reviewed annually.

The prioritisation of actions to support economic growth and investment in Livingstone Shire will be guided by two broad sets of assessment criteria – *benefits realisation* and *capacity to implement*. Each is explained in turn.

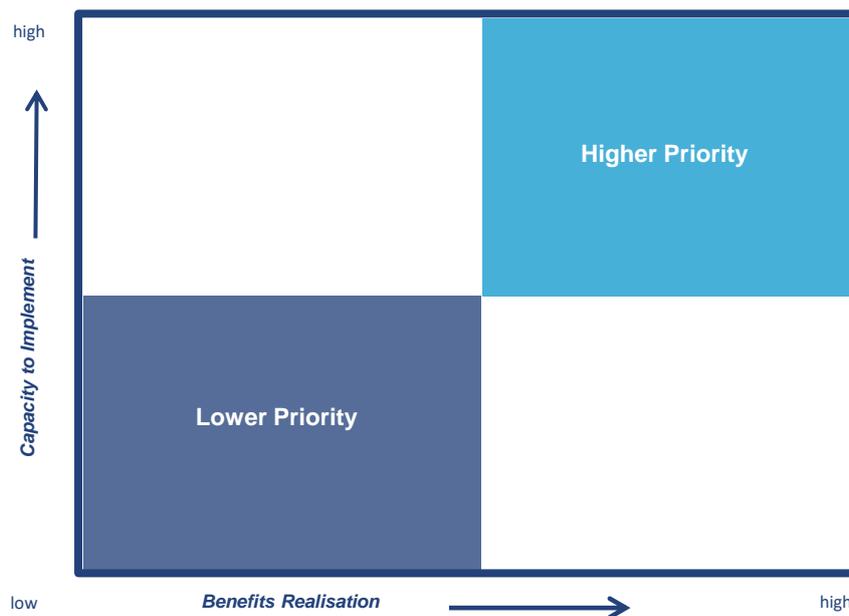
Benefits Realisation:

- What **benefits** will the opportunity deliver to Livingstone Shire’s residents and businesses if realised?
 - Does it build on Livingstone Shire’s existing industry profile, capabilities and competitive advantages?
 - Will it bring more business investment to Livingstone Shire and the Capricorn Coast region, and is it the sort of investment we want?
 - Will it help existing local businesses to grow?
 - Will it help to create more jobs in the Shire’s priority industry sectors?
 - Will it help to reduce leakages and retain and re-circulate more income in the local economy?
 - Are there other potential impacts (e.g. social, environmental, cultural) to consider?

Capacity to Implement:

- What is Livingstone Shire Council’s **capacity to implement** the project or activity?
 - Is it consistent with the community’s vision and values as articulated in the *Livingstone Community Plan: Towards 2050*?
 - Is it consistent with Council’s land use planning and policy objectives?
 - Does Council have the organisational capacity to implement the project?
 - Does Council have the financial resources and the human resources?
 - Is the necessary support infrastructure available (or can it be realistically built/accessed)?
 - Implementation - who is best placed to drive the opportunity? Is it Council as the lead, as a partner or is it the responsibility of other organisations with support from Livingstone Shire Council?

Figure 11. Blueprint 2030 Action Prioritisation Assessment Matrix



Source: SC Lennon & Associates

Strategy implementation priorities are identified through the application of these broad set of assessment criteria, determining to what extent the opportunity in question concerned is a higher, medium or lower priority.

Applying the assessment criteria and effectively 'rating' and 'ranking' each action determines those that are considered the highest priority and which, as a result, are short-term actions under *Blueprint 2030*.

5.4 Resourcing Council's Commitment to Economic Growth and Investment

Livingstone Shire Council's resourcing of its economic development support commitments, as articulated in *Blueprint 2030*, as well as access to resource support via other government agencies, will be key to its capacity to deliver on the initiatives put forward in this document.

Council's Economic Development Team has limited capacity to deliver effective economic development support services including research, strategic planning and information brokerage, the delivery of access to local business support services (concierge services), investment attraction, marketing & promotion, catalyst project planning and support and advocacy/lobbying, or to engage effectively with local businesses throughout the Shire.

Council's human resources for its economic development support, facilitation and promotion programs comprise the Manager Economy and Places, a Senior Urban Strategist, an Economic Development Officer and a Project Support Officer.

Council's Economic Development Team will have primary responsibility for delivery of the priority actions presented in *Blueprint 2030* and for monitoring its ongoing implementation.

Having regard for the recommended initiatives described in this document, it is essential that Council commit to strategy implementation priorities (priority actions) and that a commitment be made to Council's in-house human resource requirements to ensure effective implementation of *Blueprint 2030*.

It is important to note that not all initiatives contained in *Blueprint 2030* are necessarily the primary responsibility of Council's Economic Development Team as certain Council-led initiatives will require lead input from other sections of Council, such as its Planning Department.

