

**FINAL REPORT**  
**VOLUME 1**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  
**FOR**  
**THE JOHNSTONE SHIRE**

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**FOR**  
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**PREPARED BY**  
**DEBORAH WILSON CONSULTING SERVICES**  
**CMCD**  
**JOHN SARGENT**

**28 April 2005**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. *Executive Summary covers:*
- *Recognition of the traditional owners – the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.*
  - *A case for economic development.*
  - *Values guiding growth.*
  - *A vision for economic growth in the Johnstone Shire.*
  - *Economic growth framework for the Johnstone Shire.*
  - *Sector plans.*
  - *Community economic development plans.*
  - *Working with and supporting businesses.*
  - *Planning environment.*
  - *Key resources.*
  - *Market the strategy.*
  - *Regional coordination.*
  - *Recommendations.*

### **Traditional Owners**

Most of the land in the Johnstone Shire is the traditional land of the Ma:Mu tribal group. Ma:Mu traditional lands extend west to Millaa Millaa, south to Murdering Point near Silkwood, and north through Eubenangee Swamp to Coopers Point. The Djiru, Ngadjon-ji, Yindin-ji, Jirrbal and Girramay tribes occupy lands on the margins of Ma:Mu country. A map detailing tribal land is in Appendix A of this plan.

This strategy recognises the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people, traditional owners of the land of the Johnstone Shire.

The Ma:Mu people, Djiru people and other indigenous people have worked in key industries in the Shire – sugar, bananas and fishing – and have made a strong contribution to the development of these industries.

The traditional owners are also making a significant and ongoing contribution to the management of the land in the Shire. This includes the development of businesses, training and education on plants and management of the country, and vegetation management work.

The Ma:Mu people, Djiru people and other indigenous people will play an active role in economic development of the Shire in the future through major projects such as the the Ma:Mu people's contribution and involvement in the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk as well as participating in education and training initiatives and sector development plans.

Their approach to partnering with the Johnstone Shire Council and the community of the Johnstone Shire will underpin a strong economic and employment growth strategy that will benefit all people in the Johnstone Shire.

## **Introduction to the Plan**

This economic development plan was commissioned by the Johnstone Shire Council to identify directions and opportunities for the Shire over the next 3 to 5 years and to identify long term strategic directions – next 10 to 15 years.

The economic development plan covers:

- The vision for the Shire’s future economy and values that will guide economic development in the future.
- An analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Johnstone Shire covering economic, technology, environment and social issues.
- Economic development goals and specific objectives to implement those goals.
- An economic development framework and key economic development initiatives.

Volume 2 of this report contains industry demographic profiles and an analysis of development trends for the Shire.

This plan is based on consultation meetings with the community and businesses, interviews and discussions with business sectors and an economic analysis.

## **A Case for Economic Development**

The population of the Johnstone Shire has remained fairly static over the last 15 years. However, the sea change trend is expected to have a significant impact on the Shire in the next 5 to 10 years.

The Johnstone Shire’s economy has relied on primary industries – fishing and the major crops of sugar and bananas. All three of these industries have faced significant challenges in recent years.

Although there are a number of high quality tourism businesses in the Shire, tourism has been at a relatively low level.

A number of factors build a case for change in the economic development focus. Some are proactive initiatives by the Johnstone Shire Council while others are major external trends that will have an influence on the Shire's economy in the future. These factors include:

- The **sea change** trend. Property prices have been increasing in Cairns and demand for new land and housing has resulted in growth at the southern edges of Cairns City.

The property boom in Queensland has also affected property prices in the Johnstone Shire – rising from a relatively low base.

The Johnstone Shire still provides very affordable residential accommodation and is already a target for southern investors and those moving from Cairns for a more affordable lifestyle and a more natural environment.

This trend is expected to drive population growth in the Shire to growth levels near that expected for the Cairns region within a 3 to 5 year time frame.

- Pressure on key **primary industries**. Downward pressure on international sugar prices and major international competition is having a significant impact on the Queensland sugar industry. Initiatives are in place for a restructuring of the industry. These adverse conditions for the industry are resulting in lower earnings for sugar producers in the Shire – this impacts on the overall economy.

Ongoing pressures on the sugar industry will also result in some rationalisation in the industry and some transition to other crops.

Given the large area of land under cultivation for sugar, there is a need to support these producers and participate in sugar industry initiatives and strategies.

The banana industry has been affected by black sigatoka and although this outbreak has been eradicated, there is also the potential threat of imports.

The banana industry is a critical sector for the economy and needs continued recognition and support in the future.

Fishery closures are having a significant effect on the fishing industry.

Uncertainties and threats for these major primary production sectors have had significant flow on effects to the broader economy.

- While these key agricultural sectors will continue to form a major part of the economy, there is a strong need to **diversify the economic base** and create new jobs in the Shire. This will address:
  - Increasing demand for jobs from those moving to the Shire.
  - The need to generate economic growth and jobs growth in sectors other than agriculture.

There is a significant opportunity to address this through the Ports Corporation's initiative of an industrial precinct near Mourilyan Harbour. This will boost traffic through Mourilyan Harbour for bulk goods and also provide an opportunity to attract new businesses to the Shire.

- Residents and businesses in the Johnstone Shire value the **quality of life** and the unique north Queensland landscape in the Shire.

In order to preserve this unique north Queensland farming area, these changes are needed to the economy:

- Strengthening existing agricultural businesses.
- Developing opportunities for tropical produce and horticulture – building on existing production and focusing on value added opportunities.
- Managing the growth that will occur through 'sea change' migration to the Johnstone Shire.
- Managing the impact of major tourism investment which is inevitable in the Shire in the next 5 to 10 years.

An active strategy to manage this growth will help to preserve the quality of life and unique north Queensland environment in the Johnstone Shire.

- There is also a need to **update amenities** for both residents and tourists to support expected future growth. This includes planning and infrastructure management for increased residential activity as well as:
  - A coordinated planning approach to the development of Mission Beach (currently an area administered by the Johnstone Shire and the Cardwell Shire).
  - Undertaking a River Boardwalk Precinct development in Innisfail to provide improved entertainment and leisure amenity for local residents and act as a tourist attraction.
  - Continuing to preserve the art deco architecture in Innisfail.
  - Identifying development priorities for smaller townships – providing access to services and retail outlets to support the ongoing growth in these communities.
- The Johnstone Shire and other shires in the Great Green Way and the Tablelands have tended to be on ‘the back doorstep’ of both Cairns and Townsville. Rather than being simply rural areas, this region will experience significant growth in tourism investment and population growth in the future.

There is now a case to **facilitate a regional strategy** to address the short term and long term needs of this growth area. The Johnstone Shire Council can play a key role in facilitating this regional strategic approach to future development.

All of these factors provide a case for change – one which is ultimately designed to preserve the unique north Queensland character of the Johnstone Shire.

## Values Guiding Growth

A number of consistently identified themes or values need to guide economic development in the future. These important values include the following:

- Preserving the **quality of life in the Johnstone Shire** is a priority for businesses and the community. Residents of the Shire greatly value the quality of life they currently enjoy and do not wish to see substantial change.

Those who are coming to the region are also attracted by the quality of life, the open green spaces and the beauty of the Shire.

Quality of life outcomes for residents and tourists need to be considered in all economic development initiatives.

- Retaining roughly the current area of **agricultural land** is also a key priority. It is not feasible to radically change the land use – either to different crops or to residential development.

For that reason, strategies that support and strengthen agricultural production sectors are particularly important. Rather than being a secondary priority, boosting economic performance and capabilities in this sector is regarded as a fundamental priority for the strategy.

The loss of primary producers in other areas has led to land degradation. Retaining effective agricultural production is a vital strategy for effective land and environment management in the Johnstone Shire.

- Building on the Shire's advantages such as **proximity to the reef** and the large tracks of **world class environmental areas**. The Ma:Mu Canopy Walk will attract significant numbers of visitors to rainforest areas. There is an opportunity to further exploit the Johnstone Shire's proximity to the reef by developing tourism activities based out of Innisfail and other coastal locations.

- There is also a need to **maintain and support local communities**. There is a strong sense of community in all of the towns in the Johnstone Shire. Local economic development plans have been included in this strategy to ensure that there is adequate support for these communities in the longer term.
- There is a need to **provide opportunities for employment**. The fishing industry is facing restrictions of fishery access and some workers will leave the fishing industry as a result of these restrictions. The cane industry's transition will also generate demand for different jobs and training pathways. While the banana industry is expected to continue to be a major industry, some may also seek alternate employment from this industry.

Providing accessible services, training and relevant job opportunities will be a priority for the Shire in the next 3 to 5 years.

- There is also a need to **manage the impact of change**. Progress (increased population growth and increased investment in tourism activities) is inevitable in the future. There is an opportunity for the Johnstone Shire to proactively manage this growth to minimise adverse impacts on the visual amenity of the Shire and on Shire communities.

Strategies for addressing this include designating areas for development – residential and industry – so that the broader landscape and communities in the Shire maintain their identity in the future.

### **A Vision for Economic Growth in the Johnstone Shire**

The vision for the Johnstone Shire's future is:

- *A unique north Queensland region.*
- *Retaining agricultural land and strengthening primary industries.*
- *A region with world recognised environmental areas and developing as a tourism destination.*
- *A region with a diversified economic base.*

The vision for the Shire focuses on the following key economic growth themes:

### **Competitive Primary Production**

- *Actively supporting and strengthening key agribusiness sectors in the Shire.*
- *Building supply chain and market access skills and supporting innovation in the Shire.*
- *Establishing the Johnstone Shire as a destination for aquaculture investment.*

### **Economic Diversity**

- *Support the establishment of an industrial precinct near the Port of Mourilyan – supporting increased bulk exports and new manufacturing and industrial projects.*
- *Actively support an engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire – building a diversified and effective engineering sector in the Shire.*
- *Continue to pursue value added manufacturing opportunities linked to primary production.*

### **Skills and Capabilities**

- *Establish trade skills training programs in the Johnstone Shire to provide training pathways for people in transition from other industries and to support the engineering cluster in the region.*
- *Building a learning community - providing a number of training and learning opportunities to the community.*

### **Tourism in the Johnstone Shire**

- *Identify potential locations for major tourism developments in the Shire – areas where such developments will be acceptable.*
- *Attract one or two major tourism developments to the Shire.*
- *Require all major tourism developments to establish a local business marketing strategy to involve smaller, local tourism businesses.*
- *Encourage the development of farm tourism, adventure tourism and eco tourism in the Shire.*

- *Foster a vibrant and diverse creative industry sector in the Shire.*

### **Community Development in the Johnstone Shire**

- *Implement local economic development plans for communities including:*
  - ***Innisfail*** – *establishing the Innisfail River Boardwalk Precinct project as a major leisure facility for residents and tourists. Other initiatives include:*
    - *A ‘next generation’ retirement village to Innisfail.*
    - *More education and training opportunities.*
    - *A greater government presence in the town to make Innisfail a major regional centre in the future.*
  - ***Mission Beach*** – *developing a local area plan to manage the development of the area.*
  - ***Silkwood and Kurrimine*** – *attract retail and service businesses at the crossroads to support both communities.*
  - ***Mena Creek*** – *support the development of the Mena Creek tourism cluster and creative industries.*
- *Seek active involvement of the traditional owners, the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people, in the economic development strategy. This includes:*
  - ***Training and education*** – *undertaking indigenous cultural training for school students, certificate level training in vegetation, land and waterways management, horticulture training to support bush tucker crops, justice studies, hospitality and business training..*
  - ***Projects*** – *the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk, wetlands project and developing access to cultural sites.*

- **Primary industries** - bush tucker nursery and crop production, employment in banana, sugar and fishing industries.
- **New employment and business ventures** – tourism businesses and services, building and construction on new projects and small business ventures.
- **Caring for country** – land, vegetation and waterways management initiatives, environmental work, working with Johnstone Shire Council and landowners.

### **Regional Development Initiatives**

- Collaborate with other shires in the Great Green Way and the Tablelands to identify economic and community development priorities for the region.
- Develop Innisfail and the Johnstone Shire as a major regional centre to service the needs of surrounding communities.

These economic development themes are designed to:

- Preserve the unique north Queensland character and culture of the Johnstone Shire.
- Manage the inevitable growth that will occur in the region.
- Establish a proactive approach to developing the economy and the region.
- Establish greater collaboration with other shires on common needs and issues.

### **Economic Growth Framework for the Johnstone Shire**

The economic growth framework focuses on three areas:

- Drivers of economic development.
- Economic growth strategies.
- Facilitation strategies.

The table on the following page summarises the framework.

The current drivers for growth are the long standing primary production sectors and tourism.

Future drivers include the following:

- Johnstone Shire will be a sea change destination.
- Opportunities to build diversity in the economy.
- Increased tourism focus and activities – driving new investment and providing the leverage to capitalise on the Shire’s close proximity to the reef and its rainforest resources.

## Economic Growth Framework – Johnstone Shire

ECONOMIC DRIVERS	ECONOMIC STRATEGIES	FACILITATION STRATEGIES
<p><b>1.1 Current Drivers ...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long standing business sectors – agriculture, tourism.</li> </ul> <p><b>1.2 Plus Future Drivers ...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision for Johnstone Shire's economy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Competitive primary production.</li> <li>- Economic diversity.</li> <li>- Skills and capabilities.</li> <li>- Tourism with the Johnstone Shire.</li> <li>- Community development in the Johnstone Shire.</li> <li>- Regional development initiatives.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Transition to a growth economy.</li> <li>• Sea change destination.</li> <li>• Values shaping Johnstone Shire's future:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity in the economy.</li> <li>- Innovation and competitiveness in traditional industries.</li> <li>- North Queensland heritage is valued in economic development.</li> <li>- Building on the reef and rainforest resource.</li> <li>- Skills development focus.</li> <li>- Quality of life outcome for the community and businesses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Innisfail is a regional centre in the future.</li> <li>• Facilitate a Great Green Way LGA group on current issues and opportunities for economic development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2.1 Strengthen Existing Sectors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain existing sectors and build sustainability and competitiveness in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agriculture.</li> <li>- Fishing.</li> <li>- Tourism.</li> <li>- Aquaculture.</li> <li>- Engineering.</li> <li>- Manufacturing.</li> <li>- Education.</li> <li>- Creative industries.</li> <li>- Businesses serving the population – retail, household services.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>2.2 Building Economic Diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of industrial precinct near Mourilyan harbour.</li> <li>• Encourage clusters, supply chain and market focus for regional competitiveness.</li> <li>• Ongoing dialogue with major businesses and leaders in each sector.</li> <li>• Targeted support for small business development.</li> <li>• Supportive environment for small and home business.</li> <li>• Indigenous businesses and employment opportunity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3.1 Relationships with Businesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcoming environment.</li> <li>• Active focus on investment attraction.</li> <li>• Economic Development Advisory Committee.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.2 Support Business Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue small business support initiative.</li> <li>• Build supply chain and market access capabilities.</li> <li>• Clusters – agribusiness, tourism, engineering, supply chain, innovation.</li> <li>• Links to state government agencies and economic development groups.</li> <li>• Business leaders forum.</li> <li>• Market the lifestyle - attracting people and businesses.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.3 Planning Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targets for growth – population and industry investment.</li> <li>• Work with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people to implement the plan.</li> <li>• Industrial land precinct.</li> <li>• Retain green space and farm land.</li> <li>• Actively encourage aquaculture projects.</li> <li>• Innisfail as a major regional centre.</li> <li>• Infrastructure planning for growth.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.4 Shire Facilities and Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reef access – river dredging and marinas.</li> <li>• Community development strategies.</li> <li>• Infrastructure for future growth – developer/project contribution.</li> <li>• Airport – attract businesses.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.5 Market the Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market to the community, businesses, key agencies and groups.</li> <li>• Updates on progress and successes.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.6 Regional Coordination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great Green Way group – common issues and economic development.</li> <li>• Link with other existing groups and strategies.</li> </ul>

- Establishing the Johnstone Shire as a regional centre in the future and facilitating a Great Green Way LGA group on future opportunities.

