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The background of the cover is a large photograph. The top half shows a bright sunset over a horizon with some clouds. The bottom half shows a dense, dark green forest. A dark blue horizontal band is overlaid on the sunset image, containing the title text.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

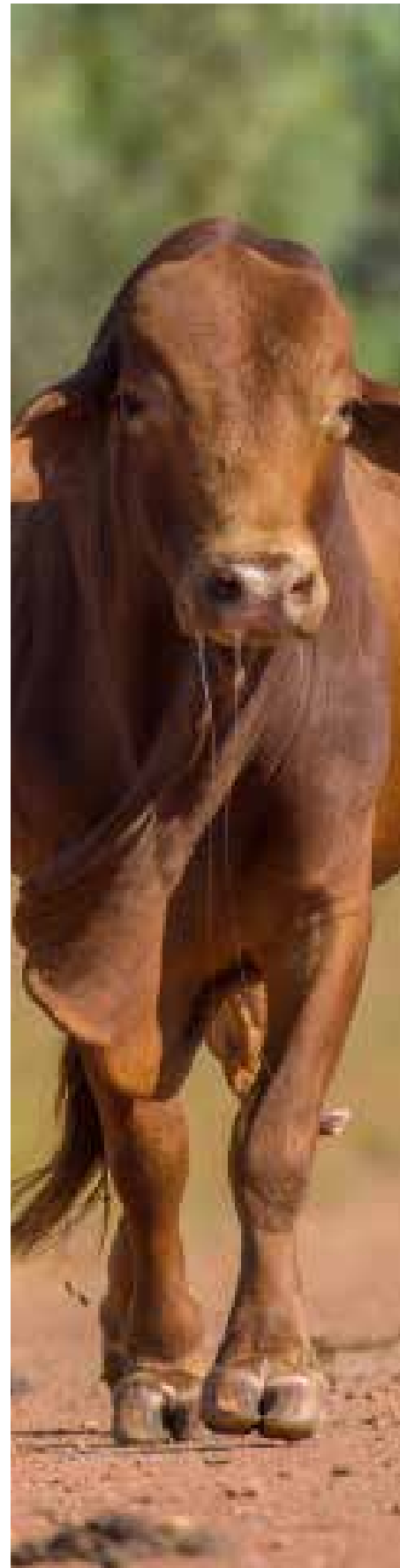


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MESSAGE

FROM THE MAYOR & CEO



Mayor Trevor Pickering

Croydon Shire is a place of enormous opportunity. Recent events provide our community with new growth horizons, where both our traditional industries (such as cattle and tourism) and new industries (such as renewable energy, health and irrigated horticulture) have strong prospects.

To realise these opportunities we have prepared this Economic Development Strategy to ensure we are leveraging our competitive advantages to foster future growth in our Shire.

My commitment as Mayor of Croydon Shire is to work diligently for the Croydon community and our external partners to address the key challenges and deliver on the priorities in our economic plan. Together, we can improve the lives and livelihoods of our people and create long-lasting economic opportunities for future generations.



CEO Jacqui Cresswell

Local government plays an important role in economic development, we advocate for opportunities and policy change, we will continue to grow while becoming more self-sufficient. Croydon Shire is a progressive place to invest, visit, and live. Identified below are projects we feel are catalysts to make this happen in the Shire.

I am excited to be working with our external partners such as State and Federal agencies to implement strategies and actions that will ultimately deliver a diverse economic base for Croydon Shire and that will create more jobs, a larger population and more local services and businesses.



“Our community is a place we want people to choose to live, establish business, grow their families, and stay.”

Mayor Trevor Pickering

HERITAGE
Precinct
TROYDON

THE ECONOMY

Croydon Shire is a local government area in north-western Queensland Australia

The shire, administered from the town of Croydon, covers an area of 29,498 square kilometres (11,389.2 sq mi). The area was originally settled as part of a gold rush in the 1880s, and at one time had a population of at least 7,000. The current population is 296 people.