Nevertheless, it is recommended that Livingstone Shire Council consider reviewing and increasing its economic development services resource allocation so that the full suite of 'core' economic development support, facilitation and promotion tasks can be properly addressed.

Having regard for human resource requirements, it is recommended that **five full-time positions** are a minimum requirement of Council's Economy and Places Team, with responsibilities distributed according to skills.

Key responsibilities would include:

- **Business Engagement and Support**, that is, the provision of information and assistance to existing local businesses through a dedicated concierge role of Council.
- **Investment Attraction** focussed on the initiatives contained in *Blueprint 2030*, to attract investment in Livingstone Shire's priority industries.

- **Promotion** to ensure that businesses, prospective investors and the wider community are aware of the support services that Council's Economic Development Team can provide, as well as what Livingstone Shire has to offer as a place in which to live, work and invest.
- **Place-making** in collaboration with Council's Planning Department and other key sections of Council, including master planning, place activation, urban improvements and community enhancement programs to ensure that Livingstone Shire's 'liveability' appeal contributes effectively to the Shire's capacity to attract business investment and grow the local workforce.
- **Advocacy** including stakeholder co-ordination, community consultation and the nurturing of mutually-beneficial partnerships to advance Livingstone Shire's and the region's economic development agenda.

In addition, there could be a **projects coordinator** depending on the need - this could be a contracted 'on demand' service.

There will need to be a budget for supplementary **specialist services** such as in the areas of socio-economic research and analysis, feasibility analysis, business case preparation, workforce planning, planning for a transition / new energy economy as well as specialist marketing, communications and branding.

Blueprint 2030 provides Livingstone Shire Council with the tools to influence the factors that facilitate the resilience, competitiveness and success of local businesses and the capacity of the Shire to attract new investment, diversify the economy and create the jobs of the future.

To realise this objective, Council must commit the necessary resources to ensure it is equipped to support local business innovation, attract investment and enable economic activity in order to effectively advance the region's potential as a location of choice in which to live, work, play and invest.

Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1 Defining Measures of Success

The successful implementation of *Blueprint 2030* must be cognisant of available resources and the capabilities of Livingstone Shire Council to progress the initiatives identified (and others which may still be identified).

It is recommended that Council review its current allocation of resources to support economic growth and investment to ensure effective Strategy implementation. The actions presented herein will also need to be prioritised and reviewed annually.

Means of monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of *Blueprint 2030's* implementation will require the use of both '**output' measures (indicators)** related directly to the recommended actions and their successful (or otherwise) implementation and some broader outcome measures.

'**Outcome' measures** refer to Livingstone Shire's broader economic development objectives and include, for example, changes in the number of businesses (net business growth), which can be assessed using ABS Business Register data, or the rate and composition of employment growth and growth in Livingstone Shire's Gross Regional Product (GRP), both of which can be assessed by referring to the latest economy.id / NIEIR updates in Council's subscription data set.

6.2 Key Performance Measures for Livingstone Shire

Headline **output measures** include:

- Livingstone Shire will be a \$1.68 billion economy by 2027 (a 5 per cent increase in the current size of Livingstone Shire's economy as measured by Gross Regional Product).
- Livingstone Shire will be home to 11,865 local jobs by 2030 (up 5% from 11,300 in 2022).
- There will be an increase in Livingstone Shire's level of employment self-sufficiency (local jobs to resident workers ratio) from 63% in 2022 to 65% in 2030.
- The net change in business registrations (new registrations less cancelled registrations) in Livingstone Shire will increase from an average of 70 per year to 80 per year by 2030.

These headline targets for Livingstone Shire will be realised through progress on the following key metrics:

- A 10 per cent increase in the number of business start-ups in Livingstone Shire by 2030.
- A 5 per cent year-on-year increase in residential building approvals in Livingstone Shire by 2030.
- A 10 per cent increase in the value of residential and non-residential construction industry activity in Livingstone Shire by 2030.
- Increased average length of stay by domestic visitors to Livingstone Shire from 4 nights to 5 nights, by 2030 and increased average length of stay by international visitors to Livingstone Shire from 5 nights to 6 nights, by 2030.
- A 5 per cent annual increase in the tourism sector's direct contribution to Livingstone Shire's gross regional product (GRP), from approximately \$25 million in 2022 to \$26.25 million in 2030.

Key **output measures**, which provide a good way of tracking the Economic Development Team's progress on set tasks include:

- New business investor feedback captured through targeted engagement and discussion (ongoing).
- Success in retaining and assisting the expansion of existing businesses captured through targeted engagement (ongoing).
- Success in assisting business start-ups captured through targeted engagement (ongoing).
- Simple tracking progress of the action plan – implementation rates (ongoing).

Blueprint 2030 will be reviewed annually with an update anticipated following the delivery of this plan.

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