Acknowledgements

Compilation of the RDA Sunshine Coast 2010 interim Regional Roadmap was coordinated and edited by Russell Mason, Jane Kerrison and Charmaine Coogan (RDA Sunshine Coast officers) and the Chair of RDA Sunshine Coast, Cr Debbie Blumel.

Thanks to the RDA Sunshine Coast Committee members who provided input at the two group workshops held in early 2010 and the workshop which was held with 110 regional leaders as part of the RDA Sunshine Coast launch in May 2010. The feedback received was the foundation for RDA Sunshine Coast’s vision, mission and goals.

Substantial support was provided by Tim Eldridge from Eldridge Marketing who had a facilitation role coordinating the workshops that formed the foundation of the vision, mission and goals. Annabel Candy from Mucho was instrumental in writing and proof reading the initial document.

Appreciation is extended to Michael Emerson from EMDA for his data analysis and collation, and the production of tables and charts. Derek Kemp from Prosperous Places provided valuable assistance in the development of the strategic directions and priorities for the region. Sean Weir and Steve Burgess from Parsons Brinckerhoff assisted with the review of plans and policies informing the government strategic overview section.

A special thanks to Philippa Bess, Michael Kebble, Raul Weychardt, Alex Lever-Shaw, John Elliot, Kylie Finigan (Sunshine Coast Regional Council), Jason Law (Sunshine Coast Business Council), Zoe Douglas (Office of Economic and Statistical Research), Julie Swain, Brian Stockwell and Ryan Skehan (Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation), Jackie Steel (Queensland Health) and Mike Heffernan (University of Sunshine Coast) for their time in providing data and information to inform the interim Regional Roadmap.

RDA Sunshine Coast would like to extend a thank you to Alex Somlyay MP, Peter Slipper MP, Andrew Powell MP, Steve Dickson MP and councillors from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council including Mayor Bob Abbot, Deputy Mayor Tim Dwyer, Cr Anna Grosskreutz, Cr Ted Hungerford and Cr Lew Brennan who supported the creation of the RDA Sunshine Coast by attending its launch in May this year.

Finally, acknowledgement must go to the RDA Sunshine Coast Committee members, Cr Debbie Blumel, Mick Graham, Michelle Hamer, Mark Farrell, Iqbal Singh, Cr Lew Brennan, Sue Scheinpflug, Charmaine Foley and Greg Dinsey for their support and guidance throughout the planning, development and finalisation of the interim Regional Roadmap.

Copyright © 2010 Regional Development Australia Sunshine Coast Incorporated
Foreword

From the Chair of Regional Development Australia Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast is no more exceptional than any other Australian region, yet we are extraordinary just the same. We have our own story, our identity, our land, our people, our economy.

The Sunshine Coast is a region under pressure. We have experienced a prolonged period of population growth at levels higher than the national average, and still they come. Our population of 323,400 is expected to increase to 500,000 by 2031.

The three former councils in our region amalgamated about two years ago. Geo-politically, we are now one region, over 200km in length, defined by the jurisdiction of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council. Our region has a hierarchy of principal, major and district activity centres and community clusterings around 44 localities, each with its own society, economy and sense of place, history and identity.

When the Federal, State and Local Governments partnered to create 55 Regional Development Australia Committees across this nation, they unleashed the voice of regional Australia and invited regional communities to talk directly with them in a constructive relationship.

Our job here at Regional Development Australia (RDA) Sunshine Coast is to ensure that governments at all levels hear about our region’s circumstances and our vision for a **region that is innovative, dynamic, connected and sustainable**. We aim to connect people across the Sunshine Coast region to strengthen business growth, generate innovative environmental solutions and enhance community development.

One of our key roles is to redress the lag in delivery time for regional services and infrastructure which the growing population needs and indeed, expects. This situation is typical of sea change communities across Australia and it is compounded by the impacts of climate change along the coastal zones.

This interim Regional Roadmap provides the foundations for an innovative, dynamic, connected and sustainable future. It proposes six main priorities – economic development and job creation, innovative environmental solutions, health and community wellbeing, education and training, regional infrastructure and transport and social inclusion.

Members of RDA Sunshine Coast understand the necessity for a coordinated effort around regional development that is consistent with public opinion. We will work hard in the spirit of consensus to achieve prosperity for this region.

We look forward to working with our stakeholders in the further development of this Interim Regional Roadmap.

Cr Debbie Blumel
Chair,
RDA Sunshine Coast Inc.
Executive summary

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a new national network which aims to grow and strengthen Australia’s regions. It is a new beginning for regional advocacy and community development. Made up of committed local leaders, the 55 RDA committees all have a strong grass-roots understanding of their regions. RDA committees are working with their communities to identify and progress opportunities, challenges and priorities for action.

The interim Sunshine Coast Regional Roadmap documents the region’s current economic, social and environmental situation. It identifies the strengths, challenges and opportunities of the region, detailing existing and projected developments. This is a living document which will anticipate future problems and suggest ways to deal with them before they can have a negative impact on the region. This document helps governments and the community understand the Sunshine Coast’s circumstances, and encourages the community to support and get involved in the process of making sure their region thrives.

As the second fastest growing area in Australia, the Sunshine Coast region has experienced strong and rapid population increases and is currently undergoing a transformation from a predominantly tourism-based economy towards the goal of a more diversified regional economy.

Unique characteristics of the area include an ageing population with a high socio-economic status and low urban density. Based on historic figures, projections for future population increases are high, with the number of dwellings forecast to increase by between 61-95% by 2031. This will challenge a region where development is constrained by parks and flood lands and where high rise development is limited. The growing and ageing population is putting pressure on existing healthcare facilities. The new Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH) is scheduled to open in Kawana in 2016, but greater emphasis on primary healthcare would reduce pressure on hospital facilities.

From 2003-2008 the Sunshine Coast region enjoyed strong gross regional product (GRP) increases averaging 6.8% per annum. However, not all sectors of the economy benefited from this with sectors such as youth unemployment remaining high at 16%. The key industries for the Sunshine Coast are still tourism, construction and retail, but this is changing and the investment in the new hospital and other health-related services will mean that health will become one of the key economic drivers for the Sunshine Coast over time.

In a recent strategy produced by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council titled “Affordable Living Strategy 2010-2020” the issue of housing affordability is clearly identified and acknowledged. In particular it is stated that “the Sunshine Coast has high housing costs relative to income and poor housing affordability.” The strategy goes on to note that “affordable living requires a whole of government, industry and community approach...” RDA Sunshine Coast has identified this as a key focus issue and will work with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council to assist as part of a whole of government approach.

Transport remains a priority issue for the Sunshine Coast with the predominant form of transport being the private motor vehicle. According to the recently released draft Sunshine Coast Sustainable Transport Strategy approximately 85% of all residents’ trips are made by private motor vehicle. To reduce the
reliance on private vehicles, major investment needs to be made in alternative transport infrastructure and this will require a whole of government approach to ensure success.

The tourism industry has been a key driver for economic growth on the Sunshine Coast for decades and this is expected to continue. However, as the region’s economy grows its reliance on tourism as a key economic driver will decrease over time. Tourism is a key industry, but the increase in population that occurs during main holiday periods and with day-trippers every weekend puts a major strain on both the social fabric of the Sunshine Coast and the environment that tourists come to enjoy. This is a key issue that needs to be managed carefully as we plan for the future.

In the Sunshine Coast Regional Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2010-14, a set of five themes based on the Council’s Corporate Plan are identified. RDA Sunshine Coast will work with Council to assist it in delivering programs that compliment these themes that are a broad economic base, support for local businesses, infrastructure for economic growth and a strong rural sector.

As identified in the Keep Australia Working strategy for the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay, employment is slowly returning to levels similar to before the global financial crisis (GFC), and as the economy and population continues to grow, more diversified innovative business owners and skilled workers will be needed whilst at the same time the issue of youth unemployment and under-employment of older workers needs to be addressed.

The natural environment and recreation spaces which attract people to the area will be put under further pressure by the forecast increases in population (both residents and tourists) and the effects of climate change. Along with the population increase comes an increased need for water. This will require new and innovative water technologies to be developed to avert the need for the proposed water desalination plant at Marcoola.

The region has a strong history of environmental awareness and responsibility, and this community knowledge and foresight should be utilised to ensure innovative solutions are found that will guarantee the natural environment is not further damaged.

RDA Sunshine Coast vision is for a region that is innovative, dynamic, connected and sustainable. It envisages a region where business, environment and community can co-exist, grow and flourish together.

There are six main priority themes identified in the interim Regional Roadmap:

1. **Drive economic development and job creation**
   Regional business growth plans and strategies which will support economic development, the creation of new jobs, skills development and business investment.

2. **Secure regional infrastructure and transport**
   Secure funding to support demand for infrastructure and services.

3. **Identify and deploy innovative environmental solutions**
   Environmental solutions which will support ongoing sustainability and the management of climate change.
4. Enhance health and community wellbeing
Planning and action for health and social services to make the Sunshine Coast Australia’s healthiest community.

5. Support social inclusion to enhance our community
Social inclusion strategies that value and encourage diversity and bring together and support all members of the community.

6. Maximise education and training opportunities
Maximise opportunities to strengthen and grow the Coast’s education and training sector.

The next stage of this planning process is to undertake consultation with the RDA Sunshine Coast key stakeholders on the interim Regional Roadmap. The consultation process will include forums and workshops to seek feedback on the six regional priorities identified.

It is acknowledged there is much work already underway through public, private and community sector efforts, relating to the six priority areas. The role of RDA Sunshine Coast is not to duplicate existing activities but rather to engage with regional leaders and key stakeholder groups to confirm the region’s priorities, identify strategies for action and communicate them to key Government agencies.

It is expected there will be a combination of implementation strategies including some actions which add value to existing efforts by providing additional support though networking opportunities, partnership building, project planning and development and regional advocacy. The role of RDA Sunshine Coast is to facilitate this process.

This interim Regional Roadmap aims to get results that will allow the economy, the community and the environment to thrive and grow together. The priority is to resolve existing challenges and avoid future problems by anticipating them and taking preventive action. The vision will be achieved with community involvement and with all partners working collaboratively towards the priorities agreed on as part of this living document.
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Executive summary</strong></td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Introduction</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 The region</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Regional overview</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Current population</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Current population characteristics</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Ageing of the population</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Urban density</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 Socio-economic mix (SEIFA Index)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4 Ethnicity</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.5 Education levels</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Future population levels</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Population levels – lifestage</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Urban development profile</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Economic profile</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.1 The economic value of the region</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.2 The economic value by industry in the region</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.3 Growth industries in the Sunshine Coast region</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Employment and unemployment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.1 Youth unemployment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.2 Employment outlook for the region based on current population projections</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 Environmental profile</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9.1 Recreation space</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9.2 Climate change</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9.3 Projected emissions</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9.4 Water resources</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 Education profile</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11 Health profile</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12 Transport profile</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.13 Towards a sustainable and productive regional economy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14 Job creation targets</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15 Section 2 summary</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Consultation overview</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 The Sunshine Coast Regional Council community engagement processes</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1 Development of the 2009-2014 Corporate Plan</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.2 Our Place Our Future 27

3.2 RDA Sunshine Coast consultation 28

4 Strengths, challenges and opportunities analysis 29

4.1 Strengths of the region 29
4.1.1 Stunning ‘World Class’ natural and coastal environment 29
4.1.2 Well-developed tourism and visitor infrastructure 30
4.1.4 High population growth and residential development 31

4.2 Challenges of the Sunshine Coast Region 32
4.2.1 Rapid visitor and residential population growth 33
4.2.2 High residential demand with limited urban land 34
4.2.3 Increasing numbers of older residents 34
4.2.4 The resident workforce increasing faster than employment 35

4.3 Opportunities for the Sunshine Coast Region 35
4.3.1 Opportunities addressing rapid visitor and residential population growth 35
4.3.2 Opportunities addressing high residential demand with limited urban land 36
4.3.3 Opportunities addressing increasing numbers of older residents: 37
4.3.4 Opportunities addressing residents workforce increasing faster than employment 38

5 Vision, mission and priorities 39

5.1 Introduction 39

5.2 Drive economic development and job creation 41
5.2.1 Expand and accelerate industry diversification on the Sunshine Coast 41
5.2.2 Increase regional economic self-reliance 41
5.2.3 Attract investment 42
5.2.4 Support the continuation of the regional and local community infrastructure program 42
5.2.5 Support the rollout of the NBN program on the Sunshine Coast 42
5.2.6 Increase youth employment 42
5.2.7 Identify and adopt world-class town planning principles and practices 42
5.2.8 Become a model of excellence in small business support 43

5.3 Secure regional infrastructure and transport 43
5.3.1 Secure Australian Government funding for the Sunshine Coast airport new runway and airport redevelopment 43
5.3.2 Maximise the value of the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital 43
5.3.3 Develop a regional transportation infrastructure strategy 43
5.3.4 Develop a national growth management policy 45

5.4 Identify and deploy innovative environmental solutions 45
5.4.1 Explore new options for sustainable and affordable water solutions 46
5.4.2 Realise the potential of alternative or community energy 46
5.4.3 Optimise the ability of town planning to enhance and facilitate sustainability 47
5.4.4 Strike the right balance between development and protection 47
5.4.5 Identify approaches to the development of centres of excellence in sustainability or green industry clustering 47

5.5 Enhance health and community well-being 48
5.5.1 Support prevention, protection, promotion and primary health care services with a vision of becoming Australia’s healthiest regional population 48
5.6 Support social inclusion to enhance our community

5.6.1 Improve accessibility to affordable housing
5.6.2 Develop a new funding formula for ‘Sea Change’ regions
5.6.3 Support indigenous programs
5.6.4 Improve access for people with disabilities

5.7 Maximise education and training opportunities

5.7.1 Assist the region’s tertiary education and training sector meet its full potential
5.7.2 Ensure our compulsory-year education infrastructure is prepared to cater for forecast population increases

6 Next steps

Attachment A – Government Strategic Context
Attachment B – Key stakeholders
Attachment C – Reference Documents
List of tables

**Table 1** Population Scenarios for the Sunshine Coast Population 9

**Table 2** Dwelling Scenarios for the Sunshine Coast - 2031 11

**Map 1** Sunshine Coast and surrounds 4

**Map 2** Sunshine Cost Urban Area 12

**Chart 1** Sunshine Coast population levels and increases, 1996 to 2009 5

**Chart 2** Sunshine Coast Tourism Visitor numbers, 2000 to 2010 6

**Chart 3** Sunshine Coast age distribution, 2006 7

**Chart 4** Sunshine Coast ethnic mix (place of birth), 2006 8

**Chart 5** Sunshine Coast population projections, to 2031 9

**Chart 6** Sunshine Coast Lifestage Mix, 2006 10

**Chart 7** Sunshine Coast household projections to 2031 11

**Chart 8** Gross regional product by industry, 2008 13

**Chart 9** Change (%) GRP by industry, 2003-2008 14

**Chart 10** Regional employment and regional unemployment 15

**Chart 11** Regional employment projections 16

**Chart 12** Average recreation (hectares) area per person 17

**Chart 13** Current and projected temperatures 18

**Chart 14** Sunshine Coast current and projected greenhouse gas emissions 19

**Chart 15** Average daily water consumption (ML/per day) 20

**Chart 16** Sunshine Coast lifestage mix, 2031 24
1 Introduction

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a new national network which aims to grow and strengthen Australia’s regions. It is a new beginning for regional advocacy and community development. Made up of committed local leaders, the 55 RDA committees all have a strong grass-roots understanding of their regions. RDA committees are working with their communities to identify opportunities, challenges and priorities for action. They are local people developing regional solutions to regional issues.