Croydon Shire is a prosperous cattle producing region which is physically linked to major centres by a network of roads.

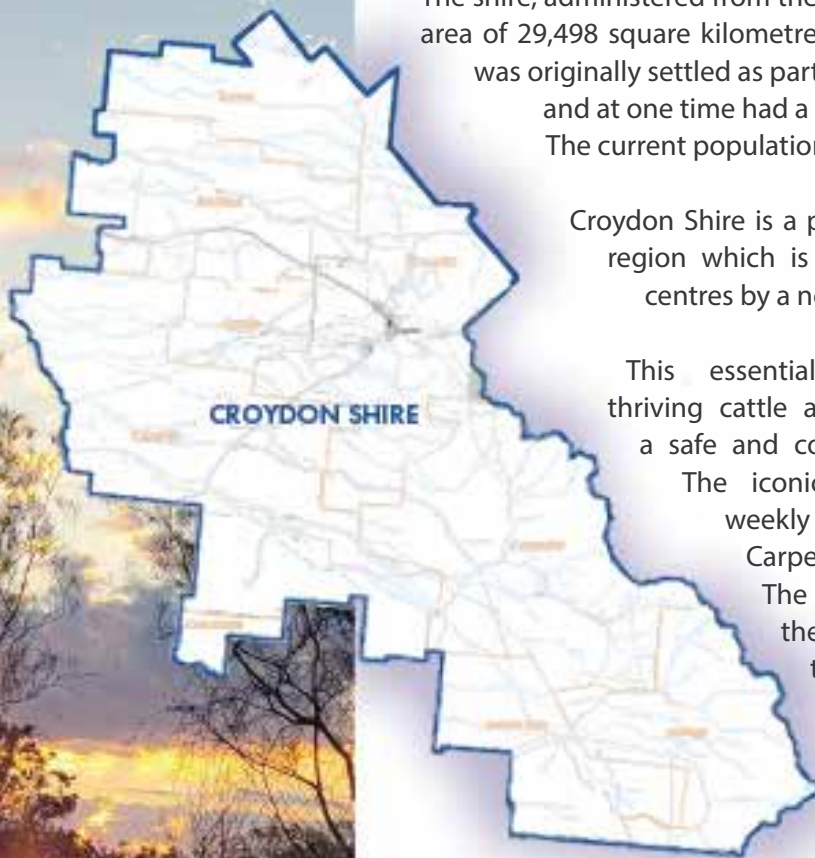
This essential infrastructure supports thriving cattle and tourism industries and a safe and connected shire community.

The iconic Gulflander train runs weekly between Normanton (in Carpentaria Shire) and Croydon.

The town of Croydon is on the tourist drive known as the Savannah Way which stretches from Cairns to Broome. The town of Croydon is a regional service centre providing essential business, accommodation, recreational and community services for shire residents and visitors alike.

Currently 34.1% of population are employed in Agriculture, whilst interestingly 35.7% are employed in Public Administration and Safety.

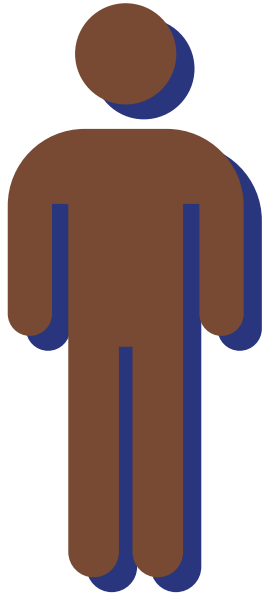
Croydon's Heritage Precinct, utilising historical buildings, and Lake Belmore continue to be highly valued and utilised by residents and appreciated by visitors to our shire. Croydon residents value their cultural identity and lifestyle and come together to celebrate the best of bush living through regular events. New residents are embraced and community groups provide leadership in all facets of community life.



ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

Gross Regional Product
\$15.3M

Total (including all industry sectors)



Population **296**
 (2021 ERP)

Indigenous Population **28.6%**
 (2021 ERP)

Median Age
40.5 Yrs
 (as at 2021)

Unemployment **4.3%**
 (4.2% Queensland, as at Sept 2022)

Employment **129 104**
 (as at 2021) local jobs according to REMPLAN

Largest Industries



35.7%
 Public Administration & Safety



34.1%
 Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing



Construction
 Accommodation & Food Services
 Education & Training
 (as at 2021)

KEY REGIONAL EXPORTS

TOTAL EXPORTS



\$22.53 M

Top 3 Exports



Public Administration



Agriculture



Accommodation & Food Services

KEY REGIONAL IMPORTS

TOTAL IMPORTS



\$13.23 M

Top 3 Exports



Agriculture



Public Administration



Accommodation & Food Services

PROPERTY MARKET



Median House Price
\$100,000

Estimated - Dept. of Resources, Office of the Valuer-General, Property Sales



Residential Builds

0 Approvals, 2022

Dept. of Resources, Office of the Valuer-General, Property Sales



Vacant Land Price

\$6,900

Est. - Dept. of Resources, Office of the Valuer-General, Property Sales



Median Weekly Rental
\$180



Commercial Builds

0 Approvals, 2022

Dept. of Resources, Office of the Valuer-General, Property Sales



Sales

12 + 4

Vacant land
 (Sept 2022)

Residential dwellings

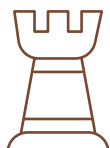
REGIONAL STRENGTHS

An aerial photograph of a rural town. A paved road curves through the center. To the left, a building is labeled 'HOTEL'. To the right, there are several smaller buildings and a green-roofed structure. In the background, a tall tower stands against a clear blue sky. The landscape is a mix of green trees and dry, brownish ground.

“The Croydon Shire has a number of regional strengths which can be grown to support and sustain its future.”

Mayor Trevor Pickering

An aerial photograph of a dirt road winding through a dense, bushy landscape. The vegetation is a mix of green and brown, suggesting a semi-arid environment. The road is light brown and appears to be a dirt track.



Heritage and Nature Tourism

Croydon was established after gold was discovered in the area in 1885, leading to the development of a prosperous town centre still evident in the architecture of the Heritage Precinct. The Croydon Shire has a strong Heritage Precinct, Mining Museum, Chinese Temple Site, outdoor displays of mining equipment, and the historic features of the cemetery, as well as the remains of several small gold mining sites situated in the vicinity of Croydon.

The history and culture of the area is presented through a state-of-the-art Visitor Information Centre and a vibrant interpretation of heritage products.

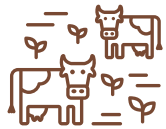
Heritage tourism provides additional income and employment for the local economy and can foster longer term social benefits such as a strengthening local identity and sense of place.

Croydon Shire is also a region of woodland and savannah grassland, with undulating hills to the north of the township.

The wet season reveals wetlands, home to numerous bird species, that attract birdwatchers to the region.

Lake Belmore is a man-made water catchment and supplies the township with drinking water. The lake is a great community attraction for fishing and picnics and is well known as the aquatic jewel of the Gulf Savannah, as the largest body of freshwater in the region. It also invites potential for in-land fishing and nature based activities. The region can capitalise on its natural landscape and nature-based tourism can become a sustainability benchmark for the rest of the tourism industry.

There is potential to invest in active tourism products and infrastructure to enhance the capacity of the industry to service a more diversified tourist base and offer more diversified tourism products.



Strong Agriculture Industry

Currently approximately 34% of the population are employed in the Agricultural sector and it produces an output of \$9.364 million per year which is about 50% of Croydon's Gross Regional Product.

Agriculture is one of the key drivers of Croydon Shire's economy with 48 pastoral leases settled within the shire boundaries.

Pasture health is a key aspect of land asset management with grazing land in Croydon Shire supporting Black Spear Grass, Bluegrass, Brown Top, Aristida and Bothriochloa.

