



Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

Federal Government pre budget submission (2017)

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils – Priority projects requiring State Government support to enable economic growth and development.

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The FNQROC Region

The twelve councils in Far North Queensland see an opportunity to capitalise on the Federal and State Governments focus on Northern Queensland. Our emphasis is on utilising existing assets and funding opportunities to economically grow our region.

Our economic strengths and opportunities lie in tourism, agriculture, cattle, mining, environment, land space and air space. Whilst we need new infrastructure, such as water storage, we have existing infrastructure which can be better utilised to support and grow these opportunities.

Our transport networks need to get people and product into, around, and out of our region in an efficient and safe manner. To do this, we have identified:

- a heavy vehicle transport network which links the Cape York Peninsula and Gulf of Carpentaria to eastern and southern markets;
- opportunities to grow our existing regional airports; and
- opportunities to better utilise our port infrastructure.

Feasibility studies on water security options are currently underway to ensure our urban and agricultural opportunities can be met into the future.

Tourism marketing and branding of our region is undertaken by TTNQ however we have a role to help develop new experiences to meet global trends, showcase our unique environment and provide opportunities to support existing and new businesses.

Health and education are also a critical focus for our region with unique opportunities available utilising existing assets to support these industries as both a service and an economic opportunity. If the region does not meet community expectations it will stifle growth opportunities and continue to cost the State and Federal Governments more per population.

The region is not that dissimilar to the Queensland overview *“While the resources sector will continue to be an important contributor to the Queensland economy, the shift in activity and employment towards services, in particular health, education, professional services and tourism-related industries, is likely to continue”* (Dept. of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 2016)

Individually our member councils have unique opportunities to turn weaknesses into strengths and as a collective make a positive contribution to the State and Federal Government priorities

• • •
“A reliable and efficient transport network is critical to the economy of North Queensland and for moving goods from production to export” (Queensland Government, 2016)

Regional Summary

Transport

When it comes to our road network it is the lifeblood of our region; an integrated transport network is critical for economic stability and growth. It is not only essential for our agricultural, pastoral and mining industry but also our tourism industry.

Tourism is our largest industry in the region, however:

- Smaller tourism vehicles are currently not considered commercial vehicles within annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts. This is important to gain a realistic knowledge of return on investment; we have limited public transport outside the Cairns area and we don't want tourists spending time in protracted traffic congestion with no alternative route to Port Douglas or the Tablelands;
- There are conflicts with heavy vehicles on substandard single lane and or unsealed roads.

It is also critical our road network functions efficiently with our airports (regional and international), sea ports and rail. With this, our focus is on our Urban Freight Route; Heavy Vehicle Network; Innisfail transport hub; and opportunities for our regional airports, and ports at Cairns, Mourilyan and Lucinda. All of these are critical when looking at the economic return on investment from our transport network.



“The Queensland government is committed to advancing infrastructure projects that will benefit industry and consumers” (Queensland Government, 2016)



“Strengthened infrastructure network planning and coordination merits consideration as a means to help lower the costs of infrastructure service and improve reliability of supply.” (Infrastructure Australia, 2015)



“Regions with tourism advantages require marine and aviation infrastructure, while agricultural areas and resource production needs access to domestic and export markets through effective integrated supply chains” (Dept. of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 2016)

Heavy Vehicle Network

We want a clearly identified and prioritised heavy vehicle network from the Cape and Gulf to Southern Markets. This network is identified as:

- Peninsula Development Road
- Mt Mulgrave Road (LG)
- Burke Development Road (from Mt Mulgrave Road to Mareeba)
- Mulligan Highway
- Mareeba Western Bypass
- Ootann Road (LG)
- Gulf Development Road
- Croydon – Richmond Rd (access to Mt Isa from Croydon utilising the national network)
- Hann Hwy (Kennedy Development) from (Hughenden to Lynd Junction)
- Kennedy Development Road (Lynd junction to Mt Garnet)
- Innisfail Bypass
- Ingham Bypass

This supports focused utilisation and prioritisation of existing assets to:

- Support export and import of essential products and services (Improving supply chain infrastructure and investor confidence)
- Provide a safe, reliable transport network which will:
 - Improve efficiencies through reduced travel times (due to increased speed, reduction of unhitching and shorter distances)
 - Reduce fuel costs
 - Reduce stock damage
 - Reduce livestock injury
 - Reduce vehicle maintenance costs
 - Increase safety through:
 - Providing safe passage for the mix of heavy vehicle and tourist vehicles
 - Providing a focused route for heavy vehicles taking them away from towns and cities
 - Travel comfort



All of these roads have been identified within the Infrastructure Australia infrastructure Audit (2015) as being important for Resource, agriculture, tourism and community links.