The role for members of RDA, including RDA Sunshine Coast, is to build relationships:

- Within communities, including with business, industry and the non-government sector.
- Across sectors, including with groups such as young people, women, Indigenous Australians and people from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds.
- Between regions, across boundaries and in cities and towns.

In partnership with the private sector and the community, RDA Sunshine Coast will:

- Support informed regional planning.
- Consult and engage with stakeholders to identify and resolve critical issues.
- Liaise with governments and local communities about the best, most appropriate programs and services to support regional development.
- Contribute to business growth and investment plans, environmental solutions and social inclusion strategies.

RDA Sunshine Coast is part of a new partnership approach which aims to work across all spheres of government and use their combined resources more efficiently to develop the Sunshine Coast community.

The community is encouraged to work with RDA Sunshine Coast on issues like creating jobs and developing skills, supporting the disadvantaged, helping the local environment, marketing the region, coping with population change and upgrading infrastructure.

This interim Regional Roadmap articulates the strategic direction for RDA Sunshine Coast. It includes:

- A regional profile which paints a broad picture of the social, economic and environmental status of the region.
- The identification of regional stakeholders.
- A summary of regional strengths, challenges and opportunities.
- An overview of the six key priority areas.
Information presented in this report draws heavily from and links to various existing local, state and federal government strategies, plans and reports; including the key Queensland Government Strategy, *Towards Q2: Tomorrow’s Queensland*. Rather than duplicate this information in this interim Regional Roadmap, references to various sources are noted to substantiate specific statements. A reference list detailing the many strategies, plans and reports which have informed development of the interim Regional Roadmap is included.

The data used to compile the information in this interim Regional Roadmap comes from many sources and these sources are listed where appropriate. An economic research agency was used to assist in the data collation for this report and is listed as EMDA. EMDA used data from key government statistical agencies such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) in Queensland to compile the tables and charts.
2 The region

2.1 Regional overview

The Sunshine Coast is a region that is undergoing significant transformation. It has already experienced two phases of development since European settlement. During the first phase the area was characterised as an agricultural based economy with supporting services. This phase then transformed since the 1960’s into tourism and related industries. The region is now transforming into a third phase which can be characterised as moving from an economy that is mainly tourism related to one that is more diverse and includes a broader range of industries, employment opportunities and lifestyle opportunities.

Key features of the region include:

- A regional economy offering a relaxed lifestyle.
- Close proximity to a major capital city, Brisbane.
- Over 200 km’s of coastline.
- Major tourist attraction centres along the coastal region and in the hinterland.
- A number of key National Parks and protected areas.
- Glasshouse Mountains, heritage listed volcanic peaks rich in Aboriginal history.


The key strategic issue facing the region is to ensure necessary economic infrastructure is in place. In the first place catch-up with the current population demand and in the second place develop infrastructure as the population grows and ages. Infrastructure includes transport links such as the airport, major road networks, public transport services, education and health facilities, utilities and high speed world class broadband (Sunshine Coast Corporate Plan 2009-2014).

The map overleaf identifies the location of the Sunshine Coast in relation to its surrounding neighbours.
2.2 Current population

A key feature of the region has been its strong population increases. Since 1991 the population has doubled to 323,400 and since 2001 has added 9,532 people per annum on average. Even in 2009 during the GFC, the Sunshine Coast grew at 3.0% and in 2010 the increase is expected to be similar due to strong population increases overall in Australia. This has made the region consistently the second fastest growing regional area after the Gold Coast in Australia and is adding many more people than areas such as Newcastle (1.4%), Richmond Tweed (1.5%) and Coffs Harbour (1.5%).

There have been a number of factors that has driven these increases including the relaxed lifestyle, the favourable climate and over 200 kilometres of coastline.

Source: Qld. Treasury socio-economic profile of the Sunshine Coast, 2010
The charts above show this graphically. Since 2002 the growth rate in terms of absolute numbers of people has increased as more people are attracted to the region. Even during the GFC, 9,572 people were added, which is the equivalent of a small town.

Tourism is a major Industry on the Coast and this generates a large number of visitors. Using data from Tourism Research Australia, in the year to March 2010, 7.8 million trips were made to the Coast; this comprises 280,000 international visitors, 2,468,000 domestic overnight visitors and 5,015,000 domestic day trippers.

Source: ABS Regional Population Data
Visitor numbers have been strong over the last decade. On an average day this equates to an extra 21,268 people on the Coast, although the average over peak times is much higher and off-peak lower. Although visitors are very welcome to the Coast they do place additional strain on the Coast’s infrastructure, especially transport and health.

Such strong population increase has created infrastructure bottlenecks for the region. These bottlenecks include areas such as health, roads (especially the Bruce Highway), at the Sunshine Coast airport and in education facilities.

The Sunshine Coast also experiences quite a large number of people leaving. Between 2001 and 2006, 30,800 people left the Coast. However as a proportion of population this is fairly typical of regional areas in Queensland.

### 2.3 Current population characteristics

The population of the Sunshine Coast can be characterised as reasonably typical of Australia overall in terms of profile, the key differences/similarities are highlighted in Chart 3 Sunshine Coast age distribution, 2006.
2.3.1 **Ageing of the population**

The main difference is the age profile of the population, with older people 65+ representing 16.5% of the population on the Sunshine Coast, whereas they account for 13.3% of the Australia’s population. The Sunshine Coast also has an over representation of the 55-64 year olds. This reflects the appeal of the Sunshine Coast as a retirement destination although it is under-represented in other age groups such as the younger adults and 25-54 year olds.

**Chart 3 Sunshine Coast age distribution, 2006**

Source: ABS Census 2006

2.3.2 **Urban density**

The Sunshine Coast region has a population density of 100.1 people per square kilometre density, which is far less dense than the Gold Coast (373.3 persons per square kilometre), Brisbane (995.1 persons per square kilometre) and other coastal regional centres such as Newcastle (133.5) or Coffs Harbour (243.7). This relatively low density is due to restrictions on multi-story units, the level of open areas (National, State parks etc.) and areas of cane fields which are prone to flooding and are therefore unsuitable for urban development. The relatively low density is a core appeal for residents living on the Coast currently and there is a strong desire to maintain this low density.

2.3.3 **Socio-economic mix (SEIFA Index)**

Developed by the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas (SEIFA), the Sunshine Coast has a significantly higher proportion in the most advantaged quintile (29.3%), compared with 20.0% for the State and only 9.8% is the lowest quintile (20.0% for the State). The reason for this is the higher level of reasonably well off retirees in the region, boosting incomes among older people.
2.3.4 Ethnicity

Chart 3 shows that the Sunshine Coast has a population that was predominately born in Australia (75.6%), which is about the same as the Australian average (75.1%). The Coast has a slightly higher proportion of UK and New Zealand born residents.

Chart 4 Sunshine Coast ethnic mix (place of birth), 2006

The Sunshine Coast has a below average population of Indigenous population (1.2%) compared with the Australian average of 3.3%. This is unlikely to change over the long term.

2.3.5 Education levels

Amongst the population on the Sunshine Coast, fewer have a degree or higher (11.6%) versus Queensland (13.1%); whereas the Coast has a higher proportion of those who have some vocational training (19.9% versus 17.8% in Queensland) (source ABS 2006).

2.4 Future population levels

The Queensland Treasury has developed population scenarios for the region based on various demographic assumptions (see chart 4). They have prepared a low, medium and high population increase scenarios to 2031. Over the last five years the region has been growing at 9,118 people per annum, which is about mid-way between the medium and high population projections.
Under each scenario, the population is projected to grow strongly. By 2031 even under the low series the population is forecast to grow to 461,212 an increase of 52% from 2009, under the medium scenario 67% increase and under the high scenario 90%.

Even under the low scenario considerable further investment in infrastructure will need to be made. Under the high scenario the population would become similar in magnitude to a capital city like Adelaide and this would require a very substantial investment in infrastructure if the quality of residents’ lifestyles is to be maintained.

It is stressed that these are projections essentially show what the region could grow to should no changes be made to restrict population increases. There is considerable debate in the region about this issue.
2.5 Population levels – lifestage

EMDA has developed a population model by population lifecycle and the results are shown in chart 6 Sunshine Coast lifestage mix, 2006.

Chart 6 Sunshine Coast Lifestage Mix, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifestage Mix, Persons ('000) 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kids/Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty Nesters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EMDA Future Coast Model, derived from ABS Census data 2006

Chart 6 identifies the possible change in the lifecycle composition of the Sunshine Coast over the next 20 years under the population scenarios.

There will be a requirement for the following in terms of key infrastructure to meet the needs of each lifestage in the future:

- Children/students: educational institutions.
- Singles: education/vocational opportunities, career opportunities.
- Couples (no children): career opportunities.
- Families: education (for the children), career opportunities.
- Empty nesters: career/work opportunities.
- Retirees: leisure and health facilities.
2.6 Urban development profile

Under each of the population scenarios, the number of dwellings required to meet these population levels has been modelled (Chart 7 Sunshine Coast household projections to 2031). By 2031 another 72,282 dwellings (61.2% more than now) would be required to meet the low scenario population increase. If the high scenario populations were met, then an additional 95.4% of dwellings would be required.

Chart 7 Sunshine Coast household projections to 2031

![Chart 7 Sunshine Coast household projections to 2031]

Source: EMDA Future Coast Model, based on number of people per dwelling, ratios from the ABS Census, 1996, 2001 and 2006

Table 2 Dwelling scenarios for the Sunshine Coast - 2031

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series</th>
<th>Number of Dwellings 2010E</th>
<th>Dwellings 2031</th>
<th>Dwelling increases 2009 to 2031</th>
<th>% Increase 2009 to 2031</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>118034</td>
<td>190316</td>
<td>72282</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>118034</td>
<td>206808</td>
<td>88775</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>118034</td>
<td>230617</td>
<td>112584</td>
<td>95.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EMDA Future Coast Model

Map 2 overleaf shows there is limited additional area to expand. The Sunshine Coast urban area is constrained by park areas, the ranges and the sugar cane floodplains. Therefore accommodating this amount of urban expansion without using high density would be a major challenge.
Map 2: Sunshine Coast urban area
2.7 Economic profile

2.7.1 The economic value of the region

The Sunshine Coast region’s gross regional product (GRP) has been growing strongly (in nominal terms) at an average annual rate of 10.1% from 2003 to 2008, from approximately $5.4 billion in 2003 to around $8.7 billion in 2008. If the Sunshine Coast were a country it would be ranked as the 125th largest country in the world, by gross domestic product (GDP).

This translates to a healthy real annual growth rate of 6.8%.

This compares to an average annual growth rate of 10.0% for Queensland in nominal terms over the same period, or a real rate of growth of 6.7% p.a. applying the same methodology.

Economic growth on the Sunshine Coast has been so strong that it is higher than most other countries in the world, comparable with nations like India and not far behind China.

Key drivers of this economic growth have been:

- Strong population increases on the Sunshine Coast.
- Growth in the key coastal industries such as tourism, retail and construction.
- Attracting a more flexible workforce.

This economic activity supports 31,758 businesses on the Sunshine Coast. The profile in terms of number of employees per business is very similar to the Australian average. 85.3% of businesses have 5 or less employees, which is nearly the same as Australia (84.8%) (source: Economic Development Strategy 2010-2014).

2.7.2 The economic value by industry in the region

Chart 8 Gross regional product by industry, 2008 shows tourism is the most valuable industry on the Sunshine Coast. It is estimated to be worth $1,463M in 2008.

Other industries related to the tourism sector are also strong performers, with construction worth another $781M and retail $674M.

**Chart 8 Gross regional product by industry, 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>2008 Gross Regional Product Value (M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>1463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Community Services</td>
<td>1008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property/Business Services</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance/Insurance</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Storage</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation/Restaurants</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural recreational Services</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The impact of strong population increases is also evident in the industry sectors, with education, health and community services sectors increasing on the coast.

The emerging diverse nature of the economy is also apparent with a mining sector worth $181M and a manufacturing sector $590M.

2.7.3  **Growth industries in the Sunshine Coast region**

The largest industries have been growing at impressive rates; tourism has increased by 62%, construction 120% and retail trade 54%. All sectors (other than a minor fall in utilities) have increased. Manufacturing has managed to grow slightly. Chart 9 Change (%) GRP by industry, 2003-2008 below shows the % change in GRP by industry.

**Chart 9 Change (%) GRP by industry, 2003-2008**

The most rapidly growing industry has been the mining sector, which has grown by 265% since 2003. This reflects the overall growth of this sector during the commodities boom. The Coast is also emerging as an important service centre to the mining industry.

The growth across all these industries shows that, while tourism is a critical component of the economy of the Coast, other aspects are also growing and leading to a more diversified economy as the economy transforms to the third phase.

2.8 Employment and unemployment

Chart 10 Regional employment and regional unemployment shows the Coast has not been immune from the impacts of the GFC. During this time employment fell and unemployment rose.

Chart 10 Regional employment and regional unemployment

Source: ABS Regional labour force data

Jobs have started to grow again thanks to the improvement in the general economy and the level is only just below the pre-GFC peak. Unemployment still remains above the national average but it is trending down. There are signs though, that some businesses are still feeling the impact of the GFC and have yet to recover fully.

