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Cook Shire Council Economic Priorities

About Cook Shire

Cook Shire is the largest shire in Queensland in terms of land area. From the Bloomfield River in the south to just north of the Jardine River it covers over 100,000 square kilometres and occupies 80% of Cape York Peninsula.

Geographically, Cook Shire is the meeting place of the Great Barrier Reef, the Wet Tropics and the Outback. It is the location of many National Parks along with other protected areas and conservation zones. Cooktown is 331kms from Cairns (3 1/2 hours by car) and 266kms from Mareeba via the fully sealed Mulligan Highway.

Cook Shire has a tough and colourful past built around agriculture and mining. Today, it's vibrant culture, diverse history and unique environment attracts people from across the country and around the globe.

Approximately 4,500 people live in Cook Shire. The major township is Cooktown with smaller population centres at Marton, Laura, Lakeland, Coen, Ayton, Rossville, Helenvale and Portland Roads, and offshore settlements including Lizard and Haggerstone Island.

Cook Shire is enriched by the unique contributions of its small communities:
Coen prides itself on being the service centre for the northern region of the Shire;
Laura is famous for its amazing rock art and the Quinkan and Regional Cultural Centre;
Lakeland is home to key farming and grazing industries; and
Rossville, Ayton and Portland Roads are recognised for their low impact lifestyles, and niche horticulture and eco-tourism ventures.



Land tenure

Within the Shire rateable properties number just over 2200 (raising \$6 million in rates and levies), however rateable properties are gradually declining as properties are transferred to conservation and other non-rateable tenures:

- Freehold 1%
- Land Lease 5%
- Aboriginal Shire Lease/ Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) or Land Trust 4%
- National Park 1%
- Nature Reserve 23%
- Mining, State Lands and Reserve 53%

Economic Development Vision

Cook Shire Council has a vision to develop a mature and diversified economy based upon competitive business practices, a highly skilled and dynamic workforce and infrastructure which meets the needs of a wide-ranging and growing population.

Consistent with the vision, is the high priority Council places on economic development including a focus on existing businesses and new enterprises, a catalyst (or advocate) for new business development, provision of appropriate infrastructure and as a response system to threats or negative impacts on the local economy. This document is a blueprint to ensuring that Cook Shire will be enjoyed by residents, attractive to the many visitors and respected by other regional economies throughout Australia.

Our mission statement

To build and improve municipal infrastructure and services which are sustainable and responsive to the needs and aspirations of our community by:

- Establishing and building stronger networks and partnerships;
- Maintaining a healthy and diverse economy whilst respecting our natural environment;
- Supporting all of our unique communities; and
- Enabling quality lifestyle choices within our Shire.

Council's Role

Cook Shire Council plays a lead role in the economic development and promotion of Cook Shire and is charged with making the most of Cook Shire's assets to secure prosperity and jobs for the long-term future of the region.

Council has prepared this Economic Priorities document which compliments our Economic Development Plan. Further information about our gross regional product, unemployment rate and infrastructure can be found in our Economic Profile document.

The five goals outlined in the Economic Development Plan are:

- **Investment growth** 'Encouraging and attracting investment opportunities to the region to broaden the economic base; provide job opportunities; and increase the regions competitiveness'
- **Local business and industry development** 'Strengthening and diversifying our local business environment through the dissemination of economic information and the implementation of local area initiatives'
- **Infrastructure development** 'Ensuring the sustainability and delivery of appropriate physical infrastructure to facilitate liveability and economic growth'
- **Tourism** 'Supporting the tourism industry through marketing and promotion and building business capacity'
- **Workforce development** 'Supporting workforce, education and training development within Cook Shire to attract new business opportunities and enhance the capability of the region'

These documents have been produced to support Cook Shire's vision of developing an economically sustainable and diverse range of industries that will reach all our goals mentioned above. The Economic Priorities are categorised by Government, Private/ Government and Policy which will give the reader a clearer understanding of Cook Shire's role in these projects. Cook Shire will build on relationships with state and federal government and will advocate for assistance to resource major initiatives to reach these goals. Every avenue for funding will be investigated, to deliver these projects for our growing region.