The economic growth strategies cover:

- Retaining and strengthening existing sectors. This includes building sustainability and competitiveness.
- Building economic diversity in the Shire.
- Providing opportunities for Indigenous businesses and Indigenous employment.
- Strengthening the small business sector.

### **Sector Plans**

Individual sector plans have been developed covering:

- The primary industry sector – agriculture, fishing and aquaculture.
- Manufacturing covering the engineering cluster, the industrial precinct and existing business development.
- Tourism.
- Education and skills.
- Creative industries.
- Regional development.

### **Community Economic Development Plans**

Community economic development plans have also been included for:

- Innisfail.
- Mission Beach.
- Mena Creek.
- Kurrimine and Silkwood.

These plans are based on community feedback and highlight economic development priorities. However, these plans do not cover all aspects of community development priorities for these communities.

## **Working with and Supporting Businesses**

There are a number of facilitation strategies that will support the implementation of the plan:

- Providing a welcoming environment for businesses and for investment. Key initiatives include:
  - A welcoming pathway for new business initiatives into the Johnstone Shire Council. This includes identifying priority investment that the Shire is seeking and providing support for projects that have the potential to substantially improve economic growth for the Shire.
  - Communicate the Shire's priorities for investment attraction within the region and provide information to target businesses on opportunities in the Shire. This can be done in conjunction with Advance Cairns and the Ports Corporation.
- Market the lifestyle and attract businesses and people to the region that add to the mix of the economy.
- Continuing to support initiatives that assist businesses. This facilitation strategy includes:
  - Continued support for the regional Small Business Answers program by AusIndustry.
  - Building supply chain and market access capabilities in the primary industry sector.
  - Establishing cluster projects covering the agribusiness sector (innovation cluster and supply chain/market access cluster), tourism (Mena Creek cluster, food and wine trail, farm tourism) and engineering.
  - Establishing strong and positive links to state government agencies and economic development groups in the region to support the implementation of the plan. This includes formally seeking the assistance of these groups to implement initiatives.

- A targeted, three month initiative by Johnstone Shire Council to identify funding sources and prepare grant applications to fund economic development plan initiatives.
- Establishing a business leaders' forum covering:
  - A regular forum with primary production associations and opinion leaders to identify needs and future priorities.
  - A business leaders' forum covering tourism, manufacturing, retail and other sectors of the Shire's economy to identify current issues and opportunities for the future.

**Planning Environment**

Economic development in the Johnstone Shire needs to align with the Shire's planning requirements. Priorities include:

- Identifying strategies for growth such as population growth and industry investment targets.
- Supporting the establishment of an industrial land precinct near Mourilyan Harbour.
- Strategies that retain green space and land for primary production.
- Providing a welcoming pathway for aquaculture investment. This includes assistance with applications and providing clear information on opportunities.
- Initiatives to establish Innisfail as a major regional centre. This support is already evident from retail investment. Johnstone Shire Council needs to have dialogue with government agencies in the region to support Innisfail's growth as a regional centre.
- Undertaking infrastructure planning to support industrial and residential growth.

**Key Resources**

The Shire has a number of key resources and the following strategies are recommended:

- Improve access to the reef from Innisfail and other coastal centres. This includes a feasibility and impact study on dredging the Johnstone River and the establishment of new marinas in the Shire.

- Implement the development plan for Innisfail Airport to attract additional businesses to the Airport.
- Identifying infrastructure requirements to support growth covering transport, energy and telecommunications.

**Regional Coordination**

Establish a working group to explore common issues and economic development for shires in the Great Green Way and Tablelands area. Identifying common issues and themes can assist in terms of coordinating activities and achieving goals.

**Market the Strategy**

It is important to communicate this economic development strategy and the benefits that it can deliver to a number of audiences:

- The community in the Johnstone Shire.
- Businesses in the Shire.
- Surrounding local government authorities.
- State and federal government agencies in the region.
- Economic development groups in the region.

Providing updates on progress and successes is a priority. The economic development planning process has already resulted in two key initiatives:

- The formation of an engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire.
- The formation of the Mena Creek tourism cluster.

Keeping the community and relevant stakeholders up to date on developments is very important. It ensures that there is ongoing community support and agency support for economic development strategies.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Johnstone Shire Council adopt the economic development plan and implement the following actions as priorities:

- (1) Establish an **Economic Development Advisory Committee** of Council to oversee the implementation of the economic development strategy and coordinate with agencies, the business community and other shires in the region.

- (2) Support the establishment of an **industrial precinct** near Mourilyan Harbour by the Ports Corporation.
- (3) Support a **cluster program** that provides direct and active assistance to a number of clusters within the Johnstone Shire.
- (4) Dedicate an internal Council resource to preparation of **grant and funding applications** to underpin a concerted 1 to 3 year program of economic development initiatives.
- (5) Establish **leaders' forums** covering the primary production sector, manufacturing and tourism sectors to provide ongoing dialogue between industry and Council on the implementation of the economic development plan.
- (6) Implement the training and education action plan to support **training transition** for people leaving primary production sectors and support skills development in the Johnstone Shire.
- (7) Write to all **state and federal government agencies** with regional managers in north Queensland to advise them of the economic development plan and seek their assistance in implementation.
- (8) Facilitate a **working group** of surrounding local government authorities to identify common economic development priorities and establish a regional focus on accessing support and assistance with economic development.

## 2. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

*2. Project Activities covers:*

- *Project aims.*
- *Project activities.*

### 2.1 Project Aims

This report covers an economic development plan for the Johnstone Shire. The study, commissioned by the Johnstone Shire Council, was conducted by Deborah Wilson Consulting Services in association with CMCD and John Sargent.

The specific aims of the economic development plan project covered:

- The vision for the Shire's future economy and values that will guide economic development in the future.
- An analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Johnstone Shire covering economic, technology, environment and social issues.
- Economic development goals and specific objectives to implement those goals.
- Economic development framework and key economic development initiatives.

### 2.2 Project Activities

The economic development plan project covered a range of specific tasks and initiatives including the following:

A series of consultation forums with the wider community and with businesses. These meetings were held in November 2004 and covered:

- Innisfail.
- Mission Beach.
- Kurrimine/Silkwood.
- Mena Creek.
- A business meeting sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.
- A creative industries sector meeting.
- A meeting with primary producer association representatives.
- An education sector meeting.

- Meetings with the Innisfail Rural Response Group.
- Meetings with the Innisfail Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Committee.
- An engineering cluster meeting.
- Follow up interviews with individual businesses and industry associations.
- A review of relevant studies and existing strategies in the region.
- An analysis of the economy of the Johnstone Shire.
- Publicity regarding the project to encourage participation in industry and community meetings. The Innisfail Advocate provided substantial support in publicising the project.

A discussion paper was used in community and industry forums to provide a starting point for comment on economic development priorities.

Volume 2 of this report contains the analysis of the Johnstone Shire economy and a summary of relevant strategies.

### 3. SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE JOHNSTONE SHIRE ECONOMY

*3. SWOT Analysis of the Johnstone Shire Economy covers:*

- Analysis of strengths and opportunities.*
- Weaknesses and threats.*

#### 3.1 Analysis of Strengths and Opportunities

Table 3.1.1 summarises the Johnstone Shire's economies strengths and potential opportunities for the future. Current strengths focus on the unique nature of the region, its natural resources and existing industries.

Opportunities cover a substantial range based on:

- Expected growth due to sea change population trends.
- The establishment of an industrial precinct at Mourilyan Harbour.
- Growth in the tourism sector.
- Growth and expansion in the primary industry sector.

#### 3.2 Weaknesses and Threats

Weaknesses of the Johnstone Shire economy include the heavy reliance on primary industry sectors that have experienced threats or adverse conditions.

Threats for the Shire include the Shire's ability to manage and support expected future growth. Table 3.2.1 outlines these weaknesses and threats.

These strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been addressed in the economic development plan for the Shire.

**Table 3.1.1 – Strengths and Opportunities – Johnstone Shire Economy**

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	ISSUES
<p><b>1. Strengths</b></p> <p>1.1 Quality of life and attractiveness of the Johnstone Shire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Johnstone Shire is the quintessential north Queensland region – retaining large areas of agricultural land, covering world heritage listed rainforest areas, very attractive coast line and close to the reef.</li> <li>• Quality of life is highly valued by existing residents.</li> <li>• The challenge is to maintain this quality of life for existing and new residents as the Shire grows and develops.</li> </ul>
<p>1.2 Established primary industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although there are current threats to the fishing industry, sugar cane production and bananas, these industries are well established and the region has long standing, successful businesses in all three of these industry sectors.</li> <li>• Preserving and strengthening these primary production sectors is a vital component in the economic development plan.</li> </ul>
<p>1.3 Location in north Queensland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Johnstone Shire is located close to Cairns – a major tourism centre and industry hub.</li> <li>• The Johnstone Shire is part of the Great Green Way – the tourism trail between Townsville and Cairns. Revitalisation of the Great Green Way and increased marketing will deliver benefits for the Johnstone Shire.</li> </ul>
<p>1.4 Business community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Shire has a strong business community that comprises of successful businesses. There is a strong base for further growth and development.</li> <li>• Businesses are already collaborating in the Johnstone Shire providing the basis for future growth and pursuing opportunities. This collaboration is occurring in primary industries, tourism and the manufacturing sector.</li> </ul>
<p>1.5 Capacity for growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Shire has the capacity to expand business activities and encourage development without significantly affecting the environment and communities. However, a planned approach is required.</li> </ul>

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	ISSUES
1.6 Innisfail as a regional centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retailers are currently investing in Innisfail – recognising it as a regional centre.</li> <li>• The Johnstone Shire is a base for services for surrounding shires.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to proactively address common needs in the region for economic development. Collaboration will support development initiatives in the Tablelands and along the Great Green Way.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Opportunities</b>	
2.1 Diversifying the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ports Corporation wishes to establish an industrial precinct near Mourilyan Harbour that will support diversity in the economy in the Johnstone Shire. This industrial and manufacturing precinct will attract new jobs to the area – providing opportunities for people in transition from other industries and jobs for new residents.</li> </ul>
2.2 Developing primary production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Johnstone Shire has the ideal climate for aquaculture ventures. There is an opportunity to attract more aquaculture investment to the Shire.</li> <li>• The Shire has large areas of good quality agricultural land and good rainfall levels. This supports sustainability for a number of agribusiness sectors.</li> <li>• While there is still a need to maintain the current investment in banana production and cane production, there is an opportunity to expand tropical produce production and value added activities in the Shire.</li> </ul>
2.3 Building engineering capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The engineering sector has developed to support primary production. However, now businesses are winning work outside the region.</li> <li>• Initiatives that support and develop the engineering sector will provide continued support to primary production sectors while delivering new opportunities for Johnstone Shire businesses.</li> </ul>
2.4 Sea change trend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sea change trend will bring new residents to the Johnstone Shire as people seek greater quality of life and lower accommodation costs.</li> <li>• Long term population growth will drive business investment and job opportunities in the future.</li> </ul>

<b>STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>ISSUES</b>
2.5 Tourism growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Johnstone Shire is a largely unspoiled area of north Queensland that has natural attractions (proximity to the reef and world class environmental areas). These assets have the potential to attract major tourism investment and increased tourism in the future.</li> <li>• There will be a need to manage this interest and growth to ensure that the quality of life and the unique north Queensland culture of the Shire is maintained.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.2.1 – Weaknesses and Threats – Johnstone Shire Economy**

<b>WEAKNESSES AND THREATS</b>	<b>ISSUES</b>
<p><b>1. Weaknesses</b></p> <p>1.1 Thin economy – over reliance on some sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the primary industry sector has been a strength for the economy in the past, over reliance on these sectors can result in a weaker economy if these key sectors are adversely affected. In recent years, there has been a combination of negative impacts on sugar production, banana production and the fishing industry.</li> <li>• There is a need to strengthen these sectors and diversify the economy to overcome this weakness.</li> </ul>
<p>1.2 Capacity to manage growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The growth rate in the Shire in recent years has been very low – not resulting in major drains on infrastructure and the resources to support this growth. However, in the future, growth will be significantly stronger, placing pressure on Council’s resources and capacity to support this growth.</li> </ul>
<p>1.3 The Johnstone Shire not perceived as a major tourism destination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Johnstone Shire has some key attractions but all tourism businesses are not benefiting as much as they could from tourism activity.</li> <li>• There is a need to strengthen the product mix in the Shire and ensure that local, existing businesses benefit from tourism development in the future.</li> <li>• Because of lower tourism activities, there is a lack of infrastructure – tourism product and accommodation – to attract a greater number of tourists. There will be a requirement for increased investment to meet these requirements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Threats</b></p> <p>2.1 Possible marginalisation of tourism activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk will attract significantly more visitors to the Shire, there is a risk that other tourism, retail and accommodation businesses in the Shire may not benefit from this investment.</li> <li>• There is a need to put in place strategies that ensure local businesses participate in and benefit from increased tourism activity. This involves ensuring that major projects collaborate with local tourism businesses and that local tourism businesses meet the requirements of the market for attractive products and services.</li> </ul>

WEAKNESSES AND THREATS	ISSUES
2.2 Lack of control over growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncontrolled growth covering residential development and tourism development may result in lower quality of life outcomes for existing and new residents.</li> <li>• Residents in the Johnstone Shire want to avoid over development and loss of the character of the Shire. This has occurred in other regions to the detriment of the local population and has resulted in a loss of 'character' in the area. Identifying how this new growth will be managed and assessing the impact on quality of life will be important.</li> </ul>
2.3 Loss of initiatives to Cairns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the past, Johnstone College of TAFE has lost a number of positive training programs to Cairns as these programs have become more popular.</li> <li>• There is a need to 'draw a line in the sand' and defend investment in training, education and other development initiatives in the Johnstone Shire.</li> <li>• The Johnstone Shire will play a critical role in the development of the Great Green Way in the future and it will be important to retain resources in the Shire.</li> </ul>
2.4 Lack of a regional approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been a tendency for the Johnstone Shire to pursue its own priorities. A lack of regional coordination and focus and a lack of focus on solving regional problems has resulted in fewer resources and less support for the Johnstone Shire.</li> <li>• There is a need to counter this trend and develop approaches that will bring a regional focus and collaboration with nearby shires.</li> </ul>
2.5 Lower levels of education and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New jobs created in the economy will require adequate skills and training.</li> <li>• The Johnstone Shire needs to focus on strengthening education and training activities to ensure that the Shire, its businesses, and workers remain competitive in a market that focuses on the knowledge economy and value adding activities.</li> </ul>

## 4. VISION FOR THE JOHNSTONE SHIRE'S ECONOMY

*4. Vision for the Johnstone Shire's Economy covers:*

- *A summary of economic growth strategies.*
- *A summary of strategies that work with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.*

### 4.1 Summary of Economic Growth Strategies

To develop a sustainable and competitive economy, the Johnstone Shire needs to implement a range of action plans across different sectors and through facilitation strategies.

The following table summarises the main goals in sector plans, community plans and facilitation strategies.

Sections 5 through 10 of this report contain these individual plans.