*“Road maintenance is critical to facilitate heavier vehicles and renew ageing pavements in a demanding climatic environment.”
(Infrastructure Australia, 2015)*

- Stimulating jobs growth in the short term through road works and in the long term through economic growth supported by an efficient transport network.

Peninsula Development Road Sealing of the Peninsula Development Road has begun in earnest with \$210mil and \$50mil committed by the Federal and State Governments respectively.

Ootann Road (LG) Ootann Road is a key link between Burke and Kennedy Development Roads for Type 1 and 2 Road Trains and is an economic enabler for expanding agriculture, cattle and supply chains for Cape York Peninsula, Gulf of Carpentaria and Atherton Tablelands. It creates an inland alternative to the Bruce Highway and linking with the Hann Highway and improves connectivity to air and sea ports and southern and Asian markets.

Ootann Road (91.4km in length (83km within the Mareeba Shire Council)), most of which is unsealed, is a local government owned Local Road of Regional Significance (LRRS) and is a critical link in the region.

The road is predominantly used by cattle and mining haulage road trains to access southern markets. The majority of road users do not contribute to the rate base in Mareeba Shire that is responsible for the maintenance and upgrade of Ootann Road. Although the road is technically a Council owned asset the usage of the road more closely aligns with a State owned asset. It is very difficult for Council to fund road upgrades and gravel re-sheeting on this 91.4km link.



Figure - Ootann Road

The cost of upgrading this road (roughly \$65 million) is well beyond the capacity of Mareeba Shire Council, with its residents identified as being amongst the most disadvantaged in Australia.

Around a quarter of Shire households are estimated to be living below the poverty line, using internationally recognized criteria and data from the 2011 Census. 26% of the Shire's population live in small areas (SA1s) considered amongst the 10% most disadvantaged in Australia (ABS SEIFA, 2011). Further, there are just over 9000 rateable properties in Mareeba Shire, dispersed over 53,457km². This cost gap means that without significant federal or state assistance, this road is likely to continue to deteriorate and the service gap will widen.

The road is considered a critical link as it:

- Links the Burke Development Road with the Kennedy Highway
- Is a Type 2 road train route, used predominantly for cattle and mineral ore transport. Many large cattle properties to the west of Chillagoe (Nychum, Bolwarra, Wrotham Park, Mt Mulgrave, Gamboola, Highbury, Dunbar etc) and further to the north in the southern reaches of Cook Shire transport cattle to southern and eastern markets.
- Saves 260km to 680km per trip when compared to the alternative route of Almaden through Mareeba and Atherton. This is as a result of the need to de-couple which adds an additional 260km for a B-Double through to 680km for a Type 2 Road Train to their trip each way.
- It is a direct inland route which connects major agriculture and beef industries to Southern and Asian markets via air and sea ports.
- This road is an economic enabler for Cape York Peninsula, Gulf of Carpentaria and Atherton Tablelands; supporting the expanding agriculture, cattle industries and supply chains.
- CSIRO's TRANSIT modelling has this road as the highest return on investment of the roads modelled.
- It links to the Hann Highway and improves connectivity to air and sea ports and southern markets. Its capacity is constrained as it is unsealed and affected by weather.
- In addition to the above kilometer savings, if combined with the Mareeba Bypass there will be an additional saving of 101 kilometers. As an example, there are 11 Type 2 roads trains (triples) per week from Brisbane to Cairns carrying 1,000 tonnes of freight each. Currently they need to break down at Mt Garnet and ferry each trailer 164km to Cairns. Triple Road Train routes into Mareeba would bring the break point to Mareeba and much closer to Cairns (63km),

• • •
“The national land freight task is expected to grow by 80 per cent between 2011 and 2031, with a large component of this task expected to be handled by road freight vehicles”
(Infrastructure Australia, 2015)

More detail can be found in Appendix A – “Further details”

Gulf Development Road: The Gulf Development Road links Normanton (Burke Development Road) to Cairns (Kennedy Highway). It has a total distance of 447km linking the Gulf with the Eastern Seaboard and forms the principal transport link within the region for cattle, mining, tourism, freight and passenger travel.