A message from the Mayor



During the next few years, government grants, subsidies and handouts will be in short supply but policy revision and a focus on operational efficiencies will be strongly encouraged and supported. On this tack, Council, emerging from a period characterized by development and capital expenditure, is heading into a time of financial prudence. We have in place new and upgraded roads, bridges, water & sewerage plants, schools, libraries, infrastructure and amenities. It is time to demonstrate our capacity to manage the Shire into surplus. This said, projects likely to go ahead with Council's full endorsement include the barge facility and development project at Archer Point, a family rehabilitation centre in the environs of Cooktown, various mines, catholic education and flexible learning, maternity ward at the hospital and planning for the revitalisation of Cooktown's waterfront. The next five years will be challenging yet exciting. Our imperative now is to make the most of what we have by using our initiative to improve our way of life and financial wellbeing for future generations.

Cooktown Foreshore and Webber Esplanade Revitalisation	Description	Cost	Timeline	Key Stakeholders
<p>The Cooktown Foreshore and Webber Esplanade Revitalisation will stimulate Cooktown’s iconic and historic river frontage. The Revitalisation Plan identifies how public investment in foreshore infrastructure will benefit private investment in the town, providing an economically diverse approach to sustaining the growth of the region. North Queensland’s east coast townships of Cairns, Townsville, Bowen, Airlie Beach and Mackay have all undergone foreshore redevelopments in the past 10 years and are now reaping the benefits of having vibrant, engaging public spaces and recreational facilities which are providing new opportunities for economic and business development.</p> <p>Community engagement has been completed and the Revitalisation Plan has been prepared. Full copies are available from Cook Shire Council’s website www.cook.qld.gov.au</p>		<p>The total project cost is \$7 million.</p>	<p>2012 - 2017</p>	<p>Council are looking for a tri-partisan approach to development with a contribution from local, state and federal governments. Local Government - \$2 million State Government - \$2.5 million Federal Government - \$2.5 million There are twelve groups of identified stakeholders that are currently associated with this project: State and commonwealth agencies, traditional owners, community groups, residents, leaseholders and landowners, visitors, tourism stakeholders, tourism industry, ports corporation, industry representatives ie Fishing industry and developer and investors.</p>

Cooktown is a Tropical North Queensland tourism destination that is rich with history, cultural heritage, picturesque wilderness and numerous nationally recognised recreational activities. Like other North Queensland coastal destinations, Cooktown is exposed to stingers and crocodiles. With Cooktown’s resident and visitor population on the rise, there is a need to revitalise Cooktown’s foreshore and esplanade facilities which will generate economic diversity, lengthen tourism visitation and attract more people to the region.

(Pictured right)
 A designers vision of the new foreshore development. The Cooktown foreshore is by far the most stunning and underdeveloped on the east coast of Australia. Views across the Endeavour River looking at Indian Head and Mt Saunders are breathtaking and the sunsets every evening are magical. Development of entertainment and recreational infrastructure and facilities will benefit the whole community, as well as tourists and potential investors.



COOKTOWN FORESHORE & WEBBER ESPLANADE REVITALISATION

PASSIVE NATURAL RECREATIONAL PRECINCT

Improving pedestrian and vehicle connectivity through meandering boardwalks and revitalisation of open spaces.

- 1 Mangrove Boardwalk – Bird Watching
- 2 Revitalised Open Spaces
- 3 Second Mangrove Boardwalk
- 4 Short Term Parking for Self Contained RV's
- 5 Interpretive Nodes
- 6 Reconciliation Rocks Upgrade

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For more information visit www.cookshire.qld.gov.au

COOKTOWN FORESHORE & WEBBER ESPLANADE REVITALISATION

CELEBRATION PRECINCT

Uniting residents and tourists through organised celebration of history and revitalisation of key spaces.