Threats to pastoral health are from weeds, pest animals, native woodland thickening through reduction in fire frequency and/or intensity, natural disasters of wildfires and floods resulting in pasture loss or decline, and impacts from mining activity.

The shire is relatively free of invasive weed species with most infestations tending to be localised and capable of being managed through scheduled spraying programs.



Potential Future Mining Industry

Gold was the main economic driver of the area for four decades. During its heyday, Croydon was the fourth largest town in the colony of Queensland.

Currently there are 67 mining exploration permits granted. Boadicea Resources has identified excellent potential to explore for Greisen-style lithium mineralisation and there are several companies currently exploring gold deposits including Moho Resources, Jubilee Metals, Oakland Gold, and Crater Gold Mining.

There have also been strong graphite deposits discovered with potential mining going forward in the next few years. Croydon is well positioned to support the development of the critical minerals industry needed to meet renewable energy targets.



Liveability

Croydon is seen as a great place to live by its residents. The relaxed lifestyle is embraced by locals and visitors alike and statistics show it is also a safe place to live. It's affordable with vibrant public spaces and has a diverse and resilient local economy.

The definition of a liveable community includes:

Robust and complete neighbourhoods, accessibility and sustainable mobility, a diverse and resilient local economy, vibrant public spaces, and affordability.

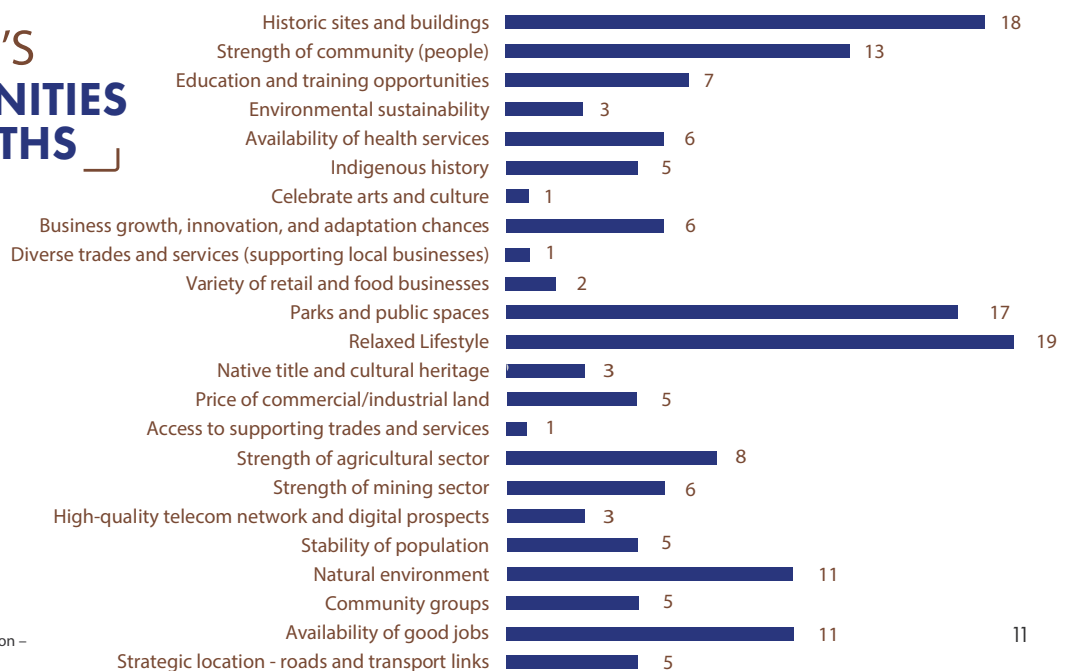
Croydon's strong liveability attributes provide the basis for a strong worker retention and attraction policy.