“The Gulf Developmental Road and the Burke Developmental Road carry high tourist numbers. However sections of single lane seal and poor road conditions combined with the road train traffic on these routes creates potential safety hazards. It is expected this situation acts to discourage a proportion of potential self-drive tourists” (Department of State Development, 2000)

In a region which experiences relative remoteness and isolation, improvements to the range of transport modes, and greater availability of affordable, reliable and regular transport services would improve the quality of life for Gulf residents immeasurably, particularly in terms of:

- *Attending and participating in social, cultural and sporting events;*
- *Opportunities to enroll in regionally based education, training and employment programs;*
- *Access to health care, specialists and social services;*
- *Improved access to businesses in the region’*
- *Access to Government services including QGAP office;*
- *Increased regional cohesion through opportunities to participate in region wide development programs and organisations;*
- *Increase opportunities for community participation in regional organisations; and*
- *Meeting family obligations.*

At present there is a great reliance on the key external centres that service the Gulf region, including Cairns, Townsville and Mt Isa. Key centres within the Gulf region are likely to continue and expand their service roles in the future.” (Department of State Development, 2000)

The Burke Development Road between Chillagoe and Almaden is experiencing 2.4% growth in heavy vehicle traffic (Australian Bureau of Statistics) yet its capacity remains constrained due to its width and lack of sealing. It links with Peninsula Development Road, Ootann Road and south through to the Kennedy Development Road (see Figure 1). The immediate Chillagoe-Mungana area has a long term history of mining activity. Affected by world commodity prices, efficient business costs such as freight are imperative to achieve industry stability. There are substantial mining exploration and prospect developments in the area for a wide range of minerals e.g. gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, wolfram and others. Therefore, further mining development is highly likely to occur. However, freight costs will impact commercial development, as well as the beef industry , and potentially the future of the far north as food bowl.

For example a \$20 million lime works at Ootan, for shipment through Cairns and Mourilyan to New Guinea gold mining operations, did not proceed due to freight costs. Also until 2012 Kagara Ltd operated five sites throughout the area (copper and zinc mining), processing 500,000 tonnes per annum; it closed in part due to unsustainable costs of production including freight.

Importantly, The Burke Development Road runs through the Mitchell Basin, the second largest river basin in Australia, marginally less than the Murray Darling River basin. This presents a major opportunity for supporting agricultural expansion in northern Australia which will require supporting road infrastructure to connect to markets.

Croydon – Richmond Rd (access to Mt Isa from Croydon utilising the national network) The Croydon-Richmond Road (103km) is a local government road which provides access for all road users, including heavy vehicles hauling cattle livestock between Croydon and Richmond. The shortest alternative route is via Normanton and Julia Creek at 726km.

Development in the Croydon and Richmond Agricultural Areas is expected to drive traffic growth on this route over the next decade and beyond. The use of large heavy vehicles, including high-productivity vehicles, on dusty unsealed gravel roads poses a high safety risk.

There is a strong desire by government and industry to use larger and higher-productivity freight vehicles to improve overall supply chain cost and efficiency. However, many of northern Queensland's inland roads do not meet current design standards, in terms of pavement and structure width, to accommodate the use of more productive freight vehicles.

Queensland has embraced the use of high-productivity freight vehicles across its road network, however, ageing infrastructure reaching design capacity, combined with strong traffic growth associated with developments, such as the far north and north west Queensland Agricultural Area, creates a road environment that poses a significant risk to road users. A leading risk is heavy vehicles on sections of unsealed gravel road on the Croydon-Richmond Road.

Road crash data on this link is limited as accidents are not being reported to the proper authorities, this is mainly due to lack of telephone services and distance, it is approximately 125 kilometres to the nearest police station. Accidents have resulted primarily in vehicle damage with no or very minor injuries to persons. Most of these accidents are identified as being caused by poor road conditions, loose gravel, sharp bends, corrugations and poor visibility.

More detail can be found in Appendix A – “Further details”

Hann Highway (Kennedy Development Road – Hughenden to Lynd Junction) The Hann Highway has federal government funding to seal the link from the Lynd Junction to Hughenden.



“The following linkages have been identified in the previous sections as being of regional significance and worthy of inclusion in a regional road transport network:

- *The Croydon to Richmond Road linking Croydon to cattle fattening country in Flinders, Richmond and McKinlay Shires. This route also links Croydon to southern centres and the Townsville to Mt Isa railway, as well as providing a link for cattle to be exported” (Department of State Development, 2000)*

Mareeba Bypass Mareeba Bypass will provide an efficient and safe alternative for heavy vehicles, linking the Atherton Tablelands, Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York Peninsula (via Mulligan, Kennedy and Mareeba-Dimbulah Road). The topography, population and World Heritage-listed rainforest of the Tablelands area south of Mareeba pose a major problem for extending multi-trailer road transport routes through the area. This bypass is the missing link to allow unhindered Road Train connection with Southern Markets. It will allow Mareeba to further develop its regional logistics and supply chain hub which has attracted multiple national logistics and agricultural suppliers.