While this falling unemployment is welcomed, the available skilled workforce on the Coast is limited at the moment. Typically after a downturn there is a large pool of unemployed to fill jobs as the economy grows (the US is experiencing this now). However, this is not really the case on the Coast, other than in the areas of youth and the older demographics of semi-retired and retired. This means that further employment growth will either come from migration into the region or more work from the current population. For example, this would mean that retirees could be encouraged to re-join, to lift the pool in the workforce.

2.8.1 Youth unemployment

According to the ABS labour data, in Queensland, young people continue to experience significantly higher rates of unemployment at 15% compared to 5% for all Queenslanders.

This is further compounded in the Sunshine Coast where youth unemployment has reached an unacceptably high level of 16%.

This is an area that requires focus to ensure that today’s youth are trained and skilled to be welcomed into the workforce of tomorrow.
2.8.2  Employment outlook for the region based on current population projections

Under each population scenario EMDA has developed employment scenarios for the Sunshine Coast. This is based on data from the ABS and other government agencies (see Chart 11 Regional employment projections).

Chart 11 Regional employment projections

![Chart 11 Regional employment projections]

Source: EMDA Future Coast Model, based small trend decline in Labour Force Participation rates from ABS Labour Force data.

Under each population scenario, the number of people employed on the Coast is forecast to increase substantially. To facilitate such employment growth, population increases will ideally need to be more aligned with the working age population, therefore providing a greater pool of workers. Infrastructure will also need to keep pace.

2.9  Environmental profile

2.9.1  Recreation space

The Coast is well endowed with natural environment areas, with close to 110,000 hectares on the Sunshine Coast considered open space and this contributes to the relaxed lifestyle of the community. This includes publicly and privately owned land, parks, trails, reserves, bushland, beaches and waterways. Approximately 23,000 hectares is managed by the SCRC and the community for environmental, recreational and social purposes.

However, the projected strong population increases will place considerable pressure on these natural areas. Chart 12 Average recreation (hectares) area per person, shows that the available natural area per person could diminish considerably. By 2031 under the high scenario, natural environment per person could fall to 0.20 hectares per person compared to 0.34 per person now.
Even under the low scenario, the recreation space per person could fall to 0.24 hectares per person.

Chart 12 Average recreation (hectares) area per person

Source: EMDA Future Coast Model, derived from open space area (110,000 hectares and assumes there is no change in available area).

2.9.2 Climate change

The Sunshine Coast is expected to experience a number of changes due to climate change. Chart 13 Current and projected temperatures shows, average temperatures are expected to rise quite strongly. The average maximum temperature is forecast to rise by 8.2 degrees by 2100. The average minimum temperature is also expected to rise as well.
Climate change is expected to cause changes to the Coast’s environment including:

- Reductions in annual rainfall.
- Fewer days per annum when rainfall can be expected to occur.
- Shifts in mean seasonal rainfall.
- Shifts in mean monthly rainfall.
- Changes in the intensity and frequency of extreme rainfall events.
- Sea levels are also expected to rise.

Such impacts especially sea levels rising and the increased likelihood of more extreme weather including flooding means the available land for further urban development will be even more restricted, making accommodating future population increases more challenging (Sunshine Coast Climate Change and Peak Oil Strategy 2010-2020).

2.9.3 Projected emissions

Chart 14 Sunshine Coast current and projected greenhouse gas emissions, identifies the increases in greenhouse gasses that could be expected from further population increases on the Coast. Under each scenario, total greenhouse gas emissions grow and this assumes that the current levels generated per capita don’t increase. By 2031, under the high scenario, emissions almost double due to population increases.
The reductions in annual rainfall due to climate change will also place pressure on the Coast’s water resources.

Currently the reservoirs on the Sunshine Coast are Lake Macdonald Dam, Baroon Pocket Dam, Cooloolabin Dam, Poona Dam and Wappa Dam, each of which controls the release of water downstream.

Chart 15 Average daily water consumption (ML/per day) shows, that even assuming that people use on average 180 litres of water per day (this was over 300 on the Coast before changes in consumption were made), the demand by households for water will grow strongly should the population scenarios eventuate. By 2031 water consumed by households under the high population increase scenario is projected to nearly double to 100.6 Million Litres per Day. Even under the low scenario, water consumption could increase to 83 Million litres per day.
It is unlikely that the increased demand for water could be met by new dams. The Coast has already experienced the difficulty in getting new dams approved with the proposed Mary Valley Dam shelved. Meeting future water needs are more likely to be met by developing new water catching and saving technologies, rather than relying on new dam construction.

An increasing population, further urbanisation (especially increases in population) and more affluent lifestyles have potential to accelerate climate change impacts as outlined below:

- The region’s greenhouse gas emissions are likely to increase, contributing to the global emissions which are driving climate change.
- Existing and future populations that settle near the coast or waterways are likely to be exposed to potentially larger climate extremes.
- Workplaces and recreation areas may be exposed to the risks of larger climate changes (Sunshine Coast Climate Change and Peak Oil Strategy 2010-2020).
2.10 Education profile

The Sunshine Coast currently has 88 schools, 2 Universities and 5 TAFE Campuses contributing towards educational opportunities in the region.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 and Sunshine Coast Community Profile, show the following levels of qualifications in the Sunshine Coast area:

- The Sunshine Coast has similar level of people with post-school qualifications to south-east Queensland and Queensland.
- A smaller percentage of people in the Sunshine Coast attend university (2.2%) compared to south-east Queensland (4.2%), but there was no difference with Queensland as a whole. However, in 2010 the University of the Sunshine Coast had a record intake of students (over 3000) therefore this trend could be changing.
- In the Sunshine Coast between 2001 and 2006 there was an increase in the number of people with non-school qualifications. Higher trade based populations on the coast could be a large reason for low bachelor numbers.

Education plays an important role in community development and there is already some anecdotal evidence that the school system is close to capacity. Based on the population scenarios, once again a substantial investment will need to be made in education facilities to keep up with the possible demand.
2.11 Health profile

There are two major public hospitals, four private hospitals and, to accommodate increases, the Sunshine Coast University Hospital is to be constructed at Kawana.

Nambour General Hospital (NGH) is the main referral hospital on the Sunshine Coast and provides a range of services including specialist and acute care services. The small size (bed numbers and clinical support services) and limited service capability at Caloundra, Noosa, Gympie and Maleny hospitals limits the role these facilities can play in expanding service capacity and capability.

There is already evidence that the hospital system is having difficulty coping with the growing demand for services on the Coast.

- Patients at NGH experience long waiting times and the hospital has consistently high occupancy levels.
- There is significant flow of Southern Cluster (and its broader catchment) residents to Brisbane hospitals for care. Residents of the Southern Cluster also access fewer health services (in any location) than is expected compared to the rest of Queensland (indicated by a low Relative Utilisation score). These factors highlight the need for an adequate and appropriate mix of clinical services and more effective arrangements for delivering services locally. Service areas where analysis indicates that Sunshine Coast residents have lower access than the state average, include dermatology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, rehabilitation, palliative care and geriatric management (QLD Government 2010).

It is already anticipated that the undersupply will worsen until the Sunshine Coast University Hospital is up and running by 2016.

The Sunshine Coast - Wide Bay Southern Cluster Projected Inpatient Bed Requirements shows that by 2022 the current capacity of the region of 592 beds would need to increase to 1,187 beds an increase of 595 beds. To meet this need the Sunshine Coast University Hospital is planned to be expanded to 738 beds by 2021 (QLD Government 2010). This will also extensively alleviate the outflow to Brisbane.
2.12 Transport profile

As can be expected in a region that has been growing very strongly in terms of GRP growth and population increases, transport demand has been growing strongly as well. There are signs that the currently infrastructure is having difficulty coping with the current demand:

• Currently, the private motor vehicle is used for the majority of trips on the Sunshine Coast (for example, approximately 90% of Sunshine Coast resident’s trips to work were made by vehicle (ABS, 2006) and this is causing congestion).
• Visitors to the region and prospective visitors are saying that congestion on the Bruce Highway is a deterrent.
• Car parking congestion especially around Noosa and Mooloolaba is well documented.
• The Sunshine Coast Airport is also reporting the need to expand to meet demand (Sunshine Coast Operational Plan 2010/2011).

Continuation along this path (high reliance on the motor vehicle and strong population increases) is likely to lead to the following outcomes for the region:

• Unrelenting pressure for more and wider roads, with consequential loss of vegetation, more congestion, an urbanised big city feel and a loss of the unique lifestyle qualities of the Sunshine Coast.
• Loss of the lifestyle attraction and key competitive edge of the Sunshine Coast for economic development.
• Increased greenhouse gas emissions.

A number of initiatives are proposed to alleviate some of the demand and these include:

• Major network additions (e.g. the proposed CAMCOS public transport corridor, North Coast Rail duplication or the Multi Modal Transport Corridor).
• TravelSmart programs.
• Sustainable transport energy sources (e.g. electric, hydrogen, hybrid and fuel cells).
• Upgrade of the Bruce Highway.
• Expansion of the Sunshine Coast Airport.

However, even these would not adequately meet the projected demand under each population scenario and more would be required to meet the needs of a substantial population increase.

2.13 Towards a sustainable and productive regional economy

The Sunshine Coast is moving into its third phase of development to a large regional economy with a broad economic profile. The core driver of the growth has been the strong population increases over many years, which has seen the region double in size in just under 20 years.

This strong growth has come at a cost. There are signs the current infrastructure is having difficulty coping with the existing demand and there is a strong push from the community to limit the rate of growth to a sustainable level.
The forward projections of population for the region and the matching resource requirements clearly illustrate the unsustainable nature of the growth. Even under the low growth Queensland Treasury population projection, population is expected to increase to 462,212 (an additional 168,000 people). This will place even more pressure to further substantially develop infrastructure across all areas - for example: health, education, transport and water.

It is clear that an alternative regional development model is required, one that provides sustainable growth and opportunities for the region, but doesn’t result in the region becoming a victim of its own success.

To illustrate this point further the population model includes lifestage projections which further demonstrate the need for change.

The lifestage projections in Chart 16 Sunshine Coast lifestage mix, 2031 identifies all lifestage segments will grow on the Coast over the next 20 years, particularly the older age groups (empty nesters and retirees).

**Chart 16 Sunshine Coast lifestage mix, 2031**

![Chart showing lifestage projections](image)

Source: EMDA Future Coast Model based on ABS and OESR data

The key strategic economic issue is how to manage this population increase so that it is sustainable and provides the Coast with a vibrant population base that is economically productive.
2.14 Job creation targets

The Sunshine Coast requires suitable employment to be generated for the key lifestage sectors. The key employment growth areas will need to be created for families. The types of jobs created will also need to be attractive for these segments i.e. family friendly, good wages and opportunities for advancement. Attracting singles and couples will also require opportunities for this segment to improve their skills and assist them in promotion opportunities (Keep Australia Working Sunshine Coast-Moreton Bay 2010).

In addition more emphasis will be needed to reduce the level of youth unemployment and a target set below the state average.

Another area requiring focus is working with the business community to utilise the skills and experience available in the older demographic groups. Many people close to retirement or semi-retired in this region have exceptional skills and experience that could be better utilised.

2.15 Section 2 summary

The Sunshine Coast is a very successful economy and is moving into its third phase of development to a large regional economy that has a broad economic profile. It is growing as rapidly as India in terms of GRP growth and is not that far behind China. The core driver of the growth has been the strong population increases over many years, which has seen the region double in size in just less than 20 years.

This strong growth though has come at some cost. There are signs the current infrastructure is having difficulty coping with the existing demand and there is a strong push from the community to limit the rate of population increase to a sustainable level.

It is clear that an alternative regional development model is required, one that provides sustainable growth and opportunities for the region, but doesn’t result in the region becoming a victim of its own success.
3 Consultation overview

RDA Sunshine Coast is one of only four RDAs across Australia whose boundaries are the same as their local or regional council. The Sunshine Coast Regional Council (SCRC) has undertaken extensive regional consultation over the past two and a half years. As RDA Sunshine Coast’s role is not to duplicate other planning and consultation processes, it has liaised with the SCRC to ensure that all of the SCRC community engagement programs have informed the RDA Sunshine Coast interim Regional Roadmap.

3.1 The Sunshine Coast Regional Council community engagement processes

SCRC participates in many forms of community engagement and recognises that community engagement creates spaces for ongoing dialogue with the community. This ranges from the community simply needing information on what SCRC is doing, or getting updates on SCRC projects, to being consulted or actively involved in public engagement opportunities.

The main benefit of community engagement is that it helps identify shared opportunities and issues, informs decision-making processes and contributes to the development of partnerships that help create a sustainable region.

The SCRC adopted a community engagement policy in August 2009. The Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Toolkit can be accessed online (http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/sitePage.cfm?code=ce-overview), the key points are:

- SCRC defines community engagement as “an ongoing dialogue with our community to identify civic issues and opportunities, assist with planning and inform decision making”
- SCRC recognises the full spectrum of engagement activities, from informing through consulting and involving, to collaboration and empowerment as advocated by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2).
- SCRC will use different community engagement techniques and communication mechanisms depending upon the issue or project, its particular circumstance and the audience it needs to target.
- At the planning stage, the project team will see if it can get the community information it needs from another source or previous engagement activity. This will maximise the use of limited resources and minimise the likelihood of consultation fatigue.

Two major activities where Council has undertaken community engagement during the past two years are:

- Development of the 2009-2014 Corporate Plan.
- Our Place Our Future.
3.1.1 Development of the 2009-2014 Corporate Plan

The corporate plan is the core strategic document of the SCRC. It identifies the priorities for the SCRC for the next five years and beyond.

The corporate plan guides SCRC’s decision-making, budget operations and resource allocations to achieve its vision: To be Australia’s most sustainable region - vibrant, green, and diverse.

In 2008, extensive community engagement was undertaken by SCRC to develop the corporate plan. This engagement involved seeking comments and feedback from the community, and holding a community conference.

3.1.2 Our Place Our Future

Our Place Our Future is SCRC’s ongoing campaign that aims to develop a strategic approach to planning the future of the Sunshine Coast region in partnership with the community.

SCRC is progressively releasing a series of strategies, discussion papers and background studies to work towards achieving its vision for the Sunshine Coast to become Australia’s most sustainable region - vibrant, green and diverse.

These strategies, papers and studies can be accessed at: http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/sitePage.cfm?code=our-place-future

These documents aim to help retain the Coast’s lifestyle and character as a collection of small communities, protect the region’s natural assets and diversify the economy.