Strong Community

Croydon residents have a strong sense of community and are proud of their heritage. This was apparent when the community engagement work was done with at least 30% of the community engaging and answering survey questions in relation to their community and future vision. The community listed its relaxed lifestyle as its greatest strength, followed by its historical precinct, the parks and public spaces and the strength of community (its people).

CROYDON'S OPPORTUNITIES & STRENGTHS



GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

A TOWN BUILT ON GOLD

The Croydon Mining Exchange Building, c.1895

Clifford & Coles, the building was located in the district of the Gold Mine and the district of the Gold Mine.



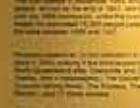
Mining family outside their mine, c.1890

The mining family outside their mine, c.1890. The mining family outside their mine, c.1890.



Croydon ups and downs

Croydon ups and downs. The mining family outside their mine, c.1890.



Miners at Croydon about 1895

Miners at Croydon about 1895. The mining family outside their mine, c.1890.



The Croydon melting

Chinese market gardener, c.1893



Chinese market gardener, c.1893. The Chinese market gardener, c.1893.

The secret of Chinese gardening

Chinese on Croydon worked on stations, and in the mines - were crucial.

They were the chief providers supplying fruit such as custards and lemons.

The Croydon Mining News in 1895 inclined to "cultivate a large and secret of Chinese success was what could be watered with the



Chinese market gardener, c.1893. The Chinese market gardener, c.1893.

"Council are actively pursuing new business opportunities for Croydon Shire."

Mayor Trevor Pickering



Tourism - Prospective New Products

Development of additional tourism products will support additional visitation and length of stay in the Shire. An increase in visitation will drive additional economic activity through increased demand for accommodation and expenditure on food and beverages. The Croydon Tourism Opportunity Plan recognises the following tourism priorities.



Nature and Adventure

- **Mountain Bike Trail Network**
- **Water Park**
- **Cemetery Swamp concept plan**
- **Mining Maze**
- **Littleton National Park**
- **Aboriginal tourism**
- **Lake Belmore** - fishing tours



Heritage and Culture

- **Chinese Temple site development**
- **Visitor information Centre Experience**
- **Interactive Show**
- **Prisoner Hologram**
- **Town Hall** - projector viewing platform
- **Heritage Lighting**
- **Walking tours**



Construction Residential and Industrial

Development of existing and new residential lots will support growth which provides additional economic benefits to the community. It will assist Council to provide housing for staff and attract families who are looking for a lifestyle change.

Development of an industrial land precinct will attract businesses, with additional flow on economic benefits provided to the Shire. Council is currently developing a 'Housing Action Plan' and is working closely with the Department of Resources for land release.



Mining Opportunities - Minerals

Current exploration of critical mineral and gold deposits could provide increased employment, whilst mining services and upgraded/improved transport links will lead to additional use of the Croydon airstrip.

Flow on economic benefits will support a vibrant community. Currently, Council has 67 exploration permits for critical minerals including iron oxide, copper, gold, and graphite.



Agricultural Investment and Diversification

There are opportunities for Croydon to make strong linkages to the Gilbert River Agricultural Precinct Project, whilst also looking at investment in horticultural cropping.

Currently, Regional Development Australia Tropical North and Etheridge Shire Council are looking to develop the Gilbert River area as an Irrigation and Agricultural Precinct, with preliminary work identifying potential economic benefits of around \$700 million per annum.

The concept is to develop a precinct of State significance with preapprovals across tenure water vegetation management, native title future acts and cultural heritage. The proposal is an opportunity to implement best practice land management and provide wide ranging and lasting indigenous economic participation, training, and employment opportunities.

The eventual project will establish appropriate protocols, on a regional basis, covering water allocation, vegetation management, environmental clearances, native title, and cultural heritage as well as the implementation of best practice agricultural management.

Council is currently working alongside Department of Agriculture & Fisheries regarding land clearing and agricultural opportunities, which will include such crops as sesame, peanuts and rice as well as citrus, cotton, cashews, sorghum and bananas.