Innisfail Bypass Mourilyan harbour, Mundoo airport and Innisfail rail depot has long been touted as an optimum transport hub in the region. The Innisfail Bypass supports not only this transport hub but the safe separation of heavy vehicles and tourist and commuter travellers. The Bypass supports the expansion of the agricultural, cattle, and mining industries. The current alignment of the Bruce Hwy takes all transport (Heavy Vehicles, drive tourism and commuters) through the town of Innisfail. This current route through Innisfail has a particularly unsafe section at Goondi Bend. There is an opportunity to utilise the focus on the Bruce Hwy to plan and develop the Innisfail transport hub. Recent Innisfail Road Freight study identified a need to:

- Update TMR planning
- Undertake Innisfail road and freight planning study
- Update CCRC planning scheme
- Continue to preserve the existing Innisfail bypass corridor
- Preserve future road corridors
- Review capacity and limitations of Innisfail rail depot
- Develop strategy for Mundoo airport

Ingham Bypass Detailed designed has commenced for the Ingham Bypass. Council is concerned about a number of issues including (but not limited to):

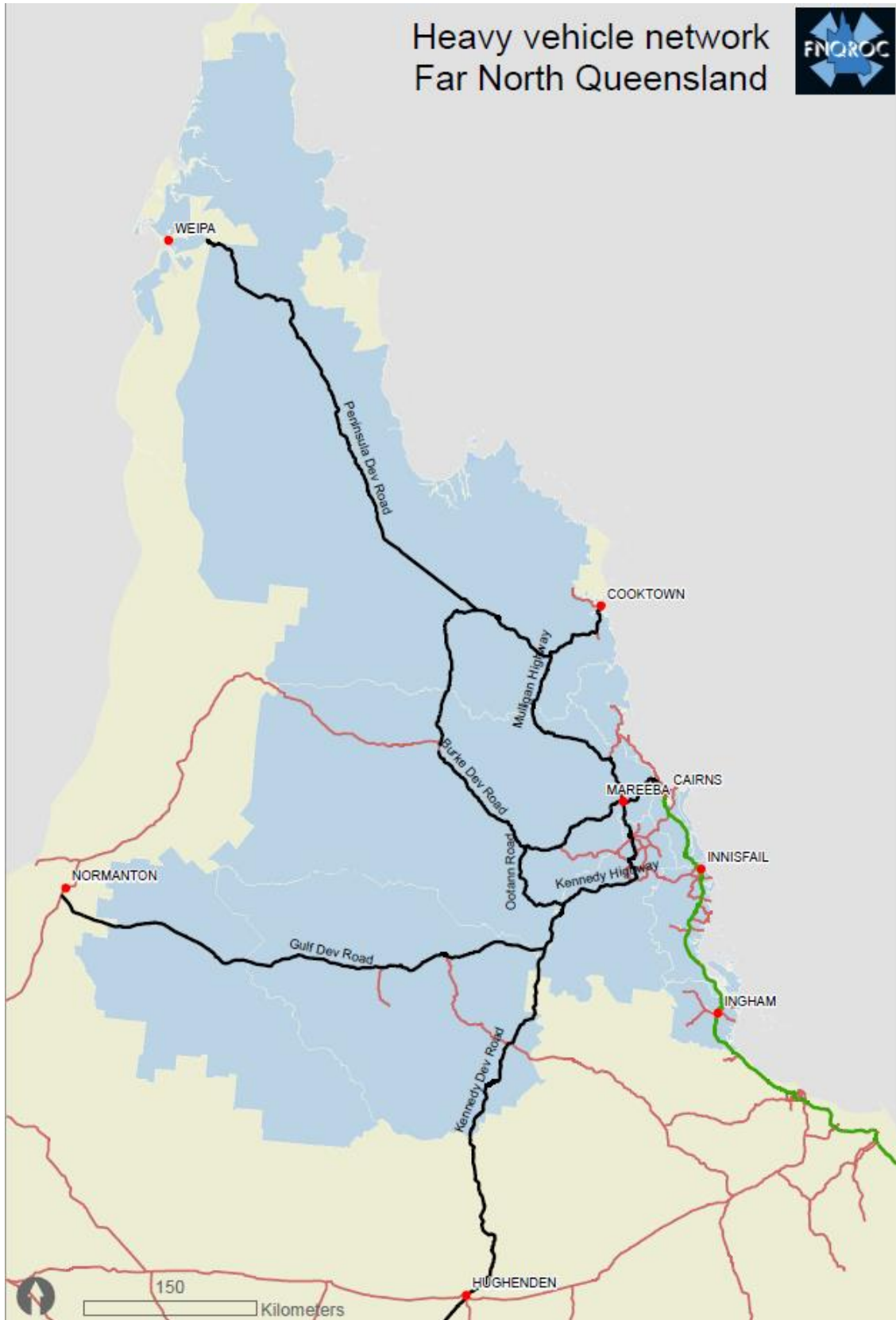
- Potential for flooding/damming, and
- Access to Ingham from the south.