SCRC undertook extensive community engagement in late 2009 to invite the Sunshine Coast community to be part of the planning that will guide the way the Sunshine Coast looks, feels and grows over the next twenty years.

SCRC received approximately 3,000 submissions, including 1,500 Our Place Our Future survey forms and 1,500 specific feedback forms and submissions relating to the various strategies, papers and studies on display.

SCRC will refer to the outcomes from the Our Place Our Future community engagement process when drafting the new planning scheme for the Sunshine Coast region, which it intends to complete in 2012.

SCRC has also commenced developing the first community plan for the Sunshine Coast. The plan, which is a requirement under the new Local Government Act, will capture the community’s vision, values and aspirations for the future of the region and will guide all other planning processes for council.
SCRC has commissioned market research to identify the key issues that accurately reflect the community aspirations and values. The results of this research will be presented to the second community conference in October 2010. This conference will be used to draft the community plan which will be released for comments and feedback in late November 2010.

3.2 **RDA Sunshine Coast consultation**

As part of RDA Sunshine Coast’s own work, two group workshops were held in early 2010 with involvement from the Committee members. A workshop was also held at the RDA Sunshine Coast launch and attended by representatives from key stakeholder groups, where the draft regional priorities were presented and feedback was received.

In addition, feedback from committee member involvement in various community-based organisations from across the Sunshine Coast has also informed the development of the interim Regional Roadmap.

RDA Sunshine Coast intends to continue consulting with key stakeholder groups including the SCRC to ensure that this document remains current and is a ‘living’ Regional Roadmap.
4 Strengths, challenges and opportunities analysis

The Sunshine Coast is unique and the purpose of this section is to describe the economic, social and environmental key elements that are strengths of the region or pose a challenge and/or opportunity.

The strengths, challenges and opportunities information in this section was sourced from many strategies for many different agencies and SCRC council policies and planning documents. A detailed list of these documents is listed in Attachment A, Government strategic context and Attachment C, Reference documents.

Key elements of the existing economic, employment and demographic profile of the Sunshine Coast region vital to the strategic framework are:

- The importance of the region's natural qualities in driving residential, tourism and visitor growth.
- The dependence of the Sunshine Coast region on population and tourism driven growth, and the lack of diversified employment.
- The rapid population growth, averaging 3.8% per annum and exceeding the supply sufficient for local employment.
- The region's popularity with the elderly and early retirees, resulting in an ageing, under-employed population (17% of population is over 65 years).
- The below average number of young families and young singles.

4.1 Strengths of the region

The existing strengths of the Sunshine Coast are strongly founded upon the regions:

- Stunning world class natural and coastal environment.
- Well-developed tourism and visitor infrastructure.
- Strong environmental ethos and environmental credentials.
- High population growth and residential development.
- Regionally important, catalytic and transformational infrastructure.

Each of these five strengths is explored in more detail below.

4.1.1 Stunning ‘World Class’ natural and coastal environment

The attractive coastal setting and relaxed lifestyle draws people from all over Australia and overseas to the area including the RAMSAR listed Pumicestone Passage, the UNSCO MAB Noosa Biosphere Reserve, Glass House Mountains, Blackall Range, rivers, beaches and a community commitment via the SCRC to maintaining biodiversity values.
4.1.2 Well-developed tourism and visitor infrastructure.

The Sunshine Coast is a domestic tourism region that is well known throughout Australia with nearly 3 million domestic overnight visitor stays recorded on 2009-10.

More recently the Sunshine Coast is becoming known internationally with visitation from key markets such as northern Europe and North America increasing steadily over the past 5 years.

Tourists visit the Sunshine Coast to experience the quintessential Australian holiday and there are many experiences for them to enjoy.

Notable experiences include:

- A variety of coastal and nature-based visitor experiences to suit different tastes and budgets.
- World renowned man-made visitor attractions like Australia Zoo, Aussie World and the Ettamogah Pub.
- Coastal villages each with its own unique character like Coolum, Noosa and Mooloolaba.
- Rural tourist and lifestyle villages like Eumundi, Maleny, Flaxton, Monteville and Mapleton.
- World class foreshores, esplanades and surfing beaches with good facilities.
- A range of international standard holiday accommodation.
- Numerous holiday units, apartments and holiday homes.
- Rural production that attracts visitors.
- Rural processing plants that are also significant visitor attractions like the Ginger Factory, Nutworks Macadamia Factory, Maleny Cheese, Kenilworth Dairy Factory and local co-operatives.
- World class outdoor camping, tropical, sub-tropical and bush experiences.
- Extensive walking, cycling and horse ride trails.
- Noosa everglades, rivers and ocean kayak experiences.
- World class ocean, estuarine and river fishing opportunities.
- Natural wildlife encounters such as whale watching off the coast.
- World class diving sites (HMAS Brisbane).
- World class restaurants and cafes.
- A relaxed lifestyle.
4.1.3 **Strong environmental ethos and environment credentials**

The Sunshine Coast has many key environmentally important areas and this has been recognised with a large number of national, state and regional parks being declared.

The community is also keenly aware of the environment and this is evidenced by the inclusion of the Noosa area into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Biosphere reserve program.

Examples include:

- Accessible national and regional parks (Noosa National Park, Obi Obi George, Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve, Maroochy River Conservation Park, Glass House Mountains National Park).
- Areas of outstanding natural beauty (Lake Cooroibah, Pumicestone Passage, the Blackall Ranges, Mt Tinbeerwah, Mt Ninderry, the Noosa River, the Maroochy River and its flood plains).
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas (Noosa North Shore, the Great Sandy National Park, Pumicestone Passages, North Bribie Island, Fern Tree Creek National Park, Dularcha National Park).
- Preservation of remote or undeveloped areas (Lake Cooloola, Noosa North Shore, the Maroochy Bushlands National Park, Maroochy Wetlands Sanctuary, Eudlo Creek National Park, Lake Cooroibah).
- Nearby world renowned environmentally protected areas (Fraser Island, Cooloola National Park).
- Significant, extensive areas of State forests and natural wilderness areas.
- Strong community and local government focus on sustainability.
- Worldwide standing of the ‘Noosa Biosphere’ initiative.
- The basis for a ‘green technology’ industry cluster.

4.1.4 **High population growth and residential development**

The Sunshine Coast is a recognised ‘Sea Change’ region and has a very fast growing population. This increase in population and constant need for more housing creates:

- A rapidly growing skilled and unskilled labour pool.
- Strong demand for retail and personal services.
- High demand for business and community services.
- High interest and demand for recreational products and services including a high degree of interest and involvement with outdoor sports.
- Strong construction and development activity.
- Strong employment in construction and infrastructure provision.
- Strong demand for building products and construction materials.
- Strong demand for educational products and services.
- Increasing demand for cultural products and services.

4.1.5 Regionally important, catalytic and transformational infrastructure

There are a number of projects either occurring, in the construction phase or in the planning phase that are regionally important, catalytic and transformational.

Each of the projects listed below has or will have a major impact on the region socially, economically and environmentally.

It is vitally important that these projects are supported at all levels of government and that a whole of government approach is applied to each and every one. RDA Sunshine Coast intends to work with the key drivers of each these projects to ensure that the whole of government approach is developed and maintained.

These projects include:

- Sunshine Coast airport (jet capable, with direct interstate flights).
- University of the Sunshine Coast (with its 150 degrees and international student focus).
- Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH).
- Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE.
- Improved regional road networks (widening and duplication of regional arterial roads with improved access to the Bruce Highway).
- Improved regional rail network (electrification and faster commuter services).

4.2 Challenges of the Sunshine Coast Region

The Sunshine Coast has been one of the fastest growing regions in Australia for many years. This increase in population means that there are many challenges facing the community and all levels of government.

It is not just the residential population increase that is challenging to government; it is also the increase in tourism visitation and day-tripper visitation.

Each of these population groups (residents, tourists and day-trippers) has different needs and requirements.
At times the differing needs of these different groups have meant that there has been friction and issues around the delivery of infrastructure. This is an ongoing challenge for all levels of government and it will require co-ordinated responses to ensure success.

The most significant challenges for the Sunshine Coast have four main causes:

- Rapid visitor and residential population growth.
- High residential demand with limited urban land.
- Increasing numbers of older residents.
- The resident workforce increasing faster than employment.

4.2.1 Rapid visitor and residential population growth

The rapid increase in population means that the community has become very aware of the need for sustainable growth to occur; in particular the community is looking to government to manage growth to protect the lifestyle that attracted people here in the first place.

To manage growth government needs to provide adequate infrastructure as a priority. This will mean planning for the growth and in particular, ensuring that the region provides affordable housing and equity of access for all residents.

Given the increasing popularity of the Sunshine Coast as a tourism destination and the pressures that these visitors place on infrastructure, greater effort needs to be placed on managing this expected growth, ensuring that the infrastructure needed is in place and that planning for future infrastructure has been done.

Rapid visitor and residential population growth creates many challenges including the following:

- Increasing risks of structural adjustments and rapidly rising unemployment from downturns in the construction, infrastructure and/or tourism industries.
- Threats to the environment and natural beauty.
- Pressure on the lifestyle and coastal attractiveness of the region.
- Pressure on the sport and recreational opportunities available.
- Pressure on the region’s natural environment and environmental services.
- Threatening environmental degradation of natural and coastal areas.
- Increased risk to coastal and flood plain development from climate change, sea level rises, local flooding and more frequent severe weather events.
- Resource security for construction materials, mineral and natural resources.
- Loss of State forest and wilderness areas (especially if privatised).
- Pressure on places of outstanding natural beauty.
- Pressure on good quality agricultural land.
- Threats to the character and lifestyle of rural areas and rural villages.
- Placing pressure on already overextended health, medical and allied health services.
- Increasing shortages of doctors, specialist and allied health professionals.
- Increasing shortages of other personal, business and professional services.
- The requirement for significant new infrastructure investment (roads, reticulated).
- The need for a new public transport and ‘active transport’ infrastructure.
- The need for new and enhanced community and social services.

4.2.2 **High residential demand with limited urban land**

Population growth on the Sunshine Coast is forecast to continue, therefore planning needs to be done well in advance to ensure that the urban land and infrastructure required is in place and available. This will ensure that the population growth is managed rather than pressure being placed on governments to react to population pressure.

Given the limited availability of urban land on the Sunshine Coast, there is a need to consider urban density as part of this planning.

High residential demand with limited urban land creates the following challenges:

- Results in high coastal land and residential property prices.
- Displacement and relocation pressures on existing low income residents.
- Limited availability of affordable housing.
- Limited ability to offer affordable transport options.
- Restricts the ability of low income earners to live close to coastal jobs.
- Results in rural dispersal of low income households with social and welfare needs.
- Results in pressure for more dispersed and lower cost housing.
- Low density residential sprawl with limited local jobs.
- Results in long-distance commuting to low income, casual and part time jobs.
- Increases susceptibility to peak oil with higher carbon footprint and fuel pricing.

4.2.3 **Increasing numbers of older residents**

The Australian population is seeing an increase in the proportion of older residents and the Sunshine Coast will see this occurring as well.

Increasing numbers of older residents creates the following challenges:

- Results in a relatively low proportion of young, active, working population.
- Results in ageing care-givers, facing increasing difficulties in giving care.
- Requires a range of affordable residential and affordable care options.
- Requires increased supportive care and opportunities for ‘ageing in place’.
- Requires pro-active approaches to reduce the ageing process (e.g. social interaction, ‘aged fitness’ and active pursuits to reduce and slow the progression of Alzheimer’s).
- Requires increased provision of high care accommodation for independent living.
• Requires provision in each part of the region (so the elderly do not have to leave their local community, families and friends or move away from familiar support networks).
• Requires greater affordable care as older self-funded retirees run out of means to support themselves (due to people living longer with increasing needs).

4.2.4 The resident workforce increasing faster than employment

The resident workforce increasing faster than employment creates the following challenges:

• Results in inadequate ‘entry level’, low skill and school leaver jobs (because of the existing small business focus with 85% of businesses having less than 5 employees).
• High dependence on seasonal tourism and visitor-related jobs (because of the strong emphasis on visitor and population driven businesses).
• Increased likelihood of unemployment because of the lack of local jobs.
• Increased unemployment because of the lack of jobs within acceptable commuting time.
• Requires increased, diverse local employment opportunities in all parts of the region.
• Requires growing more than just ‘population serving’ jobs.
• Requires attracting ‘rapidly growing’ employment activities.
• Requires growing innovative, creative and knowledge-based businesses.
• Requires growing local small business, micro-business and home-based businesses.

4.3 Opportunities for the Sunshine Coast Region

There are important opportunities for the Sunshine Coast that can also effectively address some of the existing and emerging regional challenges.

4.3.1 Opportunities addressing rapid visitor and residential population growth

The knowledge that the Sunshine Coast will see future population increases will enable the region to plan for this growth and to provide sufficient infrastructure that will ensure that the increases will be managed at a sustainable level.

There are many opportunities to address rapid visitor and residential population growth such as:

• Identification and preservation of the areas that underpin the natural environment and rural character of the area from rural industry, resident and visitor perspective.
• Identification and protection of environmentally sensitive areas and areas of outstanding natural beauty, both coastal and rural.
• Identification and protection of areas of good rural and quality agricultural land (protecting this land from incremental loss or sub-division to non-economically viable sizes).
• Identification and protection of significant rural, coastal and natural areas visible from major roads, tourist and visitor routes.
• Identification and protection of the rural setting of the region’s rural villages.
• Development of hinterland-based recreational and tourism attractions (especially those with an environmental or ecological nature).
• Enhancement and protection of coastal-based recreational and tourism attractions (including coastal green trials and board walks that prevent environmental degradation).
• Addressing the existing shortfall and projected future need for social and community infrastructure (benchmarked against realistic ‘desired service standards’).
• Addressing the existing shortfall and projected future need for physical infrastructure (including schools, roads, hospital, respite and childcare facilities).
• Addressing the existing shortfall and projected future need for public transport and ‘active transport’ (including the needs for recreation, visitors, the elderly and the young).

4.3.2 Opportunities addressing high residential demand with limited urban land

There are many regions of the world that have been able to deal with the challenge of better utilising limited urban land. Many of these examples can be studied and the most suitable ideas can be used to assist the region to manage this challenge in a sustainable way.