- 1 Existing Path Upgrade
- 2 Vehicle and Boat Trailer Parking (min 40 spaces)
- 3 River of Life Path Upgrade
- 4 Services and Facilities Upgrade
- 5 Interpretive Nodes
- 6 Captain Cook Monuments and Memorials Upgrade
- 7 Bicentennial Park Revitalisation

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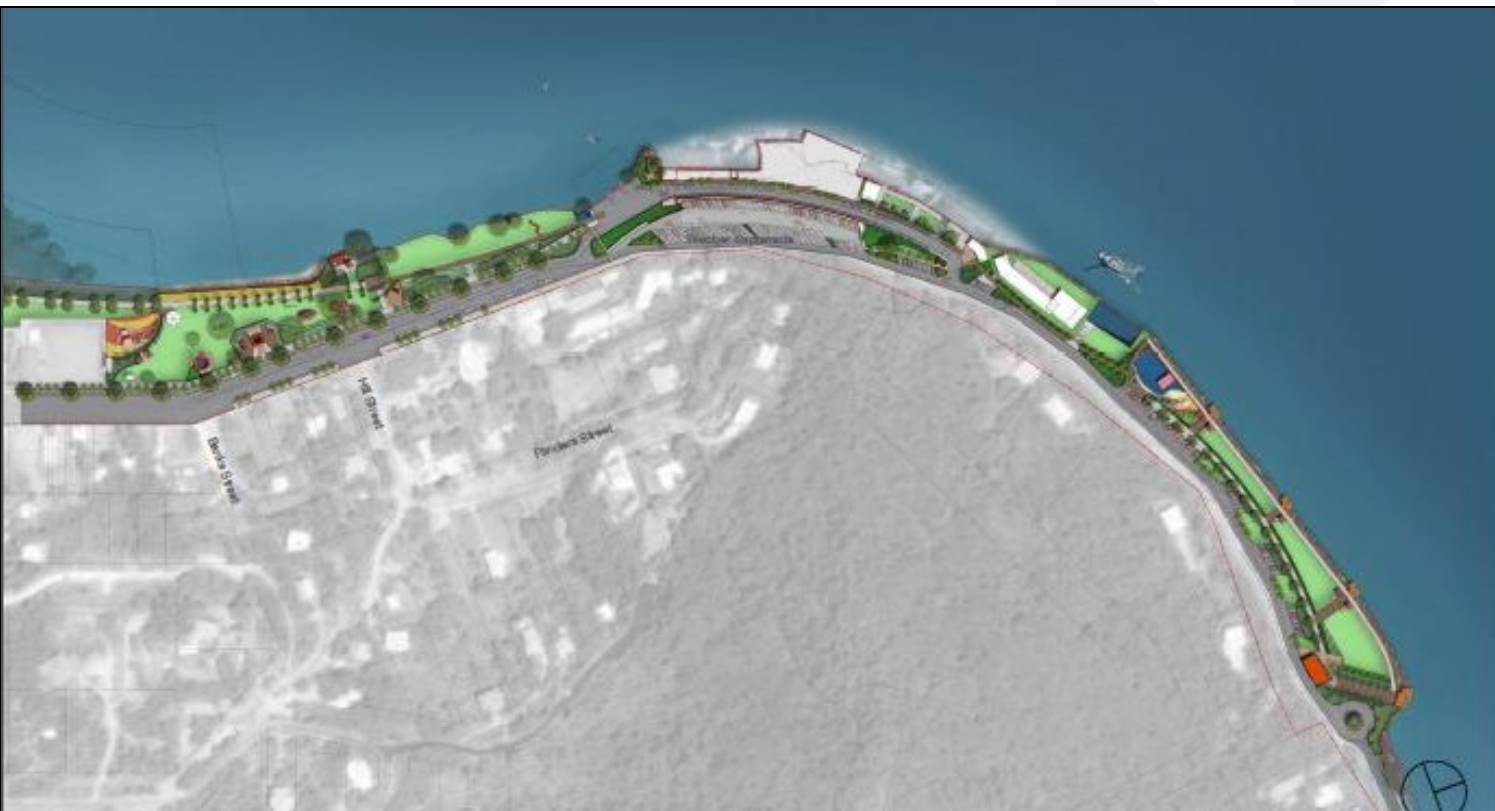
COOKTOWN FORESHORE & WEBBER ESPLANADE REVITALISATION

COMMERCIAL PRECINCT

Revitalisation of the commercial area through improved traffic management and upgrade of recreational facilities.