**Table 4.1.1 – Economic Development Plan for the Johnstone Shire – Sector Plans and Facilitation Strategies**

Vision	Sector Plans
<p><b>1. Competitive Primary Production</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Actively supporting and strengthening key agribusiness sectors in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Building supply chain and market access skills and supporting innovation in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Establishing the Johnstone Shire as a destination for aquaculture investment.</i></li> </ul>	<p>1.1 Provide training, funding and transition strategies for people leaving the fishing and sugar industry – providing pathways to new employment and business opportunities.</p> <p>1.2 Support the retention of the fishing industry in the Johnstone Shire through ongoing dialogue with the industry. Undertake dredging of the Johnstone River.</p> <p>1.3 Establish the Shire as an investment destination for aquaculture projects.</p> <p>1.4 Establish a primary industries forum to continually identify key issues, address priority actions and monitor industry needs.</p> <p>1.5 Strengthen the industry through a series of clusters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation cluster.</li> <li>• Food and wine trail initiative.</li> <li>• Supply chain and market access cluster.</li> <li>• Support of bush food initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>1.6 Support farm tourism.</p> <p>1.7 Support effective land management strategies.</p>

Vision	Sector Plans
<p><b>2. Economic Diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Support the establishment of an industrial precinct near the Port of Mourilyan – supporting increased bulk exports and new manufacturing and industrial projects.</i></li> <li>• <i>Actively support the engineering sector in the Johnstone Shire – building a diversified and effective engineering sector in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continue to pursue value added manufacturing opportunities linked to primary production.</i></li> </ul>	<p>2.1 Establish an engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>2.2 Establish an industrial precinct near Mourilyan Harbour.</p> <p>2.3 Establish a manufacturing and industry leaders' group to identify key issues, opportunities for collaboration and priorities for action.</p> <p>2.4 Attract investment in manufacturing and industrial development.</p>
<p><b>3. Skills and Capabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establish trade skills training programs in the Johnstone Shire to provide training pathways for people in transition from other industries and to support the engineering cluster in the region.</i></li> <li>• <i>Building a learning community - providing a number of training and learning opportunities to the community.</i></li> </ul>	<p>3.1 Establish an education and training leaders' group to identify key issues, priorities for action and oversee training and education initiatives.</p> <p>3.2 Establish new training resources and capabilities in the Johnstone Shire covering trade training.</p> <p>3.3 Further develop justice studies in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>3.4 Establish a university campus in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>3.5 Support VET in schools initiatives.</p> <p>3.6 Establish the Johnstone Shire as a learning community.</p> <p>3.7 Establish a training and learning plan jointly with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p>
<p><b>4. Tourism in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identify potential locations for major tourism developments in the Shire – areas where such developments will be acceptable.</i></li> <li>• <i>Attract one or two major tourism developments to the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Require all major tourism developments to establish a local business marketing strategy to involve smaller, local tourism businesses.</i></li> <li>• <i>Encourage the development of farm tourism, adventure tourism and eco tourism in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Foster a vibrant and diverse creative industry sector in the Shire.</i></li> </ul>	<p>4.1 Develop a tourism strategy for the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>4.2 Develop a distinctive tourism brand for the Shire.</p> <p>4.3 Participate in regional tourism marketing and development – cooperation with other regions.</p> <p>4.4 Establish these clusters in the Johnstone Shire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mena Creek tourism cluster.</li> <li>• Food and wine trail.</li> <li>• Farm tourism.</li> </ul> <p>4.5 Identify suitable areas for major tourism developments and attract 1 or 2 major projects in the next 3 to 5 years.</p> <p>4.6 Develop a local area plan to manage development at Mission Beach.</p> <p>4.7 Develop lifestyle and amenity tourism in Innisfail through the establishment of an Innisfail River Boardwalk Precinct.</p> <p>4.8 Support river and reef access through river dredging and river based tourism.</p>

Vision	Sector Plans
	<p>4.9 Develop a range of tourism events to complement the successful Feast of the Senses.</p> <p>4.10 Retain art deco buildings as a feature in Innisfail.</p> <p>4.11 Develop the creative industries as a key sector in the Johnstone Shire.</p>
<p><b>5. Community Development in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Implement local economic development plans for local communities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Innisfail.</i></li> <li>- <i>Mission Beach.</i></li> <li>- <i>Silkwood and Kurrimine.</i></li> <li>- <i>Mena Creek.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>5.1 <b>Innisfail</b> – establishing the Innisfail River Boardwalk Precinct project as a major leisure facility for residents and tourists. Other initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A ‘next generation’ retirement village to Innisfail.</li> <li>• More education and training opportunities.</li> <li>• A greater government presence in the town to make Innisfail a major regional centre in the future.</li> </ul> <p>5.2 <b>Mission Beach</b> – developing a local area plan to manage the development of the area.</p> <p>5.3 <b>Silkwood and Kurrimine</b> – attract retail and service businesses at the crossroads to support both communities.</p> <p>5.4 <b>Mena Creek</b> – support the development of the Mena Creek tourism cluster and creative industries.</p>
<p><b>6. Regional Development Initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Collaborate with other shires in the Great Green Way and the Tablelands to identify economic and community development priorities for the region.</i></li> <li>• <i>Develop Innisfail and the Johnstone Shire as a major regional centre to service the needs of surrounding communities.</i></li> </ul>	<p>6.1 Establish a forum with other local government authorities in the Great Green Way and Tablelands to identify economic development issues that can be addressed in a collaborative way – delivering benefits to all participants.</p> <p>6.2 Establish a working group with government agencies to identify opportunities for Innisfail to develop as a regional administration and education centre.</p>
<b>FACILITATING THE VISION</b>	<b>FACILITATION STRATEGIES</b>
<p><b>7. Relationships with Businesses</b></p>	<p>7.1 Establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee to oversee implementation of the strategy.</p> <p>7.2 Undertake investment attraction activities in collaboration with Advance Cairns.</p> <p>7.3 Establish pathways into Council to streamline processes for new industry investment.</p>
<p><b>8. Support Business Growth</b></p>	<p>8.1 Continue to support small business assistance and development initiatives in the region.</p> <p>8.2 Establish a cluster program for the Johnstone Shire covering tourism, agribusiness and engineering.</p>

FACILITATING THE VISION	FACILITATION STRATEGIES
<b>9. Planning Environment</b>	9.1 Adopt population and industry investment targets for the region. 9.2 Actively collaborate with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people on economic development strategies and their implementation. 9.3 Link economic development strategies to planning priorities. 9.4 Support the establishment of an industrial land precinct near Mourilyan Harbour. 9.5 Provide planning support for aquaculture projects. 9.6 Identify infrastructure priorities to support growth covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation.</li> <li>• Energy.</li> <li>• Telecommunications.</li> <li>• Marine infrastructure – river dredging, marinas.</li> </ul> 9.7 Infrastructure planning for future growth – residential and project.
<b>10. Shire Facilities and Resources</b>	10.1 Implement community economic development strategies. 10.2 Seek developer/project contribution for infrastructure for residential development. 10.3 Undertake a concerted program of applying for grant and funding to support implementation. 10.4 Implement the Innisfail Aerodrome development plan – supporting tourism and aviation development.
<b>11. Market the Strategy</b>	11.1 Launch the economic development strategy in the Johnstone Shire. 11.2 Formally advise government agencies of the plan and seek government agency assistance for implementing the economic development strategy. 11.3 Discuss the strategy and regional collaboration opportunities with LGAs in the Great Green Way, Tablelands and Cairns City.

#### **4.2 Strategies for Working with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru People**

The traditional owners of the land will play a key role in the economic development strategy. The following table outlines the Ma:Mu people's mission statement and the links between this mission statement and economic development strategies.

**Table 4.2.1 – Ma:Mu People & Djiru People Links to the Economic Development Strategy**

<b>Ma:Mu Mission Statement</b>	
We, the Ma:Mu people of North Queensland, Australia, proclaim our unity as a community of clans. We reaffirm our status as First Peoples, and our right to self determination, including economically, politically, socially, culturally and environmentally. We proudly reaffirm our strength as an Aboriginal community, and on this basis hereby set out our visions, which is:	
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<b>Link to Economic Development Strategy</b>
To exercise our inherent, collective rights as Indigenous peoples.	Traditional owners are an active stakeholder in the development and implementation of the economic strategy.
To acknowledge with pride our enduring Indigenous culture and heritage, and to recognise the deep and continuing interrelationships in our culture between land, spirituality, community and environment.	Education and training on plants, land management and education on culture for school students.
To grow strong as a community, culturally, economically, environmentally and spiritually.	Participate in a range of economic development activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitality and tourism.</li> <li>• Cultural training.</li> <li>• New business development.</li> </ul>
To value, and to hold strongly onto our deep and profound connections to our land and all its resources.	Active involvement of Ma:Mu people in land and water management initiatives and strategies that care for the country.
To have the confidence to share with others the unique resources and knowledge of our country.	Active involvement of the Ma:Mu people in developing key projects and initiatives, e.g. Ma:Mu Canopy Walk, wetlands, education and training, land management.
To have the courage to assert our right to make decisions, to participate in development and political processes, and to allow or deny access to our culture, heritage and environment.	Play an active role in working with the Johnstone Shire Council and industry sectors on economic development strategies.

Mission Statement	Link to Economic Development Strategy
To build and maintain sustainable, equitable and beneficial partnerships with others, at local, regional, national and international levels.	Partnerships developed covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitality and tourism.</li> <li>• Land and waterways management.</li> <li>• Education and training.</li> <li>• Business development for Indigenous people.</li> </ul>
To encourage recognition and protection of our rights in biodiversity, cultural knowledge and practices, and Indigenous cultural and intellectual property.	Bushfoods nursery project.  Development of bushfoods crops.  Other business activities that build on biodiversity, cultural knowledge and practices.
To have pride in our unique rainforests and other ecosystems.	Play a key role in maintaining natural heritage areas.
To acknowledge our roles, and to fulfil our responsibilities as custodians and stewards of the diversity and richness of our country.	Recognition of the key role the traditional owners play in maintaining the unique environment in the Johnstone Shire and building on that resource for economic development.

#### **Djiru People Links to Economic Development Strategy**

- Traditional owners are an active stakeholder in the development and implementation of the economic strategy.
- Education and training on plants, land management and education on culture for school students.
- Participate in a range of economic development activities including:
  - Hospitality and tourism.
  - Cultural training.
  - New business development.
- Active involvement in land and water management initiatives and strategies that care for the country.
- Active involvement in developing key projects and initiatives, e.g. wetlands, education and training, land management.
- Play an active role in working with the Johnstone Shire Council and industry sectors on economic development strategies.

- Partnerships developed covering:
  - Hospitality and tourism.
  - Land and waterways management.
  - Education and training.
  - Business development for Indigenous people.
- Other business activities that build on biodiversity, cultural knowledge and practices.
- Play a key role in maintaining natural heritage areas.
- Recognition of the key role the traditional owners play in maintaining the unique environment in the Johnstone Shire and building on that resource for economic development.

### **Contribution of Traditional Owners to the Economic Development Strategy**

The Ma:Mu people and Djiru people have been very proactive in developing opportunities for vegetation and land management programs. They have the potential to bring to the Johnstone Shire a substantial asset – the willingness and the funding capacity to undertake a wide range of land and waterways management activities through CDEP funding.

The Ma:Mu people will also play a critical role in the establishment of the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk, a major tourism attraction for the region.

The Ma:Mu people have also initiated a plant nursery project for bushfoods and have the potential to establish bushfood production and niche food industries based on this knowledge and capability.

In addition, the traditional owners have a wealth of knowledge and expertise that can be communicated to the wider community on management of the country.

The Ma:Mu people and Djiru people are a key asset in the Shire and will play an active role in economic development activities.

Specific initiatives have also been identified in the strategy to support training and skills development for the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people to boosting opportunities for new business in the future.

The Johnstone Shire has already been established as a centre for justice studies for Indigenous communities. There is an opportunity to build on this role and attract additional training and education activities for Indigenous people to the Shire.

## **Action Plan**

The following table summarises the main objectives, actions and required outcomes for projects actively involving the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.

In addition to this action plan, the traditional owners will have an active role in all other sector economic development plans.

**Table 4.2.2 – Ma:Mu people and Djiru People – Economic Development Plan**

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>1. Primary industry sector</b></p> <p>1.1 Continued support for the Ma:Mu people's bush foods production venture in association with TAFE.</p> <p>Investigate the economic viability of commercial production of bush food crops in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Investigate markets for bush foods and select a number of crops that can be successfully and sustainably grown in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>1.2 Actively participate in strategies that help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the competitiveness of the sugar industry and the banana industry. This includes training and skills development for Indigenous people and working with both sectors on land management strategies.</li> <li>• Participate in the agribusiness innovation cluster and supply chain skills development cluster. This will help to support bush food initiatives and provide a way of exchanging traditional owners' knowledge of land and waterways to the broader agribusiness community.</li> </ul>	<p>Key crops identified as part of the current bush foods project.</p> <p>Market investigation to assess demand for bush foods.</p>	<p>Bush food production delivers long term economic opportunities for the Ma:Mu people and local producers.</p> <p>Demand driven focus ensures that production is targeting market needs.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p>1.3 Access continued funding support for land management initiatives to be carried out by primary producers and the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p> <p>Identify opportunities that support tourism and primary production – maintaining the environment and maintaining agricultural land.</p>	<p>Johnstone Catchment Management Group. Ma:Mu people and Djiru. National Heritage Trust. CDEP. Primary producer associations. Land management strategies and priorities identified as an ongoing program by July 2005.</p>	<p>Ongoing land management initiatives maintaining natural heritage areas and supporting productive management of agricultural land.</p>
<p><b>2. Tourism</b></p> <p>2.1 Ensure that the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk becomes a landmark tourist attraction in north Queensland. Implement a strategy for the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk that provides marketing opportunities for local tourism businesses – linking small business tourism product to the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Tourism Queensland, major tourism ventures including the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk, smaller tourism businesses.</p>	<p>Ma:Mu Canopy Walk project can be a model for a major attraction working with other local businesses. An active planning process will be required to make this successful.</p>

<b>Economic Development Objectives and Actions</b>	<b>Timing and Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<p>2.2 Participate in the creative industries sector strategy including visual arts and performing arts. Identify opportunities for new business activities based an Indigenous culture focus.</p> <p>This includes possible tours to Indigenous sites of major significance.</p> <p>Identify training and skills development priorities needed to support tourism and culture based businesses.</p>	<p>Ma:Mu people and Djiru people, arts organisations in the Shire, tourism industry.</p> <p>Opportunities identified in 2005/06.</p>	<p>Increased opportunities for arts and cultural activities for the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p>
<p><b>3. Education and Skills Development</b></p> <p>3.1 Expand justice studies activities and introduce related courses that support the needs of Indigenous communities.</p> <p>3.2 Investigate opportunities to establish Johnstone College of TAFE as a higher education entry point for Indigenous students – exploring opportunities for a university campus link at the Innisfail TAFE.</p>	<p>Innisfail TAFE, Department of Employment and Training, Indigenous communities, universities.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>The Johnstone Shire develops as a strong and recognised base for Indigenous training and education services.</p> <p>Opportunities to establish tertiary education pathways and delivery of tertiary courses at Innisfail TAFE.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p>3.3 Establish a training plan with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people to cover work based training and community development training.</p> <p>This covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificate level training in vegetation, land and waterways management.</li> <li>• Certificate level horticulture training to support bush food crop development.</li> <li>• Certificate level training to support hospitality and tourism employment and new ventures.</li> <li>• Business management, entrepreneurship and business development training.</li> </ul> <p>3.4 Seek funding to support Indigenous cultural training for school students. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific training programs hosted in the Johnstone Shire.</li> <li>• Working with schools to provide this cultural training in the Johnstone Shire and in surrounding shires.</li> </ul>	<p>Education forum, TAFE Queensland, Department of Employment and Training, schools, private training providers, businesses and the community, Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p> <p>Initial plan identified by August 2005.</p>	<p>Ongoing planning to identify training and community development learning initiatives for the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p>
<p><b>4. New employment and business ventures</b></p> <p>4.1 Identify specific opportunities for new business initiatives by the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people as a result of economic growth. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous culture business linked to tourism.</li> <li>• Building and construction skills and businesses working with new projects.</li> <li>• New small business ventures, e.g. bush food, niche product development and other small business initiatives.</li> </ul>		

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>5. Participate in economic development activities.</b></p> <p>5.1 Ensure that there is representation of the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people on the Economic Development Advisory Committee and in leaders forums (agribusiness, tourism, manufacturing, education and skills development) so that there is good interaction and discussion on economic development opportunities.</p> <p>5.2 Establish an office for the Ma:Mu people to provide administrative support to the activities being undertaken in economic and employment development.</p> <p>5.3 Establish a 12 month action plan with the Ma:Mu people to clearly identify economic development opportunities and projects in which there are employment and development opportunities for the Ma:Mu people. Review this at an annual forum and discuss future plans – updating the plan on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Ma:Mu people and Djiru people, Johnstone Shire Council, stakeholders in sector plans.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>Active involvement of the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people in economic development activities.</p> <p>New training and business opportunities for Indigenous people in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>The Johnstone Shire benefits from the active participation of the Ma:Mu people and from the initiatives and funding they can bring to the Shire through national Indigenous programs covering employment and economic development.</p>

## 5. PRIMARY INDUSTRIES SECTOR PLAN

5. *Primary Industries Sector Plan covers:*
- *Industry scope.*
  - *Role and outlook for the agricultural production sector.*
  - *Current situation and trends affecting the primary production sector.*
  - *Priorities for the primary production sector.*
  - *Long term goals.*
  - *Action plan.*

### 5.1 Industry Scope

The primary industries sector covers:

- Agricultural production in the Johnstone Shire covering sugar cane, bananas, tropical produce and horticulture.
- Value adding to primary production activities.
- Aquaculture.
- Fishing.
- Land management initiatives.