Opportunities available to the region include:
• Introducing ways to limit residential growth, without displacing existing residents (based on international best practices in democratic societies).
• Identifying and designating more land for nature conservation and public recreation.
• Focusing on developing well-connected, compact communities with diverse, co-located employment, recreational, retail, social and personal services with active transport and frequent, regular public transport options.
• Providing a variety of good quality ‘affordable housing’ at places with significant shortages (based on international best practices, in democratic societies).
• Introducing a wider diversity of housing types in new and infill developments (including different sizes and types of residences in individual properties).
• Introducing a wider variety of compact, environmentally sustainable, community developments (suitable for rural and urban villages and rural settlements).
• Introducing more sustainable and greater self-sufficiency in urban areas (ranging from more local services, to the more productive use of public and private urban land).
• Educating residents and businesses to be more environmentally responsible and to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Identifying locations that should be prevented from development or protected from the effects of climate change, local flooding and possible future sea level rises.
- Flood-proofing major road and transport systems.
- Introducing more health and emergency services.
- Development of environmentally friendly community infrastructure and high quality urban design outcomes (including low emissions transport infrastructure, community based water harvesting, waste recovery, recycling, composting and energy supply).
- Creating a strong focus on green energy production and low emission technology.

### 4.3.3 Opportunities addressing increasing numbers of older residents:

As the Australian population ages so will the population on the Sunshine Coast. This will present an opportunity as the aging population will have skills and experience that can be used to benefit the region.

It will be important for the region to develop strategies that ensure that the older population of the Sunshine Coast has every opportunity to become involved as this will not only benefit the region but also the residents.

The region will also look at other opportunities such as:

- Ensuring the region is attractive for young families and young workers, with a range of affordable housing and suitable jobs with a high prospect of advancement.
- Overcoming the loss of young people who choose to leave the region, by improving recreational and education attractions and attracting young people from elsewhere.
- Building ‘social capital’ so that existing residents, new residents, young people and older residents are well-integrated into local communities (building social networks so they are unwilling to leave and better able to meet each other’s needs).
- Providing opportunities for supported ‘ageing in place’ in local communities in each part of the region, with an early emphasis on places with existing high needs.
- Providing support for ageing ‘care givers’ and easily accessible ‘respite care’ for those caring for the ageing and disabled at home.
- Providing supported accommodation at locations that enable the elderly and disabled to progress from independent living to high care accommodation.
- Addressing the existing shortfall and projected future need for physical infrastructure and community services (bench marked against desired levels of service elsewhere).
- Providing high levels of social interaction, finding new friendships, pursuing lifelong interests, lifelong learning, healthy, active living and developing new interests.
- Improving the work skills, business, employment, part-time work and volunteering opportunities for the ageing Sunshine Coast population.
- Provision of pro-active ‘outreach’ services reaching into every part of the region (identifying, reaching out and bringing together those with similar interests or needs).
• Using modern telecommunications to reduce social and physical isolation and to monitor individual health and new needs (enabling appropriate, timely responses).

4.3.4 Opportunities addressing resident workforce increasing faster than employment

• Identifying and addressing constraints restricting the growth of the Sunshine Coast’s highest employers and most rapidly growing businesses.
• Identifying and attracting rapidly growing industries found in other parts of SE Queensland (addressing the reasons why these activities are not choosing the Sunshine Coast).
• Increasing the number of visitor nights and year round occupancy of visitor accommodation (by increasing corporate, overnight and weekend visitation, developing targeted lifestyle and visitor attractions and programmed events).
• Increasing the unique visitor experiences and unique visitor attraction infrastructure in each part of the region (with an early emphasis on inland and rural villages).
• Building the employment potential of the entertainment, arts and sports sector (including regional sports, exhibition, convention and performing arts complexes).
• Identifying areas for future economic and business opportunities (protecting them from residential and population serving developments with more choices of location).
• Focusing on attracting new business founders, creative people and those with scarce skills (especially those with the ability to live and work wherever they choose).
• Becoming recognised as a centre for particular types of businesses, education and training, initially based on tourism, the environment and small business growth.
• Growing the region’s specialisation in rapidly growing ‘new economy’ businesses, with an early emphasis on creative, environmental education and technology businesses.
• Encouraging the environmental, creative, ITC and knowledge-based specialisations of the Sunshine Coast University and TAFE (encouraging international, national, local and regional students to study and stay on the Sunshine Coast).
• Incubating and supporting the development of innovative creative, technology and knowledge-based businesses (with an early emphasis on attracting, incubating and growing innovative, creative knowledge-based home-based and small businesses).
• Providing the full set of ‘community and lifestyle’ opportunities necessary to attract business founders and those with scarce skills who can live wherever they wish.
• Creating ‘superior business settings’ that attract creative, knowledge-based and ‘high value’ small businesses to generate high local expenditure and employment.
• Providing a ‘place-based’ quality of life; personal and professional development, health and education opportunities to attract these entrepreneurs and their families.
• Provide advanced telecommunications infrastructure (matching or exceeding that available at competing Pacific Rim locations).
5 Vision, mission and priorities

5.1 Introduction

In previous RDA Sunshine Coast strategic planning workshops, committee members submitted 100+ ideas on ways to help develop the Sunshine Coast region. In the subsequent workshop report, these were sorted into various categories as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative Water Projects</th>
<th>Events and Conferences</th>
<th>Development &amp; Sustainability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town/Urban Planning</td>
<td>Transportation Projects</td>
<td>Sport Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Wellbeing Projects</td>
<td>Local Food Production Projects</td>
<td>Youth Employment Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Sector Projects</td>
<td>Alternative Energy Projects</td>
<td>Other assorted ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Attraction Projects</td>
<td>Economic Self-Reliance Projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In preparation for the development of the interim Regional Roadmap, the Committee has developed and agreed a vision and mission statement. This is an opportunity to further synthesize the previously identified regional development priorities with the objective of:

- Re-sorting all the previously submitted ideas so that they align with the vision and mission statement.
- Taking these preliminary ideas to the next level by presenting them as the strategic cornerstones of the Sunshine Coast interim Regional Roadmap.
# RDA Sunshine Coast Vision, Mission & Priorities

## VISION

A Sunshine Coast that is innovative, dynamic, connected and sustainable.

## MISSION

Connecting people across the Sunshine Coast region to strengthen business growth, generate innovative environmental solutions and enhance community development.

## PRIORITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drive economic development and job creation</th>
<th>Secure regional Infrastructure and transport</th>
<th>Identify and deploy innovative environmental Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional business growth plans and strategies, which will support economic development, the creation of new jobs, skills development and business investment.</td>
<td>Secure funding to support future demand for infrastructure &amp; services.</td>
<td>Environmental solutions, which will support ongoing sustainability and the management of climate change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhance health and community well-being</th>
<th>Support social inclusion to enhance our community</th>
<th>Maximise education and training opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning and action for health and social services to make the Sunshine Coast Australia’s healthiest community.</td>
<td>Social inclusion strategies, which will bring together and support all members of the community.</td>
<td>Maximise opportunities to strengthen and grow the Coast’s education and training sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RDA Sunshine Coast will work collaboratively with the Australian and Queensland governments, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and other partners to progress the following six priorities:

- Drive economic development and job creation.
- Secure regional infrastructure and transport.
- Identify and deploy innovative environmental solutions.
- Enhance health and community well-being.
- Social inclusion to enhance our community.
- Maximise education and training opportunities.

5.2 Drive economic development and job creation

Accelerating economic development and expanding job creation is a priority for RDA Sunshine Coast. Mission-critical strategies include but are not limited to:

5.2.1 Expand and accelerate industry diversification on the Sunshine Coast

Support Local Government’s industry diversification strategy, which calls for focus on several high potential sectors like aviation, creative industries, digital, education services, environmental technologies, food and beverage, health and wellbeing, light industries, professional services and sport and recreation.

Prioritise opportunities to advance the local food production industry because it has the potential to dovetail into other fields, like local wellbeing-oriented healthy eating programs; programs to expand regional fruit and vegetable market offerings; and possibilities for food-oriented research and development of centres-of-excellence.

Develop a buoyant events and conferencing industry leveraging the region’s proven track record in tourism and accommodation, coupled with strength in arts and culture. This includes both ‘general’ events facilities as well as crossovers with other established and/or emerging strengths and assets; for example - the strong sporting culture, temperate climate, cultural and arts offerings and connections with residents who are expert speakers in different fields.

5.2.2 Increase regional economic self-reliance

Increase the self-sufficiency of the region’s ‘internal’ economy by supporting the businesses that are already established on the Sunshine Coast.

Informed debate and more research is needed on the most productive ways to achieve this. There may also be value in exploring tactics like micro-marketing and encouraging businesses to make the use of local supply chains.
5.2.3 Attract investment

Be a resource to help direct existing and potential investors and entrepreneurs to local sources of advice and business insight and help showcase some the region’s successful businesses in order to build confidence in the region as a business centre.

5.2.4 Support the continuation of the regional and local community infrastructure program

The National Sea Change Taskforce Inc. has identified a number of policy initiatives to provide additional support for regional coastal communities. The Taskforce is recommending the continuation of the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure program to provide further economic stimulus to regional coastal communities, which are particularly vulnerable to the global financial crisis and its impact on the construction sector, and that future guidelines for the program be developed in consultation with local government representatives to ensure funding is effectively targeted to meet local community. RDA Sunshine Coast would actively support this recommendation.

5.2.5 Support the rollout of the NBN program on the Sunshine Coast

Better broadband speed and service is critical in regional Australia and for this reason all options are to be explored for increasing open access infrastructure development and the supply of service by multiple carriers across the region, either through Government, semi-government programs or through commercial initiatives from the private sector.

5.2.6 Increase youth employment

There is an opportunity to strengthen youth employment. To progress a review of policies and possibilities is high on the agenda. This could include increasing opportunities in areas that require more highly skilled employees that offer career paths within organisations that operate within the region.

Further opportunities such as increased assistance for apprenticeship programs need to be encouraged so that youth on the Sunshine Coast have greater opportunities available to them.

5.2.7 Identify and adopt world-class town planning principles and practices

RDA Sunshine Coast would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with partners on a review of global thought leadership and best practices in embedding economic development (or other) strategic imperatives into town planning schemes and models.
5.2.8 **Become a model of excellence in small business support**

The Sunshine Coast, like most regional areas in Australia is predominantly made up of small businesses of less than 5 employees. There is an opportunity to provide support for these businesses on the Sunshine Coast and in regional Australia by developing a national centre-of-excellence for small business. This will enable small businesses to grow more resilient and better able to withstand changes in the global economy as well as the Australian economy.

5.3 **Secure regional infrastructure and transport**

5.3.1 **Secure Australian Government funding for the Sunshine Coast airport new runway and airport redevelopment**

RDA Sunshine Coast will work closely with key stakeholder groups to pursue funding commitments that will ensure the implementation of the Sunshine Coast Airport master plan. In particular RDA Sunshine Coast will pursue Australian Government commitment for the new runway that is the cornerstone for the airport redevelopment.

5.3.2 **Maximise the value of the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital**

Realise the economic development opportunities and help address the challenges of the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH). Its role in strengthening our health and wellbeing industry is obvious, but as the infrastructure development project takes off, there is a need and opportunity to facilitate a holistic approach to construction and development. Infrastructure projects of this nature impact on local road traffic planning and activity, housing requirements for workers and even local schools, shops and service providers. RDA Sunshine Coast can play a role in facilitating dialogue around the development of the hospital in view of the need for holistic planning and longer term industry development.

5.3.3 **Develop a regional transportation infrastructure strategy**

Nothing is more central to a prosperous economy than transportation. RDA Sunshine Coast endorses the development of the Sunshine Coast airport and will assist as appropriate with further upgrades. The airport is just one part of the regional transportation infrastructure. RDA Sunshine Coast needs to consider how it can help develop an integrated regional transportation strategy, with high levels of interlock with State Government and other bodies and including topics like the positive potential for enhanced road and rail services.

Other transport projects planned for the Sunshine Coast are identified in the SE Qld Infrastructure Plan are described below.
5.3.3.1  **CoastConnect**

Coast Connect [http://www.coastconnect.com.au](http://www.coastconnect.com.au) is the Queensland State Government’s $350 million public transport project to improve bus services between Caloundra and Maroochydore. Initiatives such as new bus/transit and cycle lanes, upgrading major bus stations and stops and giving buses priority at key intersections will play an important part in managing traffic congestion along Nicklin Way, Brisbane Road, Alexandra Parade and Aerodrome Road.

5.3.3.2  **Landsborough to Nambour Rail upgrade**

The Queensland State Government Landsborough to Nambour Rail Project [http://www.landsborough-nambour.com.au](http://www.landsborough-nambour.com.au) involves planning for construction of a dual-track railway along an improved route between Landsborough and Nambour. The new railway will boost frequency, speed and reliability of rail services and cater for the increased demand for passenger and freight rail transport. According to the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program (2010 - 2031), the railway upgrade is now planned to occur in the period 2026 - 2031.

Previous work on the corridor includes identification of a preferred route, comprehensive community consultation and now the preparation of a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Landsborough to Nambour Corridor Study.

5.3.3.3  **Beerwah to Caloundra to Maroochydore public transport corridor - Part of CAMCOS**

The Queensland Government has acquired land along a gazetted corridor for a proposed public transport link between Beerwah and Maroochydore linking the major centres of Beerwah, Caloundra, Kawana and Maroochydore as well as the proposed Regional Development Area of Caloundra South. The SEQ Infrastructure Plan and Program 2010 provides an indicative timeline of 2021 - 2026 for this project.

5.3.3.4  **Multi modal transport corridor**

This project involves the extension of the Sunshine Coast Motorway south from the Mooloolah River Interchange to Caloundra Road. It is intended that this corridor will provide transport for a range of modes including public transport, cycles and vehicles. The MMTC is intended to link with the CAMCOS corridor, providing access between Caloundra, Kawana and Maroochydore.
5.3.4 **Develop a national growth management policy**

The National Sea Change Taskforce Inc. has called on the Federal Government to adopt a 10 point plan in the national interest. One of the strategies in the plan is to develop a national growth management strategy to better coordinate the planning and provision of infrastructure in regional and rural areas, including rapidly expanding coastal communities.

The policy would involve the three spheres of government working collaboratively to better meet growth in demand for economic, social, cultural and community infrastructure and services. The policy would also aim to prevent the loss of productive agricultural land which is a major issue in many rapidly-growing coastal communities.

RDA Sunshine Coast would actively support this initiative and would be keen to take a supporting role to identify and prioritise the economic, social, art, culture and sporting infrastructure required to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding Sunshine Coast.