- 1 Retail & Commercial Space/ Boat and Trailer Parking
- 2 Boat Ramp Upgrade
- 3 The Queen's Steps & Mick the Miner Revitalisation
- 4 Waste Disposal Area
- 5 Fisherman's Wharf Commercial Establishments
- 6 Jury/Wharf Upgrade
- 7 Commercial Fishing Wharf

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COOKTOWN FORESHORE & WEBBER ESPLANADE REVITALISATION

ACTIVITY PRECINCT

Creation of a regional attraction including lagoon style pool, promoting an active and social lifestyle for residents of all demographics.

- 1 Tidal Saltwater Lagoon
- 2 Children's Playground and Waterplay Park
- 3 Proposed Waterfront Arrivals Facilities (cruise boat passenger arrivals)
- 4 Public Toilet Facilities
- 5 Car Parking for Lagoon and Fishing Club/Coast Guard
- 6 Recreation, Activity and Entertainment Area
- 7 Pedestrian/Cycle Trail Extension arrivals
- 8 Interpretative Nodes
- 9 Coastguard/Vessel Berthing

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Four Precincts have been identified along this foreshore; Passive Natural Recreational, Celebration, Commercial and Activity. These signs have been erected to showcase each

Economic Priorities Industry Development and Accessibility

Endeavour River Harbour Dredging	Description	Cost	Timeline	Key Stakeholders
	<p>Dredging of the Cooktown Harbour (leeds and swing basin) is a step closer with the applicant Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) being granted development approval with conditions. The conditions include obtaining permits from state and federal agencies (Environmental Protection Agency & Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority).</p> <p>The dredging will be carried out in 2014 and link with the Port Douglas dredge contract. The dredge spoil is required as fill for the Webber Esplanade and Foreshore Revitalisation development.</p>	\$1.5 million	2014	<p>DTMR, Cook Shire, Fishing Industry (pro & rec) Tourism operators.</p> <p>Director Engineering Services to specify which permits will be required in a timely manner.</p>
<p>Cooktown Airport Industrial Development</p>	<p>Council have recently granted preliminary approval for a 35 lot subdivision at Cooktown airport. Total land area is 7.5 hectares and distance to town is approximately 7.5 kilometres.</p> <p>The Cooktown Airport Development zoning allows for a multitude of business and industry opportunities. Council will support a range of uses that meet existing demand within the community, across a range of industries. Land will be made available freehold or leasehold depending on the application.</p>	**Developer to consider	2013-2014	Private investors and Cook Shire Council.



(Left) Cooktown airport has a 7.5ha land parcel only 10 minutes drive from Cooktown. More information about the Development can be found in the Cooktown Airport Expressions of Interest document.



(Right) The Endeavour river at low tide is in obvious need for dredging, not only for the local fisherman and recreational yachts but also for the future of the tourism and fishing industries.

Peninsula Development Road	Description	Cost	Timeline	Key Stakeholders
	<p>The Peninsula Development Road (PDR) runs 558 kilometres from Lakeland to Weipa and is the main transport link servicing Cape York Peninsula and connecting it to the national road network south of Cairns. The road is closed for up to four months per year due to the annual wet season, causing damage to the surface and flooding over low level river crossings. Millions of dollars are spent every year fixing the road under provisions of Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).</p> <p>Cape York Peninsula is close to one of the fastest growing population centres outside of South East Queensland however the condition of the PDR has been identified as a barrier to entry into a globally connected regional economy. There is significant economic activity in the Cape York region through rapid expansion in the extent and value of agricultural production but a lack of vital infrastructure means that many Indigenous communities are unable to take advantage of the opportunities this activity brings. An investment in the PDR would put in place good infrastructure that will unlock the region's full potential. This will improve accessibility to the Cape York region, create new jobs and also support mining and tourism in the area.</p>	Total cost is yet to be determined	2012-2015	Cape York Councils, local, state and federal governments.