Accommodation and other Small Business Services

To support tourism growth and attract new residents, Croydon Shire Council can facilitate suitable land options for investors to build residential housing and tourism accommodation.

Council can also support the growth of seasonal tourism businesses by allowing pop up businesses to operate during the visitor season to leverage visitation from the drive tourism market and Gulflander train.



Renewable Energy

The Croydon Shire is home to a nationally significant renewable energy resource - solar energy - this is a perfect example of a renewable energy source. It is powered by the heat and light of the sun, a resource that will never run out in our area. It is free, sustainable and completely inexhaustible, Croydon Shire Council are investigating a solar farm to, not only power council infrastructure, but enable power supply during times of brown outs to the township. This project will enable Council to reduce its carbon footprint and aligns with both Federal and State decarbonisation commitments.



KEY OUTCOMES SOUGHT

An aerial photograph of a small town in a rural area. A paved road runs through the center, flanked by grassy fields and scattered trees. In the background, there are more buildings, including a prominent one labeled 'HOTEL'. The sky is clear and blue.

“Croydon Shire Council’s mission is to ensure we continue to grow, becoming a more vibrant, diverse and progressive place to live, visit and invest.

Through economic and infrastructure development, Croydon Council will maintain and increase a healthy and resilient community.”

Mayor Trevor Pickering



Infrastructure Investment

That supports and enables private industry growth, such as in:

- **Local Urban and Housing infrastructure** – the release of freehold land blocks for residential housing and industrial land development
- **Tourism infrastructure** – Mountain Bike Trail Network, Water park project
- **Transport and Freight services and infrastructure** – Gulf Road upgrades, Gilbert River Bridge upgrade
- **Disaster Management infrastructure** – Doppler radar project
- **Resilience** – solar farm project
- **Maintained Health and Education infrastructure and services**

Regional Promotion – Tourism and Business

That supports and enables private industry growth, such as in:

- **Regional Tourism products**
- **Business opportunities for the region**
- **Construction opportunities**
- **Shire's Liveability**

Policy Change

Federal Policy

- **Zonal Tax rebate changes to account for higher cost of living in remote communities**

State Policy

- **Removal of barriers to investment opportunities**
- **Increase in permanent health services within the Shire**
- **Change compliance for managing Council swimming pools**



INFRASTRUCTURE PIPELINE

Tourism Infrastructure

- **Development of masterplan and business case** for approximately 100km of Mountain Bike trails
- **Tourism Opportunity Plan** delivery of projects

Transport and Freight Infrastructure

Upgrade the Gulf Developmental Road (Croydon - Mount Garnet) by:

- **Strengthening and widening** single lane and narrow bitumen sections
- **Improving drainage and shoulder access** over the entire road network
- **Widening and raising of the Gilbert River Bridge** to two lanes
- **Re-aligning the Sircom Street and Samwell Street intersection for safety**
- **Continual maintenance** of the entire network

Previous works have included:

- **Project 1 - (Georgetown - Mount Garnet)**
3 sections located on Talaroo Straight, west of Einasleigh River Bridge.
- **Project 2 - (Croydon - Georgetown)**
2 sections west of Georgetown between Kutchera Road and Forest Home Road.
- **Upgrade** fencing around airstrip, clearing of the airfield, re-sealing the airstrip, improving the terminal building.
- **Croydon to Richmond Road (council priority 1 shire road)** upgrading and sealing, installation of culverts and floodways, improve drainage, installation of truck stops and rest areas.
- **Maintain, upgrade and seal shire roads.** Improvements in shire roads with culvert and floodway installations, repair of damaged sections after flooding events, and upgrading sections to seal standards.