### 5.2 Role and Outlook for the Agricultural Production Sector

The agricultural production sector is a vital component of the Shire's economy.

In the past, the Shire has relied on these core agricultural sectors and fishing to deliver employment and wealth for the Shire.

However, the impact of international markets, threats of disease and closures of fisheries have had an adverse impact on the prospects for these industries.

Given the significant area of land under agricultural cultivation in the Shire, there is no prospect for a major shift in use of land – particularly as growth for residential development will be fairly steady in the years to come.

There are some alternate uses of agricultural land through industrial development near the Mourilyan Harbour port and through tourism development projects.

The priority needs to be on strengthening primary production sectors and preservation of agricultural land.

This key focus will help to:

- Maintain the natural environment and maintain effective land management.
- Retain the scenery and visual qualities of the Shire that make it attractive to residents and to tourists.
- Strengthen employment and economic prospects for a significant sector of the economy.

### **5.3 Current Situation and Trends Affecting the Primary Production Sector**

The Johnstone Shire provides ideal growing conditions for a number of crops including sugar cane, bananas and tropical produce. The Shire receives significant annual rainfall. In an environment where many areas of Australia suffer from drought conditions, the Shire has the ability to provide an advantageous environment for primary production.

The following points summarise the current situation and key trends having an influence on these primary production sectors. These trends and their implications have an influence on the economic strategy.

These current conditions and trends include the following:

#### **Sugar Production**

- Ideal growing conditions for sugar cane in the Shire.
- International downward trends on sugar pricing.
- Increased international competition.
- Rationalisation and restructuring of the sugar production industry in Australia.
- The number of mills in the region may decrease in the future.
- Challenges in transition for sugar industry workers – economic impact and the need to develop skills for new employment or industry ventures.

#### **Banana Production**

- Australia has now achieved area freedom for Black Sigatoka and there are no longer any restrictions on transport or sale within Australia for north Queensland bananas.
- Potential threat from Moko if banana imports to Australia are allowed.

- Impact of producers switching from cane to banana production – the impact of oversupply and variable quality which affects longer standing, quality producers.
- Pressure from retailers to maintain low/competitive pricing for bananas. There is a lack of transparency in the wholesale supply chain resulting in inequity between farm gate and retail pricing. Growcom has successfully lobbied for Mandatory Horticulture Code of Practice which will assist growers in sales transactions.
- Ideal growing climate for bananas.

### **Fishing Industry**

- Closure of fisheries and restrictions on fisheries access.
- Closures of some areas of the Great Barrier Reef to fishing.
- Rationalisation and restructuring in the fishing industry.
- Difficulties in transition for fishing industry workers – economic impact and the need to develop skills for new employment or industry ventures.

### **Tropical Fruit and Horticulture**

- Predominantly niche market production.
- The need for improved market access for producers.
- The challenge of developing demand for product in Australian and international markets.
- Adverse impact on crops from flying foxes in the region – a significant deterrent for some producers. Cockatoos and parrots also have an adverse impact on crops. However, most serious growers now net their orchards which has additional flow on benefits.
- Limited supply chain management and development skills – vital for growing domestic and export sales.
- Although a growing sector, this sector will not take over land currently used for bananas and sugar cane.
- Steady growth potential in the future.
- Ideal growing conditions for tropical fruit and other horticulture crops. The Johnstone Shire region can produce counter seasonal fruit to most other producing countries.

## **Aquaculture**

- The Johnstone Shire provides an ideal environment with daytime temperatures close to night time temperatures.
- Available rainfall in the area supports aquaculture production.
- Lack of general consumer awareness and understanding of the aquaculture industry. This can lead to community opposition to new aquaculture ventures.
- Need for a welcoming local government environment to support new investment.

## **Land Management**

- CDEP and national heritage trust funding of land management activities by the Ma:Mu people and Djiru have been positively received.
- Need to maintain agricultural production given the large area of land under cultivation. Loss of key primary production industries would result in poor land management outcomes for the Shire.
- Productive areas lie between the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics World Heritage areas. The need for demonstrated environmentally sustainable farm practices will only increase in the future. Growcom is championing the concept of Farm Management Systems to balance society's expectations with production realities. The Queensland government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Queensland Farmers' Federation endorsing Farm Management Systems as the agreed model for future action.

### **5.4 Priorities for the Primary Production Sector**

The economic development plan focuses on the following priorities:

- Putting in place active strategies to retain and strengthen agricultural sectors in the Shire.
- Providing access to programs, training and support for business owners and workers going through a transition from cane and fishing to other industry employment.
- Supporting innovation in agribusiness in the Shire – actively developing new ventures, capabilities and innovation which strengthen the industry in the Shire.
- Building supply chain and market access capabilities in the Johnstone Shire to support increased sales and market access

of tropical produce, horticulture and value added products such as food and beverages.

- Attract investment to support growth in the food and beverages sector in the future.
- Designate the Johnstone Shire as a preferred destination for aquaculture investment in north Queensland.
- Access to reliable on farm labour is a major issue for bananas, mangoes and tropical fruits.

## **5.5 Long Term Goals**

The long term goals for this sector include:

- Retaining agricultural production in the Johnstone Shire as a competitive and strong industry sector into the future. This will retain employment in primary production and continue to generate support for businesses and sectors that depend upon this sector. This approach will also help to retain the unique tropical north Queensland environment and open space in the Shire.
- Building market access and supply chain capabilities in the Shire to provide a platform for business growth in this sector in the future.
- Diversifying primary production activities, particularly focusing on growth in tropical produce and horticulture and through growth in aquaculture in the Shire.

## **5.6 Action Plan**

The following table summarises the main objectives, actions and required outcomes.

This action plan needs to be implemented in conjunction with the following partner organisations:

- Industry association representatives covering the sugar industry, banana production, papaw and tropical fruit production, horticulture production and fishing.
- Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.
- Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.
- Department of Employment and Training.
- Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority.

- Department of State Development and Innovation.
- Department of Communities.
- Federal government agencies.
- Research and development organisations, e.g. Horticulture Australia, RIRDC.
- Links to the tourism industry in the region.

## Primary Industry Sector – Economic Development Plan

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>1. Support transition strategies for fishing and sugar production</b></p> <p>1.1 Working with the full range of local, state and federal government agencies, document the resources, assistance and training pathways available to assist the community. Once this index of available assistance and resources has been developed, distribute to all agencies involved in community, employment and industry development areas in the Johnstone and Cairns regions.</p> <p>Publicising this information will help to identify opportunities and pathways for individuals and businesses going through transition out of key primary industries.</p> <p>1.2 Continue to identify targeted training and transition opportunities. Initial priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade training.</li> <li>• New venture start up.</li> <li>• Alternate crop production.</li> <li>• The Future Cane program and the assistance it delivers to producers.</li> <li>• Blue card assessment to support businesses undertaking training and tourism activities.</li> <li>• Change management training for the rural sector.</li> </ul> <p>1.3 Work with primary production industry associations to continue to identify opportunities for funding and support for local transition initiatives to new employment opportunities.</p> <p>1.4 Identify opportunities for the Johnstone Shire to participate in industry restructuring opportunities and funding support.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, fishing, sugar, banana and other primary industry associations, DPIF, DET and federal agencies.</p> <p>Targeted programs and activities through 2005 and ongoing.</p> <p>Collaboration with sugar industry and fishing industry groups to pursue opportunities.</p>	<p>Better access to opportunities for retraining, new employment and new business development.</p> <p>Active strategy to minimise the adverse impact of industry restructuring.</p> <p>Unemployment as a result of industry restructure minimised.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>2. Retain and support the fishing industry in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>2.1 Ongoing discussions with the industry as part of the primary industry associations' forum. Identify key issues for the industry and work with industry on these priorities.</p> <p>2.2 Investigate dredging of the mouth of the Johnstone River. River dredging is required to provide ongoing access to the river for the fishing industry based in Innisfail.</p> <p>Dredging will also support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of marine maintenance capabilities in the area. These businesses require slipways and good access for craft.</li> <li>• Easy access to the reef for reef tours, diving and sport fishing.</li> <li>• River access for tourism boats and activities.</li> </ul> <p>Seek funding to undertake the required feasibility and environment assessment for dredging.</p> <p>Identify funding sources to assist in dredging activity.</p> <p>2.3 Undertake consultation with the fishing industry to ensure that the industry still has access to facilities given a proposed redevelopment of the River Boardwalk Precinct in Innisfail for tourism and lifestyle amenity for local residents.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, fishing industry.</p> <p>Dredging feasibility/ environment evaluation completed by the first half of 2006.</p> <p>Dredging program implemented as soon as practicable.</p> <p>Consultation with the fishing industry as part of a design process for the redevelopment of the River Precinct in Innisfail.</p> <p>Second half of 2005.</p>	<p>River access supports and helps to retain fishing industry activities in Innisfail.</p> <p>River access supports development in other sectors, particularly tourism.</p> <p>Industry consultation.</p> <p>Facilities continue to be available to support industry needs. This may require relocation of some activities and facilities for the industry.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>3. Develop the aquaculture industry in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>3.1 Establish the Johnstone Shire as an investment destination for aquaculture projects.</p> <p>Establish a welcoming environment for aquaculture projects and provide active support for their establishment in the Johnstone Shire. Work with the industry and DSDI to identify suitable sites in the Shire and provide a clear pathway for evaluation and support of new aquaculture projects.</p> <p>Explore opportunities with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people regarding possible joint venture development opportunities for aquaculture projects and provision of employment and training to Indigenous people in aquaculture. <i>(These initiatives are in line with the 'Queensland Aquaculture Industries Federation's Further Development of the Aquaculture Industry in Queensland' strategy)</i></p> <p>3.2 Undertake ongoing promotion of the Johnstone Shire as a destination for aquaculture investment and developments.</p> <p>Provide information to industry associations, Department of Primary Industry and Forestry, Department of State Development and Innovation and other contact points for aquaculture investors.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, aquaculture businesses in the Shire, aquaculture industry associations.</p> <p>Support processes in place in 2005.</p> <p>Marketing material on the Johnstone Shire developed by July 2005.</p> <p>Distribution to industry groups and contact networks and ongoing updates (6 monthly to annually) to continue to raise awareness of opportunities.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire recognised as a desirable and welcoming destination for aquaculture investment.</p> <p>Increased investment delivers employment opportunities and diversification of the primary industry sector for the Shire.</p> <p>Increased awareness within the aquaculture industry and amongst proponents of the opportunities to establish in the Johnstone Shire and the welcoming environment.</p> <p>Johnstone Shire Council develops a positive environment that supports investment in the aquaculture industry.</p> <p>More projects attracted to the Shire.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p>3.3 Encourage education, training and community awareness regarding aquaculture. Possibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting aquaculture projects at Johnstone Shire schools (Tully High School already has an aquaculture project in place).</li> <li>• In consultation with industry, support training for the industry. This can take the form of VET in schools training or targeted training to meet industry needs.</li> </ul> <p>Publicise aquaculture activities to tourists in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities for related aquaculture and tourism activities, e.g. restaurants, aquaculture farm viewing, etc..</p>	<p>2005 and ongoing.</p>	<p>Increased community awareness of the aquaculture industry.</p> <p>Increased support for the industry and skills development.</p> <p>Potential tourism activities that involve aquaculture ventures.</p>
<p><b>4. Strengthening agricultural production in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>4.1 Hold a six monthly or annual forum with industry associations representing primary producers in the Johnstone Shire to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key issues affecting the development of these industry sectors in the Shire and in surrounding regions.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for collaboration or a joint focus on important topics, e.g. land management, infrastructure, market access, innovation.</li> <li>• Identify priority actions for the next 6 to 12 months that require collaboration or shared information amongst primary production sectors and collaboration with Johnstone Shire Council and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Report back to the forum on outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council and industry groups.</p> <p>First meeting by June 2005.</p>	<p>Regular forum for primary production industry associations to raise issues with Council and other stakeholders, seek information on and identify strategies and projects.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p>4.2 Establish an agribusiness innovation cluster that supports new and innovative ventures in the Shire.</p> <p>Provide support to these ventures including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with market access.</li> <li>• Developing market access and supply chain skills.</li> <li>• Providing opportunities to link these businesses with other initiatives at state and federal level, e.g. food industry strategies, export strategies and market development initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>These innovative producers and/or marketers have the opportunity to generate increased demand for product from the region – generating flow on affects and opportunities for other producers.</p> <p>The scope includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology and equipment innovation.</li> <li>• Value adding processes.</li> <li>• Marketing and market access.</li> <li>• Supply chain management.</li> <li>• Best practice and innovative production strategies.</li> <li>• Export sales.</li> </ul>	<p>Cluster funding sought and secured in 2005.</p> <p>Cluster initiated in the second half of 2005.</p> <p>Area Consultative Committee. Johnstone Shire Council. Industry associations.</p>	<p>Innovative and high growth producers and value added ventures supported.</p> <p>Increased employment and revenue.</p> <p>Flow on opportunities to other primary producers.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p>4.3 Establish a food and wine trail initiative in the Johnstone Shire, linking with activities in the surrounding region. Link Johnstone Shire businesses to the CREDC food trail initiative (<a href="http://www.australianropicalfoods.com.au">www.australianropicalfoods.com.au</a>).</p> <p>Establish signage, marketing material and food and wine trail events to promote tropical produce and beverages in the region.</p> <p>Continue the Feast of the Senses as a flagship event for the food and wine trail.</p> <p>4.4 Continued support for the Ma:Mu people's bush foods production venture in association with TAFE.</p> <p>Investigate the economic viability of commercial production of bush food crops in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Investigate markets for bush foods and select a number of crops that can be successfully and sustainably grown in the Johnstone Shire.</p>	<p>Trail established by September 2005.</p> <p>Collaboration with tourism operators on marketing material and promotion.</p> <p>Signage linked to other Shire/regional signage activities. Linked to Great Green Way.</p> <p>Key crops identified as part of the current bush foods project.</p> <p>Market investigation to assess demand for bush foods.</p>	<p>Active promotion of food and wine trails – adding to the marketing mix in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Targeted marketing of food and wine trail produce – targeting tourism as well as retail sales in food service and retail markets.</p> <p>Ongoing program of events and activities.</p> <p>Bush food production delivers long term economic opportunities for the Ma:Mu people and local producers.</p> <p>Demand driven focus ensures that production is targeting market needs.</p>