**5.4 Identify and deploy innovative environmental solutions**

SCRC’s commitment to expanding and diversifying the regional economy includes a focus on emerging opportunities for business development around climate change adaptation processes, technological advancement and involvement in carbon trading initiatives (SCC, Economic Development Strategy 2020-2014).

The Sunshine Coast’s track record in natural resource management and sustainability is well established. Many high-opportunity strategic priorities for RDA Sunshine Coast exist including:
5.4.1  Explore new options for sustainable and affordable water solutions

In consideration of the need for water security in future climate change scenarios, the Queensland Water Commission’s (QWC) South East Queensland Water Strategy (2010) identifies new desalination plants as an option for future water supply and preserves two priority sites – one of which is at Marcoola on the Sunshine Coast.

The SCRC’s submission to the QWC consultation process on the draft water strategy advised that Council is “vehemently opposed to the desalination facility” on the basis that desalination is not a suitable long-term solution to the SEQ region’s water needs on land use, community and environmental planning grounds.

It particularly noted the incongruity that a region which typically receives 1400 mm of rainfall per year should be opting for a strategy that relies on future growth being serviced by desalination, particularly given concerns about energy intensive activities and their global impacts.

SCRC has received a $4.6M federal grant towards an innovative water scheme at Ridges at Peregian Springs. The system will collect rainwater from rooftops, store it in tanks, treat it to the drinking water standard and pipe the water back to homes. It will also recycle all used water and send it back to the community for non-drinking uses. Research commissioned by the SCRC found that the scheme would be more environmentally sustainable and commercially superior than ‘business as usual’.

As SCRC has recently corporatised its water infrastructure under a SEQ water restructuring program, the council has engaged RDA Sunshine Coast as an independent agency to project manage on its behalf, a transition project to enable SCRC to transfer its project proponent role to a new entity. To this end, RDA Sunshine Coast is managing a process to establish a community water company with the technical, financial and legal functions required of a replacement project proponent.

RDA Sunshine Coast is committed to working with partners at all levels of government to drive innovation, especially in the technologies of water and energy production.

5.4.2  Realise the potential of alternative or community energy

Exploring alternative energy sources and perhaps even opportunities to create an alternative energy technologies sector on the Coast is highly appealing, and a good fit with regional values and interests.
5.4.3 **Optimise the ability of town planning to enhance and facilitate sustainability**

The significant increases in the region’s population forecast conflict with the need to protect our natural ecosystems. RDA Sunshine Coast can play a role in facilitating discussion on issues like town-planning and barriers to sustainable urban development. We need to better understand alternative urban density models and create visual illustrations of sustainable architecture and options for different housing densities.

5.4.4 **Strike the right balance between development and protection**

More informed debate and discussion is needed on measures required to facilitate development and expand the economy while maintaining our natural resources. Our environment is precious and needs protection, but our population is growing and our economy must expand.

Meta-analysis on best practice studies relating to the challenge of protecting the environment while facilitating business development and advancement would be helpful. More debate, discussion and especially reviews of innovative thinking and solutions, would add significant value in helping us protect the environment and facilitate business development in unison.

5.4.5 **Identify approaches to the development of centres of excellence in sustainability or green industry clustering**

Opportunities exist to bring together our emerging green technology (CleanTech) sector, our educational sector and our expertise in environmental sustainability as well as those responsible for our unique environmental assets, like the Noosa Biosphere. Together this could build the region as a centre of excellence in sustainability and environment-oriented business development and learning. Increased connectedness between the relevant players could also help the region establish a comprehensive climate-change strategy.
5.5 Enhance health and community well-being

There are a number of initiatives that RDA Sunshine Coast would like to promote with the goal of ensuring that the Sunshine Coast is a strong, healthy and vibrant community.

5.5.1 Support prevention, protection, promotion and primary health care services with a vision of becoming Australia’s healthiest regional population

Nothing is more fundamental to the community’s wellbeing than its physical and mental health. The Sunshine Coast community enjoys an active, outdoor lifestyle. There is a real opportunity to build on this and champion measures that could make the Sunshine Coast synonymous with the ‘healthiest community in Australia’. This might include an integrated regional health plan that spans prevention, protection, promotion and primary health care, and interlocks with other initiatives like healthy eating, local food production and the expanded services that will come with the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital.
5.6 Support social inclusion to enhance our community

5.6.1 Improve accessibility to affordable housing

Making home ownership a possibility for all members of our community is a challenge in a region that has disproportionately high levels of large, high-price-point properties and many investor/second home buyers. This is an area that requires high levels of interaction and alignment between Federal, State and Local Governments as well as community members, town planners and developers. RDA Sunshine Coast can help facilitate this interaction.

5.6.2 Develop a new funding formula for ‘Sea Change’ regions

The National Sea Change Taskforce Inc. has called on the Federal Government to adopt a 10 point plan in the national interest. One of the strategies in the plan is to introduce a new funding formula to enable coastal councils to respond effectively to the social and economic needs of coastal communities and to provide regional facilities and services. Communities in non-metro coastal areas require a specific rural and regional infrastructure fund to meet increasing demand for social, community, sporting and cultural facilities. The Sunshine Coast is a community disadvantaged under current funding arrangements.

5.6.3 Support indigenous programs

The Sunshine Coast has a small indigenous population that is seeking a cultural centre and place to use for community meetings. Indigenous unemployment that needs to be addressed at a local level supporting what is happening at a national level.

5.6.4 Improve access for people with disabilities

People with disabilities that live within the region have limited access to facilities and other amenities. It is important that this area is focused on as part of a broader whole of government program that ensures better access to assist overall community well-being.
5.7 Maximise education and training opportunities

5.7.1 Assist the region’s tertiary education and training sector to meet its full potential

The Coast’s education sector has many valuable components like the many excellent public and private schools, University campuses and TAFE. RDA Sunshine Coast can help education stakeholders come together to explore opportunities to take our educational capabilities to the next level. Topics for examination include such things as: advancing the interlock between education; R&D and industry; increased regional interaction and planning with a view to the positive potential for a regional education sector development strategy; facilitating increased interaction between resident students and international cultures; and overlaps with the developing the Coast’s events and conference industry.

5.7.2 Ensure our education infrastructure is prepared to cater for forecast population increases

The Coast’s population is expanding rapidly and many newcomers are young couples with families. Diligence is needed in forecasting the impact of population growth on education particularly in the Prep-through-Year-12 age groups.
6  Next steps

The next stage of this planning process is to undertake extensive consultation with the RDA Sunshine Coast key stakeholders on the interim Regional Roadmap. The consultation process will include forums and workshops to seek feedback on the six regional priorities identified. The feedback received will be used to update and finalise the interim Regional Roadmap.

The main objectives for the consultation will be to:

- Confirm and prioritise the key six priorities identified in the plan.
- Identify actions and initiatives to progress the key issues.
- Identify the lead agency or organisation to implement initiatives.
- Clarify responsibilities.
- Identify possible partnership arrangements.
- Identify marketing opportunities.
- Seek collaboration and co-operation.
- Outline an implementation schedule.
- Identify funding opportunities.
- Confirm review and evaluation processes.

RDA Sunshine Coast has a support and connector role in the development and implementation of the interim Regional Roadmap. It can identify what support is required for existing initiatives or provide advice on how to develop new initiatives.

It is expected there will be a combination of implementation strategies including some actions adding value to existing efforts by providing additional support though networking opportunities, partnership building, project planning and development and regional advocacy. There may be some actions that RDA Sunshine Coast will lead directly, however it is acknowledged that RDA Sunshine Coast does not currently have the capacity to lead major projects itself.

The interim Regional Roadmap will be a regional tool used to inform the community and key stakeholders and also will be used as a funding tool to vie for additional funding from the government and/or other avenues.

It is envisaged that the interim Regional Roadmap will be updated yearly to reflect any new information as it comes to hand. The information obtained will also be the guiding input into the development of the RDA Sunshine Coast Annual Business Plan.

Taken as a whole, the Regional Roadmap initiatives and projects will positively contribute to economic development and job creation across the Sunshine Coast region.
Government Strategic Context

Australia faces a complex mix of long-term challenges which will place substantial pressure on the economy, living standards and government finances over the next 40 years. This section outlines a number of government policies and plans designed to grow the economy and ensure permanent spending growth is sustainable as well as alleviating the economic and fiscal consequences of ageing populations. Some of the key issues and challenges facing the Sunshine Coast include:

- Ageing and growing populations.
- Climate change and the environment.
- Social sustainability - building human and social capital.
- Aged care and health.
- Carbon pollution reduction scheme.
- Supporting participation.
- Sustainable population growth.
- Increasing education and skills.
- Employment creation.
- Investment in infrastructure.

Australian Government

Water for the Future

*Water for the Future* is the Australian Government’s strategy to secure the long term water supply of all Australians. *Water for the Future* has four key priorities: taking action on climate change; using water wisely: securing water supplies and supporting healthy rivers. *Water for the Future* affirms the National Water Initiative as the blueprint for national water reform and commits the Australian Government to work cooperatively through the Council of Australian Governments to develop an agreed program of further water reform. To help secure water supplies for the current and future needs of our cities and towns, the Australian Government has committed $254.8 million to a National Water Security Plan for Cities and Towns. Through the program the Department is able to work in partnership with state and local government and local water authorities and provide funding to minimise water loss, invest in modern, more efficient water infrastructure, refurbish older pipes and water systems and support practical projects to save water. Sunshine Coast projects such as the Ridges Urban Recycled Water Project would be relevant to the Water for the Future program.

Australia to 2050: Future challenge – the 2010 intergenerational report

The *Intergenerational Report 2010* provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges that Australia will face over the next forty years. It is a timely reminder that the decisions we take
over the next four years will be crucial to our economic prospects and living standards over the next forty.

The key conclusion is that an ageing population and climate change present significant long-term risks for the economy and the sustainability of government finances. As the population ages, the rate of economic growth will slow. Pressures for government spending will increase, particularly in the health sector. At the same time, we will face the global challenge of climate change, which represents the largest threat to our environment and one of the most significant challenges to our economic sustainability.

In addition to assessing the fiscal and economic challenges of an ageing population, this report also includes a comprehensive discussion on environmental challenges and social sustainability.

What is relevant to the Sunshine Coast is the impact this will have on the economic and environmental sustainability, living patterns and lifestyle of the Coast.

**National Broadband Network Policy**

The Australian Government announced on 7 April 2009 it would establish a new company to build and operate a new high speed National Broadband Network. This new super-fast National Broadband Network, built in partnership with private sector, will be the single largest nation building infrastructure project in Australian history. This new National Broadband Network will:

- Connect 90 per cent of all Australian homes, schools and workplaces with broadband services with speeds up to 100 megabits per second, 100 times faster than those currently used by many households and businesses.
- Connect all other premises in Australia with next generation wireless and satellite technologies that will deliver broadband speeds of 12 megabits per second.
- Directly support up to 25,000 local jobs every year, on average, over the eight year life of the project.

With the new National Broadband Network every house, school and business in Australia will get access to affordable fast broadband. This may improve the attraction of the Sunshine Coast as a living and/or commercial destination, or perhaps more importantly, as an education/technology hub.

**Keep Australia Working**

Keep Australia Working is part of the Australian Government’s response to the global recession. As part of Keep Australia Working, Caboolture – Sunshine Coast was identified as one of 20 priority employment areas across the country. This is one of the areas identified as being most vulnerable to unemployment during times of economic downturn.
In each area, a local employment coordinator has been appointed to maximise the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan, to create job opportunities for local people and develop a regional employment plan.

A Caboolture – Sunshine Coast Regional employment plan was developed by the local employment coordinator for the Caboolture – Sunshine Coast priority employment area and the Keep Australia Working Advisory Committee.

The aim of the plan is to continue to develop partnerships and alliances during the implementation of this plan and to draw on the expertise and resources of the Keep Australia Working Advisory Committee to secure economic benefits for the priority employment area.

The plan has identified six goals, supported by specific short and medium term strategies. The goals are:

- Maximising employment opportunities created by the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan.
- Diversifying the economic base of the region and strengthening major industries.
- Developing skills supply for future needs of the region.
- Improving links and access to jobs for disadvantaged job seekers.
- Strengthening the capacity of small business to create jobs.
- Identifying, promoting and supporting projects that contribute to ongoing employment growth in the region.

Ministerial Statement 2010 – 2011 Commonwealth Budget – Stronger Rural and Regional Communities

The 2010-11 Budget continues record investment to ensure that rural and regional areas of Australia are best placed to benefit from the economic recovery as global growth resumes. This investment extends across rural and regional transport, water, energy, health, education and communications infrastructure for dynamic and productive regions.

Examples of the investment include:

- The $42 billion Nation Building and Jobs Plan supported some 200,000 jobs and made critical investments in rural, regional and urban infrastructure, making Australia one of the only advanced economies in the world to avoid economic recession.
- The Australian Government has begun a ‘Nation Building Decade’, investing a record $37 billion in road, rail and port projects across Australia, from 2008-09 to 2013-14, to boost national productivity and create jobs.
- This Budget invests $996 million in equity into the Government-owned Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC).
The Government will build on these investments by establishing a new on-going infrastructure fund for the states and territories, as part of its tax plan for the future. The fund will commence in 2012-13 with an initial contribution of $700 million and will be worth more than $5.6 billion over the decade. This will support state investment in nation-building infrastructure, delivering better infrastructure for rural and regional communities, especially in the resource-rich states.

This Budget year, the Government will provide record funding to assist rural and regional councils and shires to deliver their services, maintain local roads and upgrade local community facilities. Around $1.6 billion in funding will go to rural and regional councils through Financial Assistance Grants and the Roads to Recovery program.

The Australian Government is providing an additional $1.2 billion through the Apprentices Incentives Program to develop a significantly more skilled Australian workforce.

The Government has announced a major package of investments to support the delivery of the National Health and Hospitals Network. The 2010-11 Budget delivers further investments of $2.2 billion over four years in areas such as better access to General Practitioner (GP) and primary health care, the nursing workforce, modernising our health system through personally controlled electronic records, and fundamental changes to the way the health system works. These investments bring the Government’s total reform investment package to $7.3 billion over five years.

Rural and regional Australia will reap the benefits of the Australian Government’s significant investment in communication technology. Developments in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have already helped reduce the tyranny of distance that separates Australia from major global markets. The National Broadband Network will bring fast and affordable broadband to Australian businesses, regardless of where they are located. The new network will dramatically improve broadband for households, particularly for people living in rural and regional Australia.