(Right) The Peninsula Development Road, approximately 1039 kilometres from Cairns to Cape York



(Left) The new bridge over the Laura River cost \$M and connects the residents of Laura to Cooktown and Cairns during the floodwaters of the annual wet season. However only a few kilometres north of Laura, the Laura River cut another smaller bridge overnight with floodwaters leaving motorists stranded. (Right)



Cook Shire Solar Project	Description	Cost	Timeline	Key Stakeholders
	<p>The Cook Shire Solar Project is a first for Tropical North Queensland. It is a 25MW solar power project identified for Lakeland and the \$70 million project will provide up to 200 jobs during construction and 15-20 positions ongoing.</p> <p>The project will address current energy supply issues and support our expected energy growth of 3.7% per year over the next ten years.</p> <p>The project also includes a world class research station which would provide education and exposure to our region as a renewable energy hub.</p>	\$70 million	2013-2014	Lyon Infrastructure, local, state and federal government.

Annan River Hydro Power Turbines	Description	Cost	Timeline	Key Stakeholders
	<p>With our investigation to date, Tamar Hydropower Turbines, Exeter, Tasmania under Pentair Water & Environmental Systems (Formerly Tyco Pumping System, Tamar) are the only one supplier and manufacturer of small scale hydro power plants in Australia.</p> <p>Development of this Hydro Powered Turbine will offset all of Cook Shire Council's assets including the administration building situated on the corner of Hope and Furneaux Street, the depot building on McIvor Road and the Water Treatment Plant just off the Mulligan Highway. By offsetting Council's electricity expenses, the money saved with using this clean energy scheme can be utilised on other projects in Cook Shire.</p>	<p>\$375,000</p> <p>Although \$150,000 has been funded already through the QLD Government Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program Infrastructure Subsidy 2013/14.</p>	Must be acquitted by 30 June 2014	QLD State government

Economic Priorities

Financial Sustainability

Project	Request	Strategic Benefit
Review of Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements guidelines	Commit to a full review of NDRRA guidelines, in conjunction with state and local governments, to recognise the capacity and capability of LGAs to respond to natural disasters in a way which meet the needs of their communities pre, during and post a natural disaster event.	Local governments, particularly in regional and remote areas, are best positioned to respond to natural disaster events and undertake counter disaster operations, emergent works and restoration of public infrastructure, and achieve best value for money for the federal government in doing so.
Project	Request	Strategic Benefit
National Broadband Network	<p>Rollout of the National Broadband Network is expected to commence in September 2015 in Cooktown, with around 900 premises currently identified for connection to fibre.</p> <p>Cooktown's position within the fibre rollout timetable must be maintained and just as importantly, the commitment to fibre to the premises is vital to remain in place so as not to disadvantage our community. Fibre-on-demand has the potential to widen the digital divide between households and businesses and regions that can afford to pay for the upgrade and those, like Cooktown, that cannot.</p>	<p>High speed broadband, delivered by fibre to the premises, is a critical enabler to diversifying our economy and increasing the economic output of our region by facilitating access to domestic and global markets, providing flexible and innovative educational options and improving health services.</p>

Cook Shire Council are committed to seeing these projects are given serious consideration for State and Federal government budget allocation and funding availabilities.

Given the vast size of our large Shire, our high unemployment rate and varied economic opportunities, we cannot afford to miss out on growing Queensland's booming economic growth rate (currently at \$60b)***according to CommSec Chief Economist Craig James*

Numerous stakeholders have a vested interest in the successful outcome of these developments:

Community of Cook Shire,

Traditional Owners,

Industries; tourism, agricultural, aviation, retail,

Small to medium size enterprises,

Yuku Baja Muliku Land Trust,

Balkanu,

Cape York Sustainable Futures

Key documents analysed as part of this Plan include:

Cook Shire Council Corporate Plan 2012—2017 <www.cook.qld.gov.au/corporateplan#corp_plan>

Cook Shire Community Plan 2011—2021 <www.cook.qld.gov.au/community-plan>

Cook Shire Economic Development Plan 2013—2015

Cook Shire Economic Profile 2013—2015

These can be found on Cook Shire Council's website www.cook.qld.gov.au

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