<b>Economic Development Objectives and Actions</b>	<b>Timing and Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<p>4.5 Establish a supply chain and market access skills cluster to support increased market access.</p> <p>Undertake an assessment of market opportunities and identify potential partners in food and beverage value adding. The aim is to establish one or two new initiatives that will generate demand for production. This in turn will provide opportunities for transition from cane to tropical produce production.</p> <p>Investigate market opportunities for tropical produce production that would generate increased demand for production in the Johnstone Shire and in surrounding regions.</p> <p>Secure funding for this initiative as a market driven opportunity underpinning sustainability and growth in primary production.</p> <p>Encourage netting to address the impact of pests such as flying foxes, cockatoos and parrots.</p>	<p>Industry associations, Research and development funds.</p> <p>Market/project opportunities evaluated in 2005/06.</p> <p>Projects implemented in 2006.</p>	<p>Increased market access and market opportunities for production.</p> <p>Flow on demand for production and opportunities for crop diversification.</p> <p>Supply chain management and market access skills strengthened to become a competitive advantage for the region.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>5. Support farm tourism initiatives in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>5.1 Using CRC Tourism information and assistance, assist primary producers to establish viable farm tourism businesses in the Johnstone Shire and surrounding regions.</p> <p>Build tourism skills and link marketing of farm tourism to other tourism marketing in the Shire.</p> <p>Provide briefings and encourage a group of 5 to 10 producers to establish farm tourism ventures in the Shire.</p>	<p>Opportunities, training and business development strategies made available in 2005.</p>	<p>New farm tourism ventures established in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Farm tourism supports viability of farms.</p> <p>Farm tourism becomes a distinctive and recognised part of the tourism mix in the Johnstone Shire.</p>
<p><b>6. Support effective land management strategies in the Johnstone Shire – supporting primary production and environment sustainability</b></p> <p>6.1 Access continued funding support for land management initiatives to be carried out by primary producers and the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p> <p>Identify opportunities that support tourism and primary production – maintaining the environment and maintaining agricultural land.</p>	<p>Johnstone Catchment Management Group. Ma:Mu people and Djiru. National Heritage Trust. CDEP. Primary producer associations. Land management strategies and priorities identified as an ongoing program by July 2005.</p>	<p>Ongoing land management initiatives maintaining natural heritage areas and supporting productive management of agricultural land.</p>

## 6. MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRIAL SECTOR PLAN

6. *Manufacturing and Industrial Sector Plan covers:*
- *Industry scope.*
  - *Role and outlook for the manufacturing and industrial sector.*
  - *Current situation and trends affecting the manufacturing and industrial sector.*
  - *Priorities for the manufacturing and industrial sector.*
  - *Long term goals.*
  - *Action plan.*

### 6.1 Industry Scope

The manufacturing and industrial sector covers:

- The engineering sector in the Johnstone Shire.
- The broad range of businesses established in the Shire that provide support to key industries, e.g. transportation, cartons, agricultural chemical supplies, etc..
- The broad range of manufacturing activities.
- Export focused sectors such as the sugar terminal, live cattle exports, timber exports and other bulk exports through Mourilyan Harbour.
- Marine repairs and maintenance.

### 6.2 Role and Outlook for the Manufacturing and Industrial Sector

The manufacturing and industrial sector in the Johnstone Shire has developed largely as a support sector to the primary production sector.

The linkages between the manufacturing and industrial sectors and agriculture are fairly strong. This has had benefits in the past as these businesses have grown in response to growing demand from the agriculture sector.

However, the downturn in primary industry activities has had a significant impact on this manufacturing and industrial sector.

There is a need to strengthen and diversify the manufacturing and industrial base of the Shire so that these sectors:

- Continue to grow in the Johnstone Shire and provide the necessary support to primary industry sectors.
- Provide increased diversity and strength to the local economy.

- Strengthen employment and economic prospects in the Shire.

Over dependence on serving the primary industry sectors can put these other sectors at risk.

### **6.3 Current Situation and Trends Affecting the Manufacturing and Industrial Sector**

The following points summarise the current situation and key trends having an influence on the manufacturing and industrial sector in the Shire:

#### **Engineering Sector**

- A diverse range of engineering capabilities have developed over time in the Shire and surrounding regions.
- Engineering firms now need to seek additional work outside their local region in order to build revenue, profitability and employment for the longer term.
- The Cairns Regional Engineering Network (CREN) has been established to assist local engineering firms to secure more work in the region and provide the opportunity for collaboration to target larger projects.

CREN is one of a number of engineering networks that have established in Queensland. These networks have been very successful in retaining engineering work locally and have provided new opportunities for these firms.

- Engineering firms in the Johnstone Shire have lost opportunities because of the inability to undertake large projects.
- Initial engineering cluster meetings have been positive and there are now 9 Innisfail and Cardwell firms that are members of CREN. There is support for establishing a localised engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire.

#### **Primary Industry Trends**

- Primary industry trends have been outlined in Section 5. Essentially, these challenges are having adverse flow on effects for the supply chain that provides goods and services to these industries.
- Identifying ways of diversifying sales and markets will be important for these support industries.

## **Bulk Exports**

- The Johnstone Shire has a very high quality natural harbour – Mourilyan Harbour.
- There is increased interest in using the Harbour for a range of exports in addition to bulk sugar exports. These opportunities include woodchips and log exports and live cattle exports.
- The Ports Corporation is committed to further developing the volume of bulk exports through the Mourilyan Harbour.
- The Ports Corporation has undertaken initial discussions with the Johnstone Shire regarding the establishment of an industrial precinct near Mourilyan Harbour that would service companies with bulk exports and provide an industrial estate for manufacturing and other industries. This is an extremely positive development as the Port Corporation would be an active partner in the development of this precinct and in attracting businesses to the region.

## **Food and Beverage Manufacturing**

- There are a number of businesses already established in the Shire that manufacture value added food products and beverages.
- There are opportunities to assist these businesses to further develop their capabilities and market access – building a stronger food and beverage manufacturing base in the Shire.
- Given the region's rainfall and good quality agricultural land, there may be additional opportunities in the future to attract larger scale food manufacturing and processing activities to the region.

## **Resources that Support the Manufacturing and Industrial Sector**

- There are opportunities to provide trade and other industry training to people leaving the fishing and cane sectors. Development of new employment opportunities in the region has significant benefits – providing local employment to those in transition from other industries.
- At present, there is limited transition and trade training currently available. However, this gap has been identified and addressed in the training and skills sector plan.
- The Goondi Industrial Precinct is nearly fully utilised. Additional industrial land will support new business and business expansion in the area.

#### **6.4 Priorities for the Manufacturing and Industrial Sector**

The economic development plan focuses on the following priorities:

- Establishing an engineering cluster and building the capabilities of that cluster – targeting new work and activity for the region. This will have the benefit of offsetting potential losses of jobs or opportunities associated with declines of the cane industry and the fishing industry.
- Providing a new industrial land precinct close to the Port administered by the Ports Corporation. This will help to diversify the economy and attract new businesses and investment into the Shire.
- Attracting increased volumes of bulk exports through Mourilyan Harbour. There is pressure on the Cairns Harbour and there are opportunities to boost trade activity through Mourilyan Harbour.

#### **6.5 Long Term Goals**

The long term goals for this sector include:

- Developing a vibrant and growing engineering sector that has the opportunity to continually secure work from outside the Shire and bring opportunities into the Shire. This will build a very strong engineering sector that will continue to support the primary industries sector. This initiative will also provide employment growth and employment stability in this sector. In the longer term, the priority is to establish the engineering cluster as a well recognised, high quality cluster of firms that can undertake a range of engineering, machinery and equipment work.
- Establishing a new industrial precinct near the Mourilyan Harbour and expanding the volume of exports through Mourilyan Harbour.

#### **6.6 Action Plan**

The following table summarises the main objectives, actions and required outcomes.

This action plan needs to be implemented in conjunction with the following partner organisations:

- Department of State Development and Innovation.
- Cairns Region Engineering Network.
- Ports Corporation.

## Manufacturing and Industrial Sector – Economic Development Plan

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>1. Establish an engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>1.1 Continue to build on initial meetings and establish an active engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire that includes firms in the Johnstone and Cardwell Shires. Establish this cluster as a sub branch of CREN.</p> <p>1.2 Access funding to provide local support to this engineering cluster – assisting with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market opportunity identification.</li> <li>• Capability profiling.</li> <li>• Evaluating opportunities for collaboration, e.g. collaborative marketing, shared resources, shared staffing and industry training.</li> </ul> <p>1.3 Develop a cluster plan that assists in drawing in more work opportunities for engineering firms in the Johnstone Shire.</p>	<p>Clusters formed as a sub branch of CREN - April/May 2005.</p> <p>Access cluster facilitator funding and support for market opportunity identification – 2005 and ongoing.</p> <p>DSDI Johnstone Council. Shire</p>	<p>Engineering firms have the ability to collaborate on accessing markets, outsourcing and collaboration on production activities and collaboration on training and skills development.</p> <p>Stronger engineering sector – increased revenue and better access to market opportunities.</p> <p>Long term growth of the cluster as a recognised engineering provider in north Queensland.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>2. Establish an industrial precinct near Mourilyan Harbour</b></p> <p>2.1 Work with the Ports Corporation to establish an industrial land precinct near Mourilyan Harbour.</p> <p>2.2 Provide planning support to fast track the establishment of this facility.</p> <p>2.3 Work with the Ports Corporation in attracting manufacturing and industrial investment to this industrial precinct.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Ports Corporation, DSDI.</p> <p>Planning for the industrial estate underway in April/May 2005.</p> <p>Ensure a strong and effective collaboration between Johnstone Shire Council and the Ports Corporation.</p>	<p>New industrial land precinct attracts new investment and jobs to the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>The industrial precinct is a major catalyst for diversifying the economy of the Shire.</p>
<p><b>3. Undertake investment attraction covering manufacturing and industrial development</b></p> <p>3.1 Collaborate with Advance Cairns to develop investment attraction material for businesses considering the Johnstone Shire as a destination for investment.</p> <p>3.2 Establish an arrangement with Advance Cairns whereby Advance Cairns provides assistance to the Johnstone Shire Council on investment attraction.</p> <p>3.3 Work with the Chamber of Commerce to establish contact points for investment attraction and strategies that support businesses interested in investing in the Johnstone Shire – providing a welcoming environment.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council and Advance Cairns, Chamber of Commerce, DSDI.</p> <p>Material developed by September 2005.</p>	<p>Proactive approach to investment.</p> <p>Advance Cairns assists the Johnstone Shire to attract companies to invest.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
3.4 Undertake a review of Council processes and approval pathways. Identify ways of streamlining these processes and time frames for targeted investment, e.g. firms establishing on the new industrial precinct, major tourism projects, aquaculture projects.		
<p><b>4. Manufacturing and industry leaders' group</b></p> <p>4.1 Establish a manufacturing and leaders' forum. Hold a six monthly or annual meeting with forum members to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key issues affecting the development of these industry sectors in the Shire and in surrounding regions.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for collaboration or a joint focus on important topics, e.g. land access, infrastructure, market access.</li> <li>• Identify priority actions for the next 6 to 12 months that require collaboration or shared information amongst businesses and collaboration with the Johnstone Shire Council and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Report back to the forum on progress.</li> </ul>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, DSDI, Chamber of Commerce, major manufacturers and businesses in the Shire.</p> <p>First meeting by June 2005.</p>	<p>Regular forum for manufacturers and industrial businesses to raise issues with Council and other stakeholders, seek information and identify strategies and projects.</p>

## 7. TOURISM, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND RETAIL SECTOR PLAN

- 7. Tourism, Creative Industries and Retail Sector Plan covers:*
- Industry scope.*
  - Role and outlook for the tourism, creative industries and retail sector.*
  - Current situation and trends affecting the tourism, creative industries and retail sector.*
  - Priorities for the tourism, creative industries and retail sector.*
  - Long term goals.*
  - Action plan.*

### 7.1 Industry Scope

The tourism, creative industries and retail sectors covers:

- Major tourist attractions and new projects in the Johnstone Shire. This includes the major existing attraction of Paronella Park and the planned Ma:Mu Canopy Walk as well as other new projects in the future.
- Farm tourism.
- The Mena Creek tourism cluster.
- Accommodation – motels and B&Bs.
- Retail outlets that serve the local community as well as tourism needs. This includes cafes, restaurants and other food outlets.
- Major retailers. These retailers serve the needs of the local community and form a key part of the infrastructure for tourism.
- Tour operations.
- National parks.
- Creative industries.

### 7.2 Role and Outlook for the Tourism, Creative Industries and Retail Sector

Tourism is a major part of the economy of the Johnstone Shire at the present time and will be a much more important driver of the economy in the future.

Creative industries are closely linked with tourism activities. Johnstone Shire has a strong artist community.

The retail sector serves the local community plus an increasing number of visitors to the Shire.

There has been significant investment in new retail facilities and this will further underpin residential and tourism growth in the area.

To successfully develop the tourism industry, there is a need to preserve the unique character of the Shire and the tourism experience it offers while adding to the tourism product and mix through new developments in the region.

For tourism, there will be an ongoing tension between progress and the desire to retain the character of the Shire. However, effective planning can help to minimise this impact and also deliver some lasting benefits to smaller tourism businesses, the creative industries sector and to the retailing sector.

The key focus in this sector economic development plan will be to:

- Maintain and strengthen the existing mix of tourism businesses in the Shire.
- Attract appropriate tourism development that boosts tourism product while not adversely impacting on the Shire's character.
- Continuing to support a diverse and vibrant creative industries sector.
- Ensuring that retail and service businesses also benefit from tourism growth.

### **7.3 Current Situation and Trends Affecting the Tourism, Creative Industries and Retail Sector**

A number of trends and factors are influencing all three of these sectors. These trends and their implications also impact on the economic strategy.

Current conditions and trends include the following:

#### **Tourism Industry**

- North Queensland is a major destination for tourists. Tourists come for the reef and rainforest experience. At the present time, much of this activity is focused around the Cairns area.
- The Johnstone Shire needs to develop strategies that capture more of this tourism market.

- Mission Beach is a major tourism destination and visitors to Mission Beach often continue along the Great Green Way through Innisfail to Cairns. At present Mission Beach is administered by two shires. This has led to fragmentation in the development approach for the area.
- The Johnstone Shire is closer to the reef than Cairns is to the reef. This provides an opportunity to develop reef tourism. Although not expected to rival the Cairns reef tours, this has the potential to add to the mix in the region.
- Primary producers are increasingly looking for other revenue opportunities. This will generate interest in farm tourism.
- The Shire has a number of value added food producers and wineries. This resource can support a food and wine trail in the region.
- The Johnstone Shire runs the risk of not benefiting from major new tourist ventures in the Shire. If tourists travel by bus or car from Cairns to visit a major tourist attraction then immediately return, this will be a lost opportunity for the Shire. Active strategies are needed to avoid this problem. The Tablelands is experiencing this problem with the skyrail/rail linkage.
- The Johnstone Shire is a largely unspoiled area. It has world heritage listed rainforest areas and has the opportunity to attract large numbers of visitors in the future – ‘the Daintree of the south’.
- Pressure on land north of Cairns will result in greater developer interest in the Johnstone Shire. Identifying where and how this development will occur is an important focus for the Shire.
- The Johnstone Shire is a quintessentially north Queensland area. It has a unique culture, history and visual landscape. Preserving this culture and visual landscape will deliver long term benefits for the Shire. This unique north Queensland character can continue to remain a tourism draw in the future.
- Innisfail town has some of the best examples of art deco architecture in north Queensland. Preserving this art deco architecture and heritage will be important.
- The Shire has a diverse mix of small business operators in the tourism sector – tourist attractions, motels, B&Bs and tours. Developing the capabilities of this sector will help to ensure a vibrant and diverse tourism product in the future.

## **Creative Industries**

- The Johnstone Shire and, in particular, the Mena Creek area are destinations for artists. There is a strong arts community and this is expected to grow in the future.
- At present, there are limited opportunities for artists to show their work in the Johnstone Shire.
- There is demand for improved arts and cultural facilities in the Shire in the medium term.