Providing $652.5 million over four years to establish a Renewable Energy Future Fund as part of the Government’s expanded $5.1 billion Clean Energy Initiative. It will provide additional support for the development and deployment of large and small scale renewable energy projects and will include partnerships between the Government and the private sector to make critical early stage investments to leverage private funds to support the commercialisation of renewable technologies.

The challenge for the Sunshine Coast is to attract its share of funding given all the attention that will gravitate to the resource towns.
Queensland Government

Towards Q2: Tomorrow’s Queensland

The Q2 plan has been framed around five ambitions for Queensland, covering economy, environment and lifestyle, education and skills, health and community. Within each area are long-term targets for 2020. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Climate change.
- Unhealthy lifestyles.
- Preventable diseases.
- Growing population.
- Ageing state.
- Global competition.
- Increase the number of volunteers in communities.
- Entrenched disadvantage in communities.
- Create a diverse economy, with infrastructure that anticipates growth.
- Increase businesses undertaking research, innovation or development.
- Remove one-third QLD carbon footprint.
- Protect 50% more land for nature conservation and public recreation.
- Increase access to education.
- Reduce obesity, smoking, heavy drinking and unsafe sun exposure.
- Reduce public hospital waiting times.
- Reduce the proportion of children living in households without a working parent.

South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031

The purpose of this plan is to manage regional growth and change in the most sustainable way to protect and enhance quality of life in the region. Appropriate action to address emerging regional growth management issues is put forward. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Continued high population growth.
- Housing affordability.
- Transport congestion.
- Climate change.
- Employment generation.
- Infrastructure - transport infrastructure is a priority to the plan.
- Residential - additional dwellings to accommodate further population growth.
- Employment and economy - promoting further employment growth and diversification to avoid job shortfalls.
- Identified growth areas - subject to further investigation.
South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2010–2031

Outlines the Queensland Government’s infrastructure priorities to support the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031. It establishes priorities for regionally significant infrastructure over the next four years and outlines the longer term planning horizon to 2031. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Significant growth-infrastructure provision.
- Transport priorities.
- Health facilities and access.
- Education and training priorities.
- Community services.
- Key regional projects: Bruce Highway Upgrade Cooroy to Gympie, MMTC, Caboolture to Landsborough Rail Upgrades, Nambour Hospital, Sunshine Coast University and Caloundra to Maroochydore Corridor Study.
- Regional development areas: Maroochydore, Palmview and Caloundra South.

Draft Connecting SEQ 2031: An Integrated Regional Transport Plan (IRTP) for SEQ 2010

The draft plan seeks to fundamentally change current transport patterns by:

- Doubling the share of public transport from 7% to 14% of all trips.
- Doubling the share of active transport (such as walking and cycling) from 10% to 20% of all trips.
- Reducing the share of trips taken in private motor vehicles from 83% to 66%.

To achieve this, the plan sees:

- Rail forming the backbone of the transport network, and enhanced through Cross River Rail, new higher-capacity trains, more frequent services and efficient timetabling.
- Bus providing crucial urban links and being made more efficient, with more busways and bus priority on major roads.
- Walking and cycling becoming more appealing and safe, particularly with greater separation from heavy traffic.
- Road continuing to play a major role in moving traffic, freight, buses and cyclists.

The plan proposes six key priorities:

1. Creating compact and connected communities (e.g. centres access hierarchy, priority transit corridors).
2. Changing travel behaviour.
3. Improving transport system efficiency (e.g. technology, incident response and road user priority).
4. Supporting economic vitality (e.g. strategic freight routes, intermodal freight terminals, high capacity public transport to centres).
5. Protecting environmental quality and health (e.g. cleaner vehicles, sustainable transport).
6. Delivering an integrated transport network.

Since the release of the original IRTP, land use and infrastructure planning and coordination have significantly changed with the introduction of the SEQ Regional Plan and supporting policies. Some significant new challenges have also emerged for the transport system, including:

- The need to reduce emissions to respond to climate change.
- The dwindling supply and increasing price of oil.
- Increasing congestion, impacting on the region’s quality of life and economic growth.
- Increasing costs to provide transport infrastructure and services.

Under the original IRTP, the following transport enhancements have occurred on the Sunshine Coast:

- Rail line duplication between Caboolture and Beerburrum.
- Construction of a dedicated transit corridor linking Palmview to Kawana and Sippy Downs (Greenlink).
- Upgrades to the Sunshine Motorway.

The vision of the draft IRTP is a transport system that supports the lifestyle enjoyed by residents and visitors, enhances the State’s economy vitality and protects the natural environment. The six priorities support the policies of the SEQ Regional Plan.

The draft IRTP identifies the following about the Sunshine Coast region:

- The highest population density is along the coast, as well as the major inland towns of Nambour and Beerwah.
- There is high car dependency with 86% of personal trips in private vehicles.
- 5.4% of journey to work trips are by active transport – the second highest in SEQ after Brisbane City.
- 50% of journey to work trips are less than 10 kilometres, but 15% are longer than 30 kilometres.
- Specific 2031 targets for the Sunshine Coast region are:
  - Increase the share of trips by public transport from 3.6% to 10%, increasing daily trips from 40,000 in 2006 to 175,000 in 2031.
  - Increase the share of trips by walking from 8.4 % to 10%.
  - Increase in the share of trips by cycling from 1.7% to 8%.
  - Reduce the share of trips taken in private motor vehicles from 86.3% to 72%.
- Maroochydore will be the regional transport hub, with Kawana Town Centre identified as a sub-regional hub. District hubs include Sippy Downs, Caloundra Regional Business and Industrial Park and Sunshine Coast Airport at Marcoola.
- By 2031, there will be a significant passenger shift to public transport, especially in the urban communities south of the Maroochy River – specifically:
  - The CoastConnect bus corridor will provide frequent fast, efficient and reliable bus services between Maroochydore and Caloundra South.
  - The Sunshine Coast rail line will extend from Beerwah to Maroochydore, providing a better link to SEQ for coastal communities.
Multi-modal corridors will be provided between Mooloolaba and Caloundra South.
A bus and active transport facility will be provided on a new arterial road from Sippy Downs to Caloundra South.
A long-term corridor will be preserved from the Bruce Highway to Beerwah.
The Bruce Highway and Sunshine Motorway will be upgraded for safety and local capacity improvements.

New major strategic roads within the urban development areas are proposed to be developed to a multi-modal arterial standard that caters for buses, active transport and local traffic.

Queensland Department of Education and Training Strategic Plan 2010 – 2014

This document outlines the department’s key strategies for the next four years (2010 to 2014). The overall goal is to provide Queenslanders with knowledge, skills and confidence to maximise their potential, contribute productively to the economy and build a better Queensland.

Delivery priorities are:

- Universal access to kindergarten in the year prior to school.
- A new nationally consistent regulatory regime for all early childhood education and care services.
- Sustained improvements to student performance.
- VET system reforms and ambitious target to increase the number of Queenslanders who have trade, training and tertiary qualifications.
- Workforce reforms to better support teaching and learning continued major infrastructure expansion and use of technology for learning.

This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Currently only 32% of Queensland children access a quality kindergarten program in the year prior to commencing Prep.
- There is a strong focus being placed on increasing retention and attainment rates for all students as they move through transitions from schooling to tertiary education.
- It is also important that industry and businesses have a skilled workforce to take advantage of emerging opportunities and growth, particularly for growth areas like the coast wanting to retain diversity in a trained workforce.

The strategic plan aligns with 2020 targets detailed in ‘Toward Q2: Tomorrow’s Queensland’ including:

- All children will have access to a quality early childhood education, so they are ready for school.
- 75% of Queenslanders will hold trade, training or tertiary qualifications.
**State Planning Policy 1/02: Development in the vicinity of certain airports and aviation facilities**

This document sets out the State’s interest concerning development in the vicinity of those airports and aviation facilities considered essential for the State’s transport infrastructure or the national defence system.

The SPP lists policy outcomes that are to be achieved when making or amending a planning scheme; through development assessment; and when land is designated for community infrastructure.

These outcomes seek to protect airports and aviation facilities from development that could undermine their safety or operational efficiency. Incompatible development encroaching on airports also has implications for community amenity.

The Sunshine Coast Airport is identified under the SPP. Therefore the provisions of the SPP must be considered for planning and development decisions on land in the vicinity of this airport. The Caloundra Aerodrome is not identified under the SPP.

**South East Queensland Koala Conservation State Planning Policy**

The SPRP regulates assessable development, where that development meets certain triggers. It is an overarching planning tool which sets out certain requirements that Local Government and others must assess when reviewing development applications in order to minimise the impact of new development on koalas. SPP’s articulate the State’s interests and provide direction to Local Governments when making or amending their planning schemes, as well as for other land allocation processes such as master planning/structure planning processes, and community infrastructure designations. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- The SPRP targets the areas where koalas are known to be under the most significant risks – the Koala Coast and Pine Rivers.
- Urban development is also prohibited in conservation, open space, rural and rural-residential zones within the Koala Coast and Pine Rivers areas. This approach aims to bolster habitat for these at-risk populations.
- Avoiding, minimising or offsetting the clearing of non-juvenile koala habitat trees.
- Site design that provides safe koala movement opportunities as appropriate to the development type and habitat connectivity values of the site.
- Construction phases that do not increase the risk of death or injury to koalas.
- Clearing of native vegetation is undertaken as sequential clearing.
- Clearing of koala habitat trees is undertaken in the presence of a koala spotter.

**Development and the Conservation of Agricultural Land State Planning Policy**

This state planning policy addresses the conservation of good quality agricultural land and provides guidance to local authorities on how this issue should be addressed when carrying out
their range of planning duties. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Soil erosion, salinisation, declining fertility and deteriorating pasture are familiar problems in Queensland. The productive capacity of irrigated land must be safeguarded to ensure that this investment is properly utilised.
- There has been growing national concern about land conservation issues.
- Land degradation is now widely regarded as one of the greatest challenges facing rural Australia.
- The agricultural industry remains one of the most important components of the national and state economies.

**Housing and Residential Development State Planning Policy**

The purpose of the state planning policy is to help Local Governments identify the housing needs of their community. They should analyse and, where necessary, change their planning scheme to remove barriers to and provide opportunities for a range of housing options that respond to the housing needs of the community. The policy applies to all Local Governments with:

- A population of 10,000 or more within at least one urbanised Area 1.
- A minimum average dwelling approval rate of 100 dwellings per annum over the latest five year period.

This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Housing and social wellbeing.
- Access to housing.
- Universal design which is adaptable.
- More detailed consideration to housing issues.
- Good urban design for sustainable communities.
- New approaches in planning.
- Consideration of good urban design.

**The Queensland Tourism Strategy 2006 – 2016**

The Queensland Tourism Strategy (QTS) identified key themes and strategic actions to pave the way for the development of a sustainable tourism industry in Queensland until 2016. For sustained growth, it is important that the tourism industry is able to encourage the provision of tourism related infrastructure by governments and the private sector, as well as supporting investment for the development of tourism products and services. The QTS identifies that regional investment and infrastructure are integral to driving long-term growth across the tourism sector.
Queensland Water Commission SEQ Water Strategy

To ensure that water in SEQ is managed on a sustainable and integrated basis to provide secure and reliable supplies of acceptable quality for all uses for the long term.

The key goals of the strategy are:

Conserving water:
- Making Target 200 a voluntary residential water use target – that is maintaining average consumption at or below 200L per person per day (by comparison, residents used 300L per person per day on average before the drought).
- Ensuring businesses and industry’s water efficiency continues to improve through the preparation and implementation of Water Efficiency Management Plans.

Being prepared:
- Ongoing investigation of future bulk water supply options and new technologies relating to water supply sources to ensure the best future decisions are made.
- Reporting on the strategy annually and showing the effects of climate change, actual population growth and community water use.

Managing water efficiently:
- Operating the Water Grid cost effectively and efficiently.
- Keeping climate-resilient sources on standby so more can be taken from dams in times of plenty, knowing back-up supplies are available when needed.

The report is SEQ’s blueprint for a sustainable, efficient and secure water supply. In 2005 in SEQ 75% of water was consumed for urban purposes and power generation, with the remainder used for rural purposes. This is reflective of SEQ’s rapidly growing urban areas.

Existing bulk water supplies on the Sunshine Coast include the Six Mile Creek Dam, Cooloolabin Dam, Wappa Dam, Poona Dam, Baroon Pocket Dam and Ewan Maddock Dam. The report recognises the following opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:
- Investigation of a desalination facility at Marcoola
- The northern pipeline inter-connector stage 2, to provide a 2-way connection within the Sunshine Coast. As part of the project, reverse flow capacity will also be installed into the Stage 1 interconnector. The project is scheduled for completion in 2011.

A water resource plan (which identifies water quality, flow rates and water allocations) and a resource operations plan (which details operating rules and trading agreements etc.) have been prepared for the Sunshine Coast catchment.

The report identifies that UnityWater is now the water service provider for the combined area of Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay Regional Council areas.
Queensland Health Strategic Plan 2007 – 2012

To outline Queensland Health’s mission, values, operating principles, strategic challenges and priorities between 2007 and 2012. Queensland Health is the lead agency for 2 targets of ‘Toward Q2: Tomorrow’s Queensland’:

- Shortest public hospital waiting times in Australia.
- Cutting by one third obesity, smoking, heavy drinking and unsafe sun exposure.

The following strategic priorities have been adopted to achieve these targets –

Making Queensland healthier:

- Support healthy behaviours and lifestyle choices.
- Protect the health of Queenslanders.

Meeting Queenslanders’ healthcare needs safely and sustainably:

- Support an expanded range of services available in a primary care setting.
- Provide mothers and babies with the best start.
- Expand hospital and related services to meet the needs of a growing population.
- Expand access to subacute care services.
- Improve older Queenslander assessment services and access to high quality appropriate aged care services.
- Improve patient care, safety and patient outcomes.

Reducing health service inequity across Queensland:

- Close the gap on health outcomes for Indigenous, rural and remote Queenslanders.
- Improve access to mental health services across the State.

Developing our staff and enhancing organisational performance:

- Develop and value the workforce.
- Manage infrastructure and assets.
- Distribute healthcare resources efficiently and effectively.
- Invest in information and communication technology.
- Work in partnership.
- Invest in research.
- Strengthen performance management, governance and accountability.