Urban Infrastructure - Liveability

- **Secure the release** of additional freehold and unallocated state land for residential and industrial purposes
- **Program of main water replacement and rationalisation** of water supply network infrastructure, including separate water for parks project
- **Stormwater drainage projects**
- **Solar Farm project**

Mining Investment

- **Maintain relationship with mining companies** who are exploring the region and leverage any mining ventures to create employment and support new mining ventures with potential land release for worker accommodation.
- **Leverage Mining investment** to maintain/upgrade transport links

Allied Health Investment

- **Looking at pharmaceutical needs for community** – leveraging potential allied health services that could be based in region

Education Investment

- **Improve educational outcomes for the Croydon community** – review teacher/student ratio



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Tourism

- *Mountain Bike Trails*
- *Accommodation*
- *Chinese Temple Site Upgrade*
- *Events*
- *Small seasonal tourism businesses:*
retail/souvenirs, walking tours, fishing tours, bicycle workshops, food and beverages, etc.

Small Business/ Sport and Recreation

- *Water park*
- *Accommodation*
- *Gym/fitness business*

Health and Education

- *Child Care*
- *Education*
- *Allied Health services*
- *Pharmaceutical services*

Renewable Energy

- *Development of a solar farm project*
to minimise brownouts and reduce carbon footprint

Property Development

- *Residential Housing development*
- *Industrial land development*

Support to Mining Services

- *Civil Construction*
- *Exploration and drilling support*
- *Vegetation management*

Agriculture

- *Potential irrigated agricultural opportunities*
- *Agricultural cropping investment projects*
that have the potential to bring strength and stability to Croydon Shire by increasing the farming population and creating flow on effects that benefit the wider community. By investing in these projects, Croydon community can increase their agricultural output and also create jobs, improve educational opportunities, and access new markets.





KEY ACTION AREAS

Advocacy for Croydon Shire Priority Projects

- ***Gilbert River Bridge upgrade*** - \$25M
- ***Realignment of Queensland Government Roads*** - Samwell and Sircom Streets - \$1.5M
- ***Doppler Weather Radar Project***
- ***Mountain Bike Trail Network Development*** - \$5M
- ***Solar Farm***
- ***Water Park*** - \$560k
- ***New Signage*** - \$80k

Ongoing Corporate Plan Implementation

- ***Economic Development and Infrastructure strategies***
- ***Environmental Sustainability strategies***
- ***Corporate Governance and Leadership strategies***
- ***Healthy Resilient Community strategies***

Maintain Croydon Shire Advocacy Strategy

- ***Set regional advocacy project priorities*** with Councillors
- ***Present Council priorities for endorsement*** by regional economic development agencies
- ***Attend regular strategic engagements*** with state and federal government agencies and industry associations
- ***Attend Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and Northwest Regional Organisation of Councils delegations to Brisbane/ Canberra to meet with ministers and agency leaders*** (either outbound or in-bound)

Investment strategy

- ***Develop a business attraction strategy*** which promotes the business/work opportunities in Croydon and its liveability aspects
- ***Develop a housing action plan***, release of residential and industrial land, develop residential housing projects, along with an industrial land precinct
- ***Renewable energy opportunities***
- ***Create increased provision of Sport and Recreation services*** by internal and external providers
- ***Host Trade and Investment Queensland groups*** that can attract the private sector to the region

Regional Promotion and Events

- ***Create a major Mountain Bike trail event***
- ***Increased promotion of Croydon's Heritage history and precinct***
- ***Increased promotion of Lake Belmore and its offerings***

Local Procurement

- ***Council to organise/facilitate procurement information workshops*** for local business operators
- ***Continue to maintain the Croydon Shire Council Procurement policy, process, and conditions***







MEASURING SUCCESS



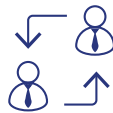
Performance

- *Measured against KPIs in action plan and specific tasks*



Effectiveness

- *Residential and Industrial land development*
- *Infrastructure development*
- *Education*
- *Policy change*
- *Tourism product development and Tourism promotion*
- *Investment opportunity identification and attraction*
- *New and sustainable events*
- *Retention and attraction of workers*



Impact

- *Employment increase*
- *Population increase*
- *Regional immigration numbers*
- *Gross Regional Product*



Contact us

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