## **Retail**

- The Shire has a mix of small retailers and large retailers. Large retailers identified Innisfail as a major service centre for the region. Continued investment by major retailers is expected in the future.
- The Shire has a number of outstanding small retailers that are a tourist attraction in themselves. It will be important to preserve this small retailer sector.

### **7.4 Priorities for the Tourism, Creative Industries and Retail Sector**

The economic development plan focuses on the following priorities:

- Attracting new tourism investment to the Shire and managing this investment effectively.
- Putting in place strategies that build the capacity of existing tourism businesses and areas.
- Strengthening the growing creative industries sector.
- Continuing to support retail and service businesses that service local residents and the tourism industry.

### **7.5 Long Term Goals**

The long term goals for this sector include:

- Managing growth in tourism development while retaining the unique north Queensland character of the Johnstone Shire.
- Ensuring that small tourism businesses in the Shire benefit from the future influx of tourism to the region.
- Preserving the unique character of the region.

## **7.6 Action Plan**

The following table summarises the main objectives, actions and required outcomes.

This action plan needs to be implemented in conjunction with the following partner organisations:

- Tourism Tropical North Queensland.
- Department of State Development and Innovation.
- Tourism industry groups and associations.
- Tourism businesses.
- The retail community.
- Tourism organisations including the Great Green Way and tourism offices in surrounding shires.
- Chamber of Commerce.
- Mena Creek tourism cluster.
- Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.
- Fishing industry.

## Tourism, Creative Industries and Retail Sector – Economic Development Plan

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>1. Develop the tourism strategy for the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>1.1 In collaboration with Tourism Tropical North Queensland, develop a detailed tourism strategy for the Johnstone Shire that accommodates these key areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully establishing the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk.</li> <li>• Attracting major tourism developments.</li> <li>• Developing local marketing implementation plans that ensure major projects deliver opportunities and benefits to smaller tourism businesses in the region.</li> <li>• Ecotourism covering bird watching, rainforest experience, Misty Mountains trails, walks and bush food tourism.</li> <li>• Farm tourism.</li> <li>• Food and wine trail.</li> <li>• Tropical produce activities and themes – events and activities such as the Feast of the Senses, farm tourism and value added food produce.</li> <li>• Adventure tourism.</li> <li>• Niche tourism activities targeting access to the reef from the Johnstone Shire.</li> </ul>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, tourism businesses, Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Tropical North Queensland, DSDI collaborate to develop a strategy in 2005.</p>	<p>The tourism strategy for the Johnstone Shire aligns with other regional tourism strategies, e.g. Cairns and the Tablelands, and identifies specific initiatives for implementation in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Greater cohesion in tourism marketing and focus.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>2. Develop a distinctive tourism brand for the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>2.1 As part of the tourism development strategy, review the branding for the Shire to ensure a contemporary positioning for the Shire and consistency across tourism material. This branding approach may need to be done at the same time as development of marketing material.</p> <p>2.2 Develop a Johnstone Shire tourism brochure that outlines the range of features, attractions and tourism businesses in the Shire.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, tourism businesses, Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Tropical North Queensland. 2005 and 2006.</p>	<p>Distinctive image and branding for the Johnstone Shire reviewed/developed.</p> <p>Updated and detailed brochure of tourist attractions and businesses produced for the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Effective tourism branding for the Shire.</p>
<p><b>3. Participate in regional tourism marketing and development</b></p> <p>3.1 Actively participate in tourism development planning and implementation in the Great Green Way, with the Tablelands region and with Cairns region to maximise opportunities for regional tourism, businesses and product.</p>	<p>Great Green Way, Johnstone Shire, Tablelands, Cairns, Tourism Tropical North Queensland. 2005 and ongoing.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire plays an active role in marketing strategy implementation for the Great Green Way.</p> <p>Johnstone Shire works collaboratively with the Tablelands and Cairns regions to market tourism product and identify new tourism opportunities.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>4. Establish and support tourism clusters in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>4.1 Establish and support these tourism clusters through active cluster facilitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mena Creek tourism cluster.</li> <li>• Food and wine trail.</li> <li>• Farm tourism.</li> </ul> <p>For each of these clusters, deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A cluster plan.</li> <li>• Marketing strategies for these clusters.</li> <li>• Skills development and training plan.</li> <li>• Assistance with viability assessment and information on key success factors for these businesses.</li> </ul> <p>4.2 Ensure that these clusters are actively included in the tourism strategy and in links with major tourism developments in the region.</p> <p>4.3 Develop new signage in the Shire to provide tourists with trail information and adequate sign posting for these businesses.</p> <p>4.4 Undertake collaborative marketing including the development of brochures and materials for these clusters.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, DSDI.</p> <p>Cluster project – access to a facilitator that can assist these clusters in start up stages.</p> <p>Funding from cluster participants to contribute to marketing material.</p>	<p>Tourism clusters boost marketing and viability for small operators.</p> <p>Growth in the Shire’s tourism product.</p> <p>Effective and attractive signage and marketing material developed.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>5. Major tourism investment projects</b></p> <p>5.1 Designate areas in the Shire suitable for major tourism development in the future.</p> <p>5.2 Attract 1 or 2 major tourism investment projects to the Johnstone Shire in the next 3 to 5 years.</p> <p>5.3 Require major tourism projects to implement a strategy that delivers marketing benefits to local businesses. This will ensure that local businesses participate in the benefits of successful new development.</p> <p>5.4 Ensure that the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk becomes a landmark tourist attraction in north Queensland. Implement a strategy for the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk that provides marketing opportunities for local tourism businesses – linking small business tourism product to the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Tropical Queensland, major tourism ventures including the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk, smaller tourism businesses.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire clearly identifies areas suitable for development.</p> <p>Actively attracting major ventures adds to the mix of tourism in the region and delivers benefits to smaller tourism businesses.</p> <p>Designating areas in the Shire reduces the risk of over development in the Shire.</p> <p>Ma:Mu Canopy Walk project can be a model for a major attraction working with other local businesses. An active planning process will be required to make this successful.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>6. Development at Mission Beach</b></p> <p>6.1 Continue discussions with the Cardwell Shire to develop a coordinated and seamless approach to planning and development of the Mission Beach area.</p> <p>6.2 Establish an experts or leaders' reference group to work with both councils in the development of a local area plan for Mission Beach. The aim is to preserve the unique environment of the area while still accommodating tourism and development growth in the community.</p> <p>6.3 Aim to establish Mission Beach as a world leader in tourism development in an environmentally sensitive area.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Cardwell Council, Tropical Queensland.</p> <p>By mid 2005.</p>	<p>Coordinated approach delivers consistency and planning certainty in the Mission Beach area.</p> <p>Specific development strategy developed to preserve the natural environment while accommodating continued growth in the region.</p> <p>Mission Beach retains its unique character but is able to accommodate the increasing numbers of new residents and visitors to the region.</p> <p>Mission Beach maintains its status as a leading tourism destination in Australia and internationally.</p>
<p><b>7. Develop lifestyle amenity and tourism in Innisfail</b></p> <p>7.1 Undertake a feasibility study and a planning and design process for the Innisfail River Boardwalk Precinct.</p> <p>7.2 Redevelop the area between the two bridges in the town centre as a contemporary leisure and recreation environment. This will benefit local residents as well as attracting increased tourism to the area.</p> <p>7.3 Consult with the fishing industry on this redevelopment so that the industry is not disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Chamber of Commerce, fishing industry.</p> <p>DSDI,</p>	<p>A world class leisure and recreation area is developed in the heart of Innisfail – a drawcard for new investment in restaurants and a tourist attraction in the region.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
7.4 Identify suitable sites for a 'next generation' retirement village – one that would attract the baby boomer generation. Once possible areas are identified, seek expressions of interest from major retirement village operators to establish a high quality retirement village and leisure resort for the over 50s in Innisfail		Retirement village opportunities identified and proponents encouraged to establish a facility in Innisfail.
<p><b>8. River and reef access</b></p> <p>8.1 Undertake a feasibility and impact study into dredging the Johnstone River. Providing deeper water access for the fishing industry, the tourism industry and boating visitors can deliver major economic benefits to the region.</p> <p>8.2 Identify suitable sites for marina development in the Johnstone Shire. Suitable sites may be the Johnstone Shire and along the coastline linked to major developments.</p> <p>8.3 Ensure that fish habitats are retained in the Shire.</p> <p>8.4 Develop niche tourism operations targeting reef access (tours and fishing). Rather than compete with Cairns, develop differentiated product that builds a strong and positive brand for the Johnstone Shire as a reef access point.</p> <p>8.5 Investigate opportunities for river tourism on the Johnstone River.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, DSDI, other government agencies, fishing industry, tourism industry.</p> <p>Studies completed in 2005/06.</p> <p>Niche operations – 2005/06 and ongoing.</p>	<p>Opportunities to dredge the river and establish new marinas identified.</p> <p>River access to the reef provides a platform for reef based tourism and sport fishing for the region.</p> <p>Opportunity to develop reef tours, sport fishing and river tourism in the Johnstone Shire.</p>
<p><b>9. Develop a range of tourism events</b></p> <p>9.1 Continue to run the annual Feast of the Senses as a landmark event for the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>9.2 Identify other activities and events, and linkages with other regions, that can be developed into an ongoing event program for the Johnstone Shire. This includes tourism activities, performing arts, visual arts and regional/historical events.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, tourism businesses, Tablelands region, Cairns region, Tourism Tropical North Queensland.</p>	<p>Program of events developed to continually attract tourists to the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>Events and activities compliment activities in surrounding regions.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>10. Develop the creative industries sector in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>10.1 Undertake a feasibility study and identify funding sources for a cultural centre and combined arts centre for the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>10.2 Maintain Innisfail as an art deco architecture centre. Encourage building owners to restore and preserve art deco buildings. It is important to retain the original culture and look of Innisfail – a unique north Queensland town.</p> <p>10.3 Establish a profile of artists and creative industry activities in the Johnstone Shire. A range of renowned artists live in the Shire and the development of the creative industries sector is an important facet of the tourism industry for the Shire.</p> <p>10.4 Provide ongoing support for visual artists in the Johnstone Shire. This includes providing support for an arts venue in Innisfail town and maintaining an arts base at the Sugar Museum.</p> <p>10.5 Support performing arts initiatives in the Shire and link these to the tourism and community events program.</p> <p>10.6 Promote Mena Creek as an arts and creative industries resource in the Johnstone Shire.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, DSDI, arts organisations in the Shire, Arts Queensland, business owners.</p> <p>2006 to 2008.</p> <p>Profile established – 2005/06.</p>	<p>Feasibility assessment completed and funding sources identified.</p> <p>Establish a cultural and arts centre for the Johnstone Shire as a medium term priority.</p> <p>Innisfail retains its unique art deco architecture and its unique north Queensland character. Innisfail continues to be a tourist attraction for visitors in the region.</p> <p>Profile of artists and creative industries established for the Johnstone Shire. Information available on the website.</p> <p>Capabilities in the Shire used in the business case for creative industries projects and investment.</p> <p>Venues for visual artists supported within the Shire.</p> <p>Priorities for the performing arts and related events identified and implemented.</p> <p>Mena Creek renowned as a base for artists and creative industry in the Johnstone Shire.</p>

## 8. EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SECTOR PLAN

*8. Education and Skills Development Sector Plan covers:*

- *Industry scope.*
- *Role and outlook for the education and skills development sector.*
- *Current situation and trends affecting the education and skills development sector.*
- *Priorities and long term goals for the education and skills development sector.*
- *Action plan.*

### 8.1 Industry Scope

The education and skills development sector covers:

- TAFE facilities and TAFE training in the Johnstone Shire.
- The network of private training providers in the region.
- Schools.
- Industry supporters of vocational education and training.
- Universities (a potential link for the Johnstone Shire in the future).

### 8.2 Role and Outlook for the Education and Skills Development Sector

An demographic analysis highlights the lower levels of education attainment in the Johnstone Shire.

There is a need to strengthen education and training capabilities in the Shire to provide support for industry development as well as community development.

TAFE programs have been scaled back in recent years as successful programs have been taken to Cairns. Given the potential growth in the Johnstone Shire, it is now time to establish a growth strategy for training and education activities in the Shire.

This will require a partnering approach with key education and training stakeholders such as Department of Employment and Training, Education Queensland and private training providers.

While there will be demand for training for employment preparation, there is also a need to provide wider access to information and learning opportunities for the community.

This plan will help to:

- Build training capability in the Johnstone Shire.
- Provide training and employment pathways for young people and for people moving from fishing and sugar industries to new employment.
- Develop vocational education and training (VET) training capabilities in the Shire – at schools, with private training providers and with the TAFE.
- Build training and education facilities so that they become a major strength in Innisfail, as a regional centre.

### **8.3 Current Situation and Trends Affecting the Education and Skills Development Sector**

A number of factors have influenced training and education capabilities in the Shire. A number of trends are also emerging that will generate demand for increased training and learning opportunities.

These current conditions and trends include the following:

#### **Vocational Education, Schools and Training**

- Johnstone College of TAFE has established very successful training programs in the past only to lose these to Cairns as courses become popular. There is a need to retain new training programs initiated in order to build training capacity.
- There is a significant trade skills shortage throughout the country. Engineering businesses have difficulty attracting skilled workers. This demand can underpin increased trade training and fast track training in the region.
- There is a need to provide trade training pathways for people leaving the sugar and fishing industries – providing worthwhile employment prospects for those people.
- The Queensland government through its ETRF initiative, will actively support VET in schools. A proactive approach to VET in schools initiatives in the Johnstone Shire will have lasting benefits – delivering training and employment pathways for young people in the Shire.
- The Johnstone College of TAFE has been delivering a very successful community justice studies program for Indigenous communities. There is an opportunity to expand this work to make Innisfail a major centre for this training in the state.

- There are opportunities to work with Ma:Mu people and Djiru people to identify and respond to training opportunities. These include developing trade and other employment skills as well as community development/learning programs.
- There is an opportunity to establish positive links between schools and industry to provide training and employment pathways. This includes links to tourism, aquaculture, primary industries and engineering training.
- The Innisfail State High School is planning to develop a school of excellence in tropical environments. This is a major training and education initiative in the area.

### **University**

- Although the Johnstone Shire could not sustain a university campus at this point of time, Innisfail and the Johnstone Shire aim to be key players in delivering regional services to the LGAs that make up the Great Green Way and the Tablelands.

A proactive strategy to explore these opportunities is recommended. The long term goal is to establish a university campus in Innisfail. There may be opportunities to link a campus to the existing TAFE.

### **Learning Community**

- Given the amount of industry transition training, and the need to focus on value adding and technology jobs in the future, there is a strong case for developing a learning community strategy for the Johnstone Shire.
- The Johnstone College of TAFE and schools provide existing training resources that can be better used by the community.

## **8.4 Priorities and Long Term Goals for the Education and Skills Development Sector**

The economic development plan focuses on the following priorities:

- Building training and education capabilities in the Johnstone Shire.
- Establishing trade training programs in the Johnstone Shire to support industry transition and engineering/automotive capabilities.
- Establishing Johnstone Shire as a learning community.

- There are opportunities to provide additional employment linked training and other training options to the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people in the Johnstone Shire.

## **8.5 Action Plan**

The following table summarises the main objectives, actions and required outcomes.

This action plan needs to be implemented in conjunction with the following partner organisations:

- Innisfail TAFE.
- Department of State Development and Innovation.
- Schools in the Shire.
- Private training providers.
- Department of State Development and Innovation.
- Industry Training Advisory Councils.
- Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.
- Chamber of Commerce.