In general, the growing and ageing population, economic and workforce challenges and an increase in preventable diseases caused by unhealthy lifestyles, continues to impact Queensland Health’s ability to deliver and sustain quality and safe health services.
The strategic priorities set at the State level will filter down to the local service level in the form of district operational plans, partnership agreements, divisional operational plans, business unit/project plans and individual staff development plans.

Health is a high profile issue on the Sunshine Coast, but the real opportunities and challenges are not only with the hospital, but with opportunities for primary care and also providing a quality compact high energy urban lifestyle, to attract health workers to the region.

Queensland Health Population Health Plan 2007–2012

Queensland Health aims to deliver the best population health services nationally, improving the health and wellbeing of the population and reducing the health status gap between the most and least advantaged in the community. This will require increased funding allocated to the Prevention, Promotion and Protection Program, the introduction of new and enhanced services and additional workforce and infrastructure.

This Plan identifies the major change agenda and key investment priorities for Queensland Health’s population health function over the next five years (2007–2012) which are critical to the achievement of this ambitious aim. This Plan for Queensland Health’s population health function directly responds to the strategic service reforms contained in the Queensland Statewide Health Services Plan 2007–2012 and the direction articulated in the Queensland Health Strategic Plan 2007–2012.

Sunshine Coast Regional Council

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council is committed to sustainable growth. To guide future planning, Council has prepared and endorsed a range of strategies and policies to ensure desired economic, environmental and social outcomes as summarised below.

Economic Development Strategy 2009 - 2014

The aim of this strategy is to enable the creation of wealth and jobs across a diverse economic base within the context of Australia’s most sustainable region. It is intended to build the economy so that the Sunshine Coast is more resilient to peaks and troughs of the economic cycle. It aims for its business, infrastructure and technology to gain a reputation for sustainability and success, both nationally and internationally.

The strategy is focussed on delivering actions under the five themes in the Council’s corporate plan:

- A broad economic base.
- Support for local business.
- Infrastructure for economic growth.
- A sustainable tourism industry.
- A strong rural sector.
The report highlights a number of challenges:

- Climate change.
- Ongoing economic cyclical swings.
- Growth and demographic shifts.

It also highlights some opportunities:

- Innovation and knowledge economy.
- Clean technology.
- Education services.
- Partnerships with community and industry.

**Sunshine Coast Tourism Opportunity Plan 2009-2017**

The Tourism Opportunity Plan (TOP) is designed to be used to inform State and Local Government planning processes and the Destination Management Plan (DMP). The Sunshine Coast Destination Management Plan identifies one of its key strategic priorities as ‘well planned infrastructure’ where there is a focus on improved communication and inclusion of the tourism industry in planning for infrastructure development in the region. The purpose of this TOP is to provide a direction for the sustainable development of tourism for the Sunshine Coast region to 2017.

**Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020**

The Sunshine Coast Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020 aims to ensure the region’s biodiversity is protected, enhanced, healthy, resilient to climate change and valued by the entire community by 2020. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Population growth and development.
- Vegetation loss - habitat clearing and fragmentation.
- Climate change.
- Management of weeds and pest animals.
- Land management practices to protect and enhance the region’s biodiversity values.
- Managing natural lands to retain regional character and provide environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits.
- Use the area’s biodiversity values to inform the future planning scheme – establish residential development and associated infrastructure in locations and densities that support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity values.
- Maintain and improve the health and resilience of natural areas, ensuring their contribution to important habitats and corridors, open space networks and regional landscape values.
- Involve the whole community and build effective partnerships.
Attachment A – Government Strategic Context

Ensure a coordinated and focused approach is applied to the protection of biodiversity on a regional scale.

Climate Change and Peak Oil Strategy 2010-2020

The goal of the Climate Change and Peak Oil Strategy is to guide the transition to a low carbon, low oil and resilient future for the Sunshine Coast. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Natural environment - existing threats multiplied by climate change.
- Economy/marketable - demand for services, infrastructure and increased risks.
- Lifestyle - consumption of non-renewable energy, increasing waste and unsustainable transport behaviour.
- Health - access to clean water, water quality and impacts of extreme weather events.
- Population growth and development - increased demand for infrastructure and services, and increased risks.
- Partnerships with Government and private business investing in investigations into renewable energy, carbon sequestration and supply chain improvements.
- Attractive location for renewable energy investment.
- Offers potential hub for development of innovative, low energy technologies.
- Potential to take advantage of potential impacts of climatic change such as longer growing seasons due to warmer winters.
- Potential to attract tourists due to warmer winters.
- Opportunity to take advantage of climate change expertise in the region.
- Preparing for climate change and peak oil may provide opportunities for value-adding to existing capital projects e.g. integrated water management in new developments.

Affordable Living Strategy 2010-2020

The Affordable Living Strategy identifies the actions needed to make the Sunshine Coast a more affordable and sustainable place to live. It highlights the need to improve housing diversity and affordability within self-contained neighbourhoods. It also promotes improved transport choices with better housing and resource efficiency. This in turn will improve access to essential facilities and services and help to create opportunities for all residents. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- High levels of housing stress.
- Low density/car dependant settlement patterns.
- Access to health and other support networks.
- Issues of safety arising from alternate forms of transport such as cycling and walking.
- Housing affordability.
- Resource efficiency - current and future consumption of water and power.
- Vulnerable economy.
- Limited housing diversity.
Attachment A – Government Strategic Context

• Strengthening growth around existing self-contained centres, services and facilities and providing a balance between Greenfield development and urban consolidation on a human scale.
• Encouraging diverse housing choices, based on good design principles that enable all household types and income levels to access housing that meets their needs.
• Social inclusion through diverse and affordable living opportunities.
• Improve the efficient utilisation of existing resources and minimising our ‘living footprint’.
• Enable the creation of strong community centres with a variety of sustainable transport options.
• Promote vibrant and inclusive places to live with a resilient Sunshine Coast economy.

Planning for a sustainable Sunshine Coast: a statement of proposals for the new planning scheme

The statement of proposals sought community input on the key principles and key directions for the new planning scheme. It provides the high level direction council is intending to take with the new planning scheme which will replace the three existing planning schemes – Caloundra City Plan 2004, Maroochy Plan 2000 and the Noosa Plan 2006. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

• Managing growth.
• Robust economy.
• Ecological sustainability.
• Health and wellbeing.
• Social cohesion.
• Accessibility and connectedness, innovation and creativity and great governance.

Open Space Discussion Paper

This discussion paper was released for public consultation in late 2009. The discussion paper and community feedback is forming the basis for the preparation of the Sunshine Coast Open Space Strategy which is currently underway.

The discussion paper addresses the ongoing protection and development of open space on the Sunshine Coast, recognising the need for additional formal and informal open spaces to encourage healthy and active living.

This paper provides information on recreation, sport and urban parkland, protection of current open space and identifies future open space locations. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

• Protection of natural/cultural heritage sites.
Attachment A – Government Strategic Context

- Maintaining the separation of the interurban break to the south of the coast viewed as important to maintaining the Coast’s identity.
- Maintaining a high level of access to popular areas and open space networks such as Coolum, Noosa and Mooloolaba Esplanade.
- Ensuring physical access to open space networks and catering for all ages.
- Demand for outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Increasing population density and the provision of appropriate open space.
- Cost to council for the maintenance of open space networks.
- Long term protection of existing parks (issues with land tenure e.g. parks identified as reserves for utilities).
- Protect and promote the area’s natural assets, maintaining and expanding tourism on the coast.
- Opportunities to use open space to mitigate impacts of climate change (e.g. use of street trees).
- Opportunity to diversify open space networks to cater for a larger variety of activities.
- Secure important parcels of open space currently held in tenure as road reserve, utility reserve etc.

Sustainable Transport Discussion Paper

This discussion paper was released for public consultation in late 2009. The discussion paper and community feedback is forming the basis for the preparation of the Sunshine Coast Sustainable Transport Strategy which is currently underway.

This discussion paper identifies challenges and suggests responses that have the potential to achieve sustainable transport alternatives. It also sets out some key principles for delivering more sustainable travel and identifies some challenges for the community and our decision makers if we are to protect the lifestyle values and character of the region. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Population growth.
- Trip growth and influencing a shift to alternative transport modes.
- Delivering transport infrastructure to an expanding urban footprint.
- Addressing climate change, peak oil and the need to plan for self-containment.
- Delivering transit-oriented development.
- Delivering higher density development at key transport nodes.
- Delivering transit oriented development.
- Increasing alternative transit networks which service the growing population.
- Possibility of urban consolidation projects for areas surrounding transit nodes.
Waterways and Coastal Foreshores Management Discussion Paper

This discussion paper was released for public consultation in late 2009. The discussion paper and community feedback is forming the basis for the preparation of the Sunshine Coast Waterways and Coastal Foreshores Strategy which is currently underway.

This discussion paper seeks to strike a balance between the environmental, social and economic requirements of the Coast’s natural waterways. It proposes a framework for addressing key waterways challenges and for managing the region’s rivers, creeks, wetlands, lakes and foreshores. This document presents the following challenges and opportunities for the Sunshine Coast:

- Increased demand on foreshore and coastal waterways.
- Increased urban and waste water discharged into sensitive receiving environments.
- Sea level rises.
- Increased storm surge events.
- An increase in cyclone intensity.
- Saltwater intrusion and inundation.
- Increased coastal erosion.
- Potential need for higher frequency of maintenance.
- Manage and protect waterway and coastal foreshore systems which offer valuable ecosystem services to coastal communities.
- Improve quality of waterway systems located in the region.
- Ensure delivery of high quality wastewater treatment trains in new developments, reducing harmful discharge to receiving environments.

Other relevant parties

The RDA has a clear mandate to consult with the community, business, non-profit organisations and all levels of government. The RDA Sunshine Coast has a range of community and residential groups, community associations, peak bodies and lobby groups that they consult with. These groups span the economic, social and environmental sectors.
Attachment B – Key stakeholders

Advance Sports Sunshine Coast
Allied Health Group
Australian Industry Group (AIG)
Australian Securities Investment Commission (ASIC)
Australian Taxation Office (ATO)
Aged Care Providers Peak Body
AusIndustry
Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS)
Australian Wildlife Hospital
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
Austrade
Business Enterprise Centre (BEC)
Building Services Authority (BSA)
Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ)
Caloundra Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.
CleanTech Sunshine Coast
Centrelink
Community Solutions Incorporated
Commerce Queensland
Community Water Ltd
Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM)
Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)
Department of Health and Ageing
Department of Infrastructure and Planning (DIP)
Development Watch Incorporated
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (ITRD&LG)
Department of Justice and Attorney General
Department of Transport and Main Roads
Department of Public Works
Department of Education, Training & Arts (DETA)
Department of Communities
Department of Child Safety
Department of Emergency Services
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
Disability Services Queensland
Education Queensland (Ed Qld)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
FKP Developments
GIBIN (Government Industry Business Information Network)
Growers Representatives
Innovation Centre Sunshine Coast
IP Australia
Invest Australia
Attachment B – Key stakeholders

Juniper Development Group
Jobnetwork
Keep Australia Working (KAW) Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay
Lend Lease Ltd
Liquor Licensing Division Queensland Treasury
Local Doctors Network
Manufacturers Forum
Maternity/Child Health Group
Noosa Creative Alliance
Noosa Biosphere
Office for Women
Organisation Sunshine Coast Associations of Residents (OSCAR)
Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) Queensland
Property Council
Public Trust Office
QBuild
Queensland Ambulance Service
Queensland Health (QH)
Queensland Police Service
Queensland Corrective Services
Queensland Youth Industry Links Inc
RAMSAR Ramsar convention on wetlands
REIQ (Commercial Property)
Reed Property Group
Regional Nursing Solutions
Regional Managers Coordination Network (RMCN)
Regional Futures Network
Sea English Academy (SEA)
Sea Change Taskforce Inc (SCTF)
SEQ Council of Mayors (SEQ COM)
Sunshine Coast Regional Council Affordable Housing Taskforce
Sunshine Coast Business Council (SCBC)
Sunshine Coast Enterprises (SCE)
Sunshine Coast Community Coop (SCCC)
Sunshine Coast Destinations Limited (SCD)
Sunshine Coast Convention Bureau (SCCB)
Sunshine Coast Education (SunEd)
Sunshine Coast Business Women’s Network
Sunshine Coast Airport
Sunshine Coast TAFE
Sustainable Business Alliance
Sunshine Coast Environment Council (SCEC)
Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH)
Attachment B – Key stakeholders

Sunshine Coast Youth Partnership (SCYP)
Tourism Australia
Tourism Queensland
Trade Queensland
University of the Sunshine Coast (USC)
UnityWater
Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA)
United Synergies Limited
Youth Sector Change Drivers Group
Attachment C – Reference Documents

National


Commonwealth of Australia (2010), Australia to 2050: Future challenges


Queensland


Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, Strategic Plan 2010-2014.


Attachment C – Reference Documents


Queensland Government (2010), Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

Queensland Government (2009), Sunshine Coast - Wide Bay Southern Cluster Projected Inpatient Bed Requirements


Queensland Government (2010), Shaping tomorrow’s Queensland: A response to the Queensland growth management summit
Attachment C – Reference Documents


Tourism Queensland, Queensland Tourism Strategy, November 2006

**South East Queensland**


Attachment C – Reference Documents

Sunshine Coast

Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Affordable Living Strategy 2010-2020
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Climate Change and Peak Oil Strategy 2010-2020
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Community Plan Update August 2010
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Corporate Plan 2009-2014
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Cultural Heritage Background Study
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Economic Development Strategy 2010-2014
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Open Space: Discussion Paper 2009
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Operational Plan 2010-2011
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Planning for a sustainable Sunshine Coast: Policy framework August 2010.
Sunshine Coast Regional Council (Draft) Sunshine Coast Sustainable Transport Strategy 20120-2020, September 2010
Sunshine Coast Tourism Opportunity Plan 2009-2017
Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Wellbeing on the Sunshine Coast, July 2010
Sunshine Coast Airport Master Plan, Sunshine Coast Airport, September 2007
Sunshine Coast Airport, Airport Master Plan - Cost Benefit Analysis, Price Waterhouse Coopers, October 2009.

Other

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010), Labour force survey
Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006), National Regional Profile: Sunshine Coast
Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007-08), 3218.0 Regional Population Growth, Australia
Adams, R (2009), Transforming Australia Cities: For a more financially viable and sustainable future, transportation and urban design, City of Melbourne.
Noosa Biosphere Reserve, Management Plan 2009-12, November 2009