## Education and Skills Development Sector – Economic Development Plan

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>1. Education and training leaders' group</b></p> <p>1.1 Establish an education and training leaders' forum. Hold a six monthly or annual meeting with forum members to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key issues affecting the development of skills and education in the Shire and in surrounding regions.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for collaboration or a joint focus on important topics.</li> <li>• Identify priority actions for the next 6 to 12 months that require collaboration.</li> <li>• Report back to the forum on progress.</li> </ul>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Innisfail TAFE, private training providers, schools, Chamber of Commerce, Ma:Mu people and Djiru people, businesses in the Shire.</p> <p>First meeting by June 2005.</p>	<p>Regular forum for training and education forum to raise issues with Council and other stakeholders, seek information and identify strategies and projects.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>2. Establish new training resources and capabilities in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>2.1 Johnstone TAFE, Department of Employment and Training and employers in the Johnstone Shire to undertake discussions to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast track trade training and/or prevocational training in the Johnstone Shire in the automotive and related engineering sectors.</li> <li>• Transition training for people leaving the fishing industry and the cane industry – trade related sectors.</li> <li>• Business development and training to support new business start up in the Shire.</li> <li>• Training in tourism skills to support the transition to farm tourism and support food and wine trail businesses.</li> <li>• A leaders development program to support business development.</li> <li>• Corporate governance and grant writing skills for sporting, community and business groups.</li> <li>• Support the establishment of a school of excellence in tropical environments at Innisfail State High School.</li> </ul>	<p>Innisfail TAFE, Department of Employment and Training, Department of State Development and Innovation, engineering cluster, sugar and fishing industry associations, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire establishes and retains trade based training.</p> <p>Opportunity to further develop trade training capabilities in the region in the future.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities to collaborate with industry to provide training on the job – providing access to equipment and resources necessary for trade training.</p> <p>Resources to support skills development in the tourism sector, new business ventures and community groups.</p>
<p><b>3. Further develop justice studies in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>3.1 Expand justice studies activities and introduce related courses that support the needs of Indigenous communities.</p> <p>3.2 Investigate opportunities to establish Johnstone College of TAFE as a higher education entry point for Indigenous students – exploring opportunities for a university campus link at the Innisfail TAFE.</p>	<p>Innisfail TAFE, Department of Employment and Training, Indigenous communities, universities.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>The Johnstone Shire develops as a strong and recognised base for Indigenous training and education services.</p> <p>Opportunities to establish tertiary education pathways and delivery of tertiary courses at Innisfail TAFE.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>4. Establish a university campus in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>4.1 Establish a task force to develop a strategy to establish a tertiary campus in the Johnstone Shire in the medium term.</p> <p>4.2 Evaluate course options and links to activities in the Shire to provide a basis for a university campus in the future.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Department of Employment and Training, Innisfail TAFE, Chamber of Commerce, universities.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>Innisfail develops as a regional education and skills centre in the future – complimenting the role Innisfail has as a retail centre.</p> <p>Establishment of the university campus is in line with the strategy to attract a greater government and administrative presence to the town.</p>
<p><b>5. Support VET in schools initiatives</b></p> <p>5.1 In the education forum, evaluate opportunities with schools for VET in schools initiatives in the Shire that support key industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquaculture.</li> <li>• Engineering.</li> <li>• Tourism.</li> </ul> <p>Work with industry to establish pathways from school to employment to provide increased training opportunities for young people.</p> <p>5.2 Education forum to work with retailers in the sector to provide opportunities for employment and traineeships for young people in the region.</p>	<p>Education forum, Department of Employment and Training, Innisfail TAFE, schools, private training providers.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>VET in schools opportunities identified and implemented.</p> <p>Regular dialogue between the education forum and industry identifies employment and workplace training opportunities for young people.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>6. Establishing the Johnstone Shire as a learning community</b></p> <p>6.1 Establish computer training as an initial community education and skills development initiative. Through collaboration between the TAFE and schools, provide opportunities for the broader community to gain basic computing skills in the Shire.</p> <p>Use this project as a model for further community training initiatives – building the Johnstone Shire's capability to be a learning community.</p> <p>6.2 Undertake a project to review learning community strategies in other shires and identify funding sources for implementing this approach.</p> <p>6.3 Establish a training plan with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people to cover work based training and community development training.</p>	<p>Education forum, TAFE Queensland, Department of Employment and Training, schools, private training providers, businesses and the community, Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p> <p>Initial plan identified by August 2005.</p>	<p>Initial community IT training program helps to build skills and capabilities in the Shire.</p> <p>An ongoing program of community learning activities helps to provide residents and businesses with the skills they need to seek employment and support community development opportunities.</p> <p>Ongoing planning to identify training and community development learning initiatives for the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p>

## 9. COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

*9. Community and Regional Development Sector Plan covers:*

- *Scope.*
- *Role of community and regional development.*
- *Community priorities.*
- *Action plan.*

### 9.1 Scope

Community and regional development covers:

- Community economic development plans for:
  - Innisfail.
  - Mission Beach.
  - Silkwood and Kurrimine.
  - Mena Creek.
- Establishing Innisfail as a regional administration, education, retail and service centre.
- The Johnstone Shire undertaking a positive facilitation role in identifying common issues and themes in economic development for the LGAs in the Great Green Way and Tablelands.

### 9.2 Role of Community and Regional Development

Rather than focusing only on business activities, an economic development plan must address community expectations and values. These values have been reflected in the specific sector plans and in the facilitation strategies for the plan.

Given the Johnstone Shire's strategic location, it is well placed to play a leadership role in terms of regional development along the Great Green Way.

### 9.3 Community Priorities

Consulting meetings were undertaken to canvass community views on economic and community development priorities for their area. These priorities are outlined below. The action plan identifies key initiatives, however, further work would need to be undertaken to address some of the issues raised by communities.

#### **Innisfail**

- Establish walking trails within the town.
- Encourage restaurants to open after dark.
- Establish a cinema.
- Establish an 18 hole golf course on Warrina Lakes.
- Continue to promote Innisfail's tourist attractions – the frogger and Warrina Lakes.
- Establish a high quality retirement project in Innisfail.
- Provide more community and health infrastructure for the elderly.
- Provide entertainment and recreational facilities for youth. There is very little for young people to do.
- Provide employment opportunities for young people.
- Address drugs and violence in the community.
- Provide employment opportunities – counter the growth of the welfare industry.
- Cater to tourism by people with a disability – this is a large and growing group.
- Provide more recreation and entertainment activities for backpackers.
- Maintain cassowary habitats.
- Exploit the Johnstone River – provide better river access and marinas. Dredge the river for better river access.
- Develop a river precinct – similar to those developed in Cairns along the esplanade and along the strand in Townsville.
- Encourage more tourism into Innisfail town.

- Provide additional accommodation. This includes accommodation for 'grey nomads'.
- Supply high quality produce to super yachts and cruise ships that visit the area.
- Increase the usage of Mourilyan Harbour.
- Encourage river tourism – although this must be viable.
- Greater promotion of the Great Green Way.
- Provide adequate education and health facilities for the community.
- Attract more people to live in the region.
- Retain Innisfail as the art deco capital of the north – this has been a major tourism success for Napier in New Zealand.

### **Mission Beach**

- Establish a group of leaders and experts that can advise on world class development in an environmentally sensitive area. This group can provide input into a local area plan for Mission Beach.
- Retain habitats for the cassowary and other fauna in the Shire.
- Improve transport options in the Shire.
- Establish bike paths.
- Do not allow highrise developments on Mission Beach – keep the village style of life.
- Designate light industrial areas so that development is controlled.
- Reduce 'leap frog' development that puts pressure on infrastructure such as water and sewerage.
- Focus on sustainability in tourism development.
- Establish farm tourism.
- Establish food tourism including gourmet cooking schools.
- Invest in infrastructure and facilities in Mission Beach – commensurate with the rate revenue from the region.
- Rebuild the jetty.

- Establish a local high school.
- Establish an aquatic centre and sporting grounds in the area.

### **Silkwood and Kurrimine**

- Provide sporting and community recreation facilities.
- Establish a swimming pool.
- Provide an extended oval with overhead lights.
- Actively support and assist sporting groups in the area.
- Upgrade boat ramps.
- Assist local groups to collaborate or amalgamate and assist with grant applications.
- Place a greater emphasis on the Kurrimine Beach and Silkwood areas.
- Establish a circuit road between Kurrimine Beach and Mission Beach.
- Continue to support Silkwood initiatives to beautify the town.
- Maintain Kurrimine Beach as a family beachside community rather than a high development area.
- Provide infrastructure to support residential growth in Kurrimine Beach.
- Provide sewerage services to the Kurrimine Beach area.
- Upgrade roads in the area.
- Provide sporting and recreation activities for young people including fishing.
- Provide coordination and support in grant writing and grant applications.
- Designate commercial and retail areas at the crossroads – providing new business and retail services to both communities.
- Provide 4WD access to the beach.
- Provide adequate medical facilities to the communities.
- Provide walkways for bikes, buggies and walking in the area.

- Provide an expanded network of walking trails to connect key locations.
- Improved funding to maintain national park reserves in the area.
- Assist small clubs with public liability insurance to support their ongoing operation.
- Establish a public toilet for the Silkwood gardens.

### **Mena Creek**

- Attract more artists to Mena Creek.
- Provide assistance and support for small tourism businesses in the area – they need to benefit from tourism coming to the area. After the meeting the Mena Creek tourism cluster was formed.
- Maintain relatively low levels of population in Mena Creek to retain the character and beauty of the area. Roughly double the population of Mena Creek, but stop major residential development in the area.
- Provide more accommodation in the Shire for tourists – motels, B&Bs and caravan parks.
- Improve road safety.
- Establish a farmers' co-op with local supply to tourists and to retailers.
- Undertake collaborative advertising – local tourism businesses working together to pool resources.
- Mena Creek needs to retain its own identity.
- Stronger links with Paronella Park on marketing activities.
- Provide a unique experience in the Mena Creek area.
- An opportunity is to produce Indigenous foods.
- Make it easy for businesses to deal with Council and government agencies, e.g. permits, approvals, etc..
- Encourage value adding to produce produced in the area.
- Encourage collaboration amongst businesses in Mena Creek to improve marketing and business activity levels.
- Provide childcare facilities.

#### **9.4 Action Plan**

The following table summarises the main objectives, actions and required outcomes.

This action plan needs to be implemented in conjunction with the following partner organisations:

- Townships and communities in the Johnstone Shire.
- Local government authorities in the Great Green Way and Tablelands areas.
- Government agencies.
- Townsville and Cairns City Councils.
- The business community.

## Community and Regional Development Sector – Economic Development Plan

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>1. Implement a regional development strategy in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>1.1 As a medium to long term goal, establish Innisfail as a major administration and service base for the region between Townsville and Cairns.</p> <p>1.2 Form a working group with government agencies and surrounding shires to identify short term, medium term and longer term priorities for service delivery and economic development. This will identify common regional themes and determine how best to meet these requirements as the region grows in the future.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, LGAs in the Great Green Way and Tablelands, government agencies, Townsville and Cairns City Councils.</p> <p>Working group formed in 2005.</p> <p>Strategy prepared by early 2006.</p>	<p>Pathway for further development of services and an administration centre at Innisfail identified.</p> <p>A regional strategy developed to support expected future growth in population and tourism in the region.</p>
<p><b>2. Innisfail economic development plan</b></p> <p>2.1 Establish a River Boardwalk Precinct in Innisfail as a major leisure and recreation facility for local residents and as a tourist attraction.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Investigate activities that could be hosted at this venue that would be a draw for tourists travelling through the region.</p> <p>2.2 Actively identify services and resources that Innisfail can attract to build the town's role as a regional service, administration and education centre. This includes increased accommodation options (motels, caravan parks, low cost accommodation).</p> <p>2.3 Identify areas for residential development and identify infrastructure requirements to support this expected future growth.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, government agencies, business community, general community.</p>	<p>Innisfail develops as a major regional centre in the future.</p> <p>Improved leisure and recreation options for tourists and local residents. This development is expected to attract investment in new businesses such as restaurants and retailing.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>3. Mission Beach economic development plan</b></p> <p>3.1 Establish an arrangement between the Johnstone and Cardwell Shires whereby coordinated planning and development will occur in the Mission Beach area.</p> <p>3.2 Establish an expert group to provide information and advice into the development of a local area plan for Mission Beach.</p> <p>3.3 Develop a local area development plan for Mission Beach that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retains the existing natural rainforest environment.</li> <li>• Accommodates current and future growth.</li> <li>• Establishes Mission Beach as a national and international leader in sustainable tourism development.</li> <li>• Include amenities for the local area, e.g. sporting and recreation facilities to meet residents needs.</li> </ul>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Cardwell Shire Council, expert/leader group, businesses, the community.</p> <p>Agreement in 2005.</p>	<p>Agreement on a coordinated development strategy provides a sound basis for local area planning and future development.</p> <p>Expert/leader group established.</p> <p>A local area plan developed for Mission Beach to guide future development and preserve the unique character and environment in the area.</p>
<p><b>4. Kurrimine and Silkwood economic development plan</b></p> <p>4.1 Provide residential development infrastructure required to support growth at Kurrimine Beach.</p> <p>4.2 Retain the existing ‘family beach destination’ character of Kurrimine Beach. This includes encouraging use of traditional north Queensland architecture styles.</p> <p>4.3 Support the establishment of community recreation (walking trails) and sporting facilities that can be utilised by Kurrimine Beach, Silkwood and Mission Beach.</p> <p>4.4 Encourage the establishment of a retail and business centre at the Crossroads – providing new services for both Kurrimine Beach and Silkwood.</p> <p>4.5 Continue support for Silkwood’s unique strategies to preserve and beautify the town. This includes providing upgraded facilities for tour buses (parking areas, toilets, etc.)</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Cardwell Shire Council, businesses, the community.</p>	<p>A local plan developed for Kurrimine Beach and Silkwood to guide future development.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>5. Mena Creek economic development plan</b></p> <p>5.1 Allow limited growth in the Mena Creek area but preserve the unique qualities and characteristics of this community.</p> <p>5.2 Provide assistance and support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mena Creek tourism cluster.</li> <li>• The Mena Creek artist and creative industries community.</li> </ul> <p>Work with both groups to assist them to identify priorities and implement these priorities in the future.</p> <p>Promote Mena Creek as a niche tourism and arts region.</p>	<p>Johnstone Council, Shire businesses, community.</p> <p>Shire Cardwell Council, the community.</p>	<p>The unique character of Mena Creek is preserved.</p> <p>Mena Creek becomes known as a destination for niche tourism businesses and for arts and creative industries.</p>
<p><b>6. Identify community infrastructure priorities</b></p> <p>6.1 Identify transport infrastructure and community infrastructure priorities to support development in the Shire. Although initial priorities were identified in consultation on the economic development strategy, further discussion may be required to identify a specific range of short term and longer term infrastructure priorities.</p> <p>It will be important to identify these requirements given the expected future growth that will occur in the Shire in the next 5 to 10 years.</p> <p>6.2 Provide grant writing assistance and support to access funds to support community growth.</p>	<p>Johnstone Council.</p> <p>Priorities identified in 2005/06.</p> <p>Shire</p> <p>Priorities identified in 2005/06.</p>	<p>Priorities identified and funding strategies identified.</p>

## 10. FACILITATION STRATEGY PLAN

*10. Facilitation Strategy Plan covers:*

- *Priorities for facilitation.*
- *Role of Council.*
- *Action plan.*

### 10.1 Priorities for Facilitation

A number of facilitation strategies have been identified to assist in the implementation process.

These facilitation strategies are designed to provide a strong basis for growth as well as responding to growth pressures in the future.

### 10.2 Role of Council

The Johnstone Shire Council needs to play a key role in supporting and implementing the economic development plan.

A key process for this is the establishment of an Economic Development Advisory Committee. The key roles for this Committee include:

- Acting as a clearing house for information and requests on economic development activities.
- Acting as a conduit for information to Council and from Council to the private sector on economic development initiatives.
- Active involvement in key projects undertaken as part of the economic development plan. Members of this committee would participate in project steering groups to ensure that there is adequate oversight of economic development projects.
- Act as an entry contact point to Council for major economic development initiatives.
- Providing account management support to proponents of major economic development initiatives to ensure that there is adequate support and assistance for these projects as they progress through planning to implementation stages.
- Providing regular briefings to government agencies and regional managers of agencies in north Queensland to ensure that there is a regular update process on achievements and developments in the Johnstone Shire.
- Providing operational and strategic advice to Council on the implementation of the economic development plan.

In addition to this specific role of the committee, there is a broader role that the Johnstone Shire Council can undertake in supporting the implementation of the economic development plan:

- Providing a favourable business environment for existing businesses and new ventures in the Shire.
- Being seen as an economic leader for the Shire – being a catalyst for economic development as well as a facilitator.
- Minimising the level and type of regulatory impact on new and existing business development.
- Minimising costs of compliance with local regulations and requirements.
- Simplifying processes and procedures for development applications while still maintaining good governance and accountability.
- Seeking efficient, least cost and timely provision of local infrastructure to support business and residential development, e.g. roads, water and sewerage, waste disposal.
- Streamlining administrative processes to remove impediments to business and industry development.
- Under the Enterprise Powers of the Local Government Act 1993, having the potential to consider partnerships with the private sector in enterprises of broad benefit to the Shire.
- Considering strategies that will encourage and support investment attraction.
- Actively participating in regional forums on economic development.
- Ensuring that hard copy and website information is available to encourage economic development in the Shire.
- Providing an easy entry point for economic development initiatives and industry enquiries.
- Supporting electronic commerce and other strategies that reduce the burden on the small business sector.

### **10.3 Action Plan**

The following table summarises the main objectives, actions and required outcomes from facilitation strategies.

## Facilitation Strategy Sector – Economic Development Plan

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>1. Establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee</b></p> <p>1.1 Establish a Committee of Council – the Economic Development Advisory Committee.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Invite participation from business leaders in this Committee – representation from the key economic sectors in the Shire.</p> <p>1.2 The Committee will be a conduit to Council for new investment opportunities and provide a forum for discussing economic development priorities and strategies.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council.</p> <p>Committee established by April/May 2005.</p>	<p>An active Economic Development Advisory Committee provides a contact point for business and a structure for overseeing the implementation of the economic development plan.</p>
<p><b>2. Investment attraction to the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>2.1 Undertake a review of the process in dealing with Council for new businesses and businesses in the Shire wishing to expand.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Identify protocols, contact points and pathways which help to streamline the development process.</p> <p>2.2 Identify target industries and sectors that will receive priority support from Council. Work with industry sectors and relevant businesses to develop a knowledge within Council of the requirements for these sectors – supporting investment attraction.</p> <p>2.3 Work with Advance Cairns to develop investment attraction information and protocols that will support new business investment in the Johnstone Shire.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Advance Cairns, Chamber of Commerce, industry groups.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council proactively attracts new business to the Shire and provides a positive, efficient pathway for new investment.</p>

Economic Development Objects and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>3. Support business development</b></p> <p>3.1 Continue to assist and support small business development initiatives undertaken by AusIndustry and Department of State Development and Innovation.</p> <p>3.2 Identify a program of business training assistance and development that the Johnstone Shire can continue to support as an ongoing resource. This will be important in supporting new venture start up and people making the transition from one industry sector to another.</p> <p>Continue to scan funding opportunities to support local initiatives in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>3.3 Establish a regular forum to provide a clearing house for information, priority identification and strategy implementation – involve the economic development network and community development network.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, DSDI, AusIndustry, government and economic development groups.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>Effective coordination on business development and support strategies. An active program of activities continues to be delivered in the Johnstone Shire.</p>
<p><b>4. Establish a cluster program for the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <p>4.1 Clusters will benefit a number of different sectors. Seek funding for a concerted cluster program in the Johnstone Shire to support a range of industries – tourism, agribusiness and engineering.</p> <p>Undertake this activity to support ongoing collaboration and collaborative marketing by firms in the Shire.</p> <p>4.2 Seek funding assistance from DSDI and the Area Consultative Committee to implement this strategy.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, DSDI, DPIF, Area Consultative Committee.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>Support for a cluster strategy identifies new market opportunities and helps build capacity in a number of industries.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>5. Targeting grant and other funding sources</b></p> <p>5.1 Undertake a three month targeted program to identify grant and funding sources and prepare applications. This initiative can assist in underpinning economic development strategies and in supporting community development initiatives.</p>	<p>Staff member in Johnstone Shire Council committed to undertaking this task, Economic Development Advisory Committee. 2005.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire accesses a range of funding that helps to implement the economic development strategy and build capacity in the community.</p>
<p><b>6. Link economic development to planning priorities</b></p> <p>6.1 Establish population growth targets for smaller townships in the Shire.</p> <p>6.2 Identify residential development areas in Innisfail and Mission Beach to support increased population growth in the future.</p> <p>6.3 Support the establishment of an industrial land precinct near Mourilyan Harbour.</p> <p>6.4 Designate areas for tourism and other development – helping to retain green space and key environmental areas in the Shire.</p> <p>6.5 Identify infrastructure implications of increased population and industry growth – energy, water, transport infrastructure, telecommunications and skills development.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, relevant government agencies. 2005.</p>	<p>The Johnstone Shire Council's planning approaches align with economic development strategies.</p>

Economic Development Objectives and Actions	Timing and Resources	Outcome
<p><b>7. Work with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people</b></p> <p>7.1 Work with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people to identify specific economic development opportunities in which the Indigenous community can participate.</p> <p>7.2 Continue to identify funding opportunities, training opportunities and new business ventures that will benefit the Indigenous community in Innisfail.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Ma:Mu people, Djiru people.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>An active approach to working with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people will deliver benefits for those communities, the business community and the broader community in the Johnstone Shire.</p>
<p><b>8. Develop the Innisfail Airport</b></p> <p>8.1 Implement the recommendations of the recently completed study 'Innisfail Aerodrome Development Plan'. This strategy links with the tourism industry and provides a basis for attracting increased business and activity at the Airport in the future.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council.</p> <p>Commence in 2005.</p>	<p>Innisfail Aerodrome development plan implemented.</p>
<p><b>9. Continued support for defence exercises</b></p> <p>9.1 Provide continued support to the defence forces for the use of the Cowley Bay and Tully defence training areas. There is likely to be bi-annual usage.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>Continued defence activities in the region that deliver benefits to the local economy.</p>
<p><b>10. Market the economic development strategy</b></p> <p>10.1 Launch the economic strategy for the Johnstone Shire and put in place a regular program of updates on implementation and successes.</p> <p>10.2 Write to all government agencies represented in north Queensland to advise them of the economic development strategy and request their assistance for implementation.</p>	<p>Johnstone Shire Council, Economic Development Advisory Committee.</p> <p>April/May 2005.</p>	<p>Effective launch and communication on the strategy.</p> <p>Dialogue with key partners initiated – establishing ongoing working relationships.</p>

## 11. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*11. Conclusion and Recommendations covers:*

- *Conclusion.*
- *Recommendations.*

### 11.1 Conclusion

The economic development plan has identified a range of opportunities for the Johnstone Shire. These opportunities focus on:

- Strengthening existing businesses.
- Attracting and fostering new business ventures.

In order to implement this plan, the Johnstone Shire Council will need assistance from a range of partners – the traditional owners of the land, Department of State Development and Innovation, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Department of Employment and Training, industry associations covering sectors in the Shire and other government agencies.

Initial priorities for the plan include:

- Effectively launching the economic development plan to the community and to key government stakeholders.
- Putting in place grant writing activities to secure funding for projects.
- Initiating talks with key partner groups on the implementation of sector plans and facilitation strategies.

The Johnstone Shire will move from a fairly static, low growth economy to a growth economy over the next 5 years. The economic development plan provides pathways to manage this growth and achieve positive and sustainable outcomes.

### 11.2 Recommendations

Key recommendations were outlined in the executive summary for the report.

The following table provides a summary of recommendations covering all sector plans and implementation strategies.

**Table 11.2.1 – Economic Development Plan Recommendations**

Vision	Recommendations
<p><b>1. Competitive Primary Production</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Actively supporting and strengthening key agribusiness sectors in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Building supply chain and market access skills and supporting innovation in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Establishing the Johnstone Shire as a destination for aquaculture investment.</i></li> </ul>	<p>1.1 Establish a primary industries forum to continually identify key issues, address priority actions and monitor industry needs.</p> <p>1.2 Strengthen the industry through establishing a series of clusters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation cluster.</li> <li>• Food and wine trail initiative.</li> <li>• Supply chain and market access cluster.</li> <li>• Support farm tourism.</li> </ul> <p>1.3 Work with traditional owners to establish bush food marketing and production initiatives.</p> <p>1.4 Work with traditional owners and primary producers to implement ongoing, effective land management strategies and work programs.</p> <p>1.5 Establish the Shire as an investment destination for aquaculture projects.</p> <p>1.6 Support the retention of the fishing industry in the Johnstone Shire through ongoing dialogue with the industry.</p> <p>1.7 Work with government agencies to identify available support programs. Use these support programs to provide training, funding and transition strategies for people leaving the fishing and sugar industry – providing pathways to new employment and business opportunities.</p>
<p><b>2. Economic Diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Support the establishment of an industrial precinct near the Port of Mourilyan – supporting increased bulk exports and new manufacturing and industrial projects.</i></li> <li>• <i>Actively support an engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire – building a diversified and effective engineering sector in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continue to pursue value added manufacturing opportunities linked to primary production.</i></li> </ul>	<p>2.1 Establish a manufacturing and industry leaders' group to identify key issues, opportunities for collaboration and priorities for action.</p> <p>2.2 Establish an engineering cluster in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>2.3 Establish an industrial precinct near Mourilyan Harbour in close collaboration with the Ports Corporation.</p> <p>2.4 Johnstone Shire Council, Advance Cairns and Ports Corporation to work collaboratively to attract investment in manufacturing and industrial development to a new industrial precinct at Mourilyan.</p>

Vision	Recommendations
<p><b>3. Skills and Capabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establish trade skills training programs in the Johnstone Shire to provide training pathways for people in transition from other industries and to support the engineering cluster in the region.</i></li> <li>• <i>Building a learning community - providing a number of training and learning opportunities to the community.</i></li> </ul>	<p>3.1 Establish an education and training leaders' forum to identify key issues, priorities for action and oversee training and education initiatives.</p> <p>3.2 Establish new training resources and capabilities in the Johnstone Shire covering trade training.</p> <p>3.3 Further develop justice studies in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>3.4 Establish a training and learning plan jointly with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p> <p>3.5 Establish a university campus in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>3.6 Support VET in schools initiatives.</p> <p>3.7 Establish the Johnstone Shire as a learning community.</p>
<p><b>4. Tourism in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identify potential locations for major tourism developments in the Shire – areas where such developments will be acceptable.</i></li> <li>• <i>Attract one or two major tourism developments to the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Require all major tourism developments to establish a local business marketing strategy to involve smaller, local tourism businesses.</i></li> <li>• <i>Encourage the development of farm tourism, adventure tourism and eco tourism in the Shire.</i></li> <li>• <i>Foster a vibrant and diverse creative industry sector in the Shire.</i></li> </ul>	<p>4.1 Develop a tourism strategy for the Johnstone Shire in consultation with Tourism Tropical North Queensland and the Great Green Way.</p> <p>4.2 Develop a distinctive tourism brand for the Shire.</p> <p>4.3 Participate in regional tourism marketing and development – cooperation with other regions.</p> <p>4.4 Establish these clusters in the Johnstone Shire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mena Creek tourism cluster.</li> <li>• Food and wine trail.</li> </ul> <p>4.5 Identify suitable areas for major tourism developments and attract 1 or 2 major projects in the next 3 to 5 years.</p> <p>4.6 Develop a local area plan to manage development at Mission Beach.</p> <p>4.7 Develop lifestyle and amenity tourism in Innisfail through the establishment of an Innisfail River Boardwalk Precinct.</p> <p>4.8 Support river and reef access through river dredging and river based tourism.</p> <p>4.9 Develop a range of tourism events to complement the successful Feast of the Senses.</p> <p>4.10 Retain art deco buildings as a feature in Innisfail.</p> <p>4.11 Develop the creative industries as a key sector in the Johnstone Shire.</p>

Vision	Recommendations
<p><b>5. Community Development in the Johnstone Shire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Implement local economic development plans for local communities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Innisfail.</i></li> <li>- <i>Mission Beach.</i></li> <li>- <i>Silkwood and Kurrimine.</i></li> <li>- <i>Mena Creek.</i></li> <li>- <i>Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>5.1 <b>Innisfail</b> – establishing the Innisfail River Boardwalk Precinct project as a major leisure facility for residents and tourists. Attract a ‘next generation’ retirement village to Innisfail.</p> <p>5.2 <b>Mission Beach</b> – develop a local area plan to manage the development of the area.</p> <p>5.3 <b>Silkwood and Kurrimine</b> – attract retail and service businesses at the crossroads to support both communities.</p> <p>5.4 <b>Mena Creek</b> – support the development of the Mena Creek tourism cluster and creative industries.</p> <p>5.5 <b>Ma:Mu people and Djiru people</b> – work collaboratively with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people to implement a range of economic development strategies.</p>
<p><b>6. Regional Development Initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Collaborate with other shires in the Great Green Way and the Tablelands to identify economic and community development priorities for the region.</i></li> <li>• <i>Develop Innisfail and the Johnstone Shire as a major regional centre to service the needs of surrounding communities.</i></li> </ul>	<p>6.1 Establish a forum with other local government authorities in the Great Green Way and Tablelands to identify economic development issues that can be addressed in a collaborative way – delivering benefits to all participants.</p> <p>6.2 Establish a working group with government agencies to identify opportunities for Innisfail to develop as a regional administration and education centre.</p>
Facilitating the Vision	Recommendations
<p><b>7. Relationships with Businesses</b></p>	<p>7.1 Establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee to oversee implementation of the economic development plan.</p> <p>7.2 Undertake investment attraction activities for the Johnstone Shire region in collaboration with Advance Cairns.</p> <p>7.3 Establish pathways into Council to streamline processes for new industry investment.</p>
<p><b>8. Support Business Growth</b></p>	<p>8.1 Continue to support small business assistance and development initiatives in the region undertaken by Department of State Development and Innovation and AusIndustry.</p> <p>8.2 Establish a cluster program for the Johnstone Shire covering tourism, agribusiness and engineering.</p>

Facilitating the Vision	Recommendations
<b>9. Planning Environment</b>	<p>9.1 Adopt population and industry investment targets for the region. These targets will guide and help manage future growth.</p> <p>9.2 Link economic development strategies to Johnstone Shire Council planning priorities.</p> <p>9.3 Support the establishment of an industrial land precinct near Mourilyan Harbour.</p> <p>9.4 Provide planning support for aquaculture projects.</p> <p>9.5 Identify infrastructure priorities to support growth covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation.</li> <li>• Energy.</li> <li>• Telecommunications.</li> <li>• Marine infrastructure – river dredging, marinas.</li> </ul> <p>9.6 Johnstone Shire Council to undertake infrastructure planning for future growth – residential, major tourism projects and industrial .</p>
<b>10. Shire Facilities and Resources</b>	<p>10.1 Implement community economic development strategies for communities in the Shire and with the Ma:Mu people and Djiru people.</p> <p>10.2 Seek developer/project contribution for infrastructure for residential development.</p> <p>10.3 Undertake a concerted program of applying for grants and funding to support implementation of the economic development plan.</p> <p>10.4 Implement the Innisfail Aerodrome development plan – supporting tourism and aviation development.</p>
<b>11. Market the Strategy</b>	<p>11.1 Launch the economic development strategy in the Johnstone Shire.</p> <p>11.2 Formally advise government agencies of the plan and seek government agency assistance for implementing the economic development strategy.</p> <p>11.3 Discuss the strategy and regional collaboration opportunities with LGAs in the Great Green Way, Tablelands and Cairns City.</p>

## 12. APPENDIX A