• • •

“More than half of North Queensland’s network exceeds the theoretical design life and an increasing proportion (currently one third) of network seals are older than the target optimum. Queensland notes its pavement rehabilitation and programmed maintenance requirement on Northern Queensland of \$700m over the next five years, \$318m of which represents a backlog.”

(Infrastructure Australia, 2015)

Heavy vehicle network Far North Queensland



Federal government recommendation

1. Continuation of Beef Road and Northern Australia Road funding and in particular \$10m per year until Ootann Road is fit for purpose and sealed and \$5 million per year until Richmond-Croydon Road is fit for purpose and sealed.

Federal Linkages

Australian Infrastructure Audit

The *Australian Infrastructure Audit* is an initiative of the Australian Government. It provides a top-down assessment of the value adding contribution of infrastructure, considers the future demand for infrastructure over the next 15 years, and delivers an evidence base for further gap analysis, long-term planning and future investment priorities. Key findings include:

- the road and rail freight task is projected to increase by 86 per cent from around 458 billion tonne km in 2011, to 852 billion tonne km in 2031
- further improvements to productivity will require wider use of higher productivity freight vehicles requiring greater investment in pavements, bridges and measures that improve road safety
- infrastructure decisions can support Australian industries where a competitive advantage has been identified, such as agriculture.

Northern Australia Audit

The *Northern Australia Audit: Infrastructure for a Developing North Report* (Northern Australia Audit) is an initiative of the Australian Government. The Northern Australia Audit is aimed at developing an implementation strategy for realising the economic potential of Northern Australia that includes north Queensland. The Northern Australia Audit identified key transport-related issues for the beef and agricultural industry, including the deterioration of routes for northern producers that could lead to significant productivity losses.

Northern Australia's economic development requires:

- resilient export related infrastructure with sufficient capacity
- good connections with southern Australia
- links between the growing urban economies of Darwin, Cairns, Townsville and Mackay and their hinterlands.

Northern Australia White Paper

An initiative of the Australian Government, the *White Paper on Developing Northern Australia* (White Paper) is aimed at unlocking the great potential and opportunities of Northern Australia that includes north Queensland. The White Paper outlines a vision for the development of Northern Australia

recognising that modern, efficient and reliable transport infrastructure is a key requirement to developing Northern Australia.

Infrastructure Investment Programme

The Australian Government's investment in road and rail infrastructure, formalised through the *2014-15 to 2018-19 National Partnership Agreement on Land Transport Infrastructure Projects*, aspires to a safe, sustainable national transport system that enhances the inter-connectivity of corridors (networks) of significant economic opportunity across Australia.

This network would contribute to the achievement of program outcomes by:

- improving land transport infrastructure that supports economic growth and productivity
- improving connectivity for communities, regions and industry
- improving transport safety.

Northern Australia Roads Programme

This network would complement the safety and productivity improvements goals of the NARP and support the Australian Government's vision for Northern Australia.

Local Key Priorities

Cairns Arts and Culture

Cairns has a vision to be the “Arts Capital of Northern Australia”.

The Tanks Art Centre, combined with the recently completed Munro Martin Parklands and the under construction Cairns Performing Arts Centre, complete the suite of performance spaces that cater for local and visiting performances of varying sizes and genres. Council is currently considering options for an outdoor entertainment venue to cater for up to 20,000 patrons.

The heritage listed School of Arts Building in the CBD is presently being refurbished and when re-opened in 2017 will house much of the community’s heritage in a museum space. The heritage listed former Public Offices building is home to the [Cairns Regional Art Gallery](#).

Cairns is also home to the [Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair](#), an internationally recognized showcase for indigenous art.

The quality facilities currently in place and those planned or currently under construction, will position Cairns as the Arts Capital of Northern Australia.

Support will be needed from all levels of government to realise this vision.

Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair

Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) is a unique three-day event that merges an art market with a celebration of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

It is the only art fair in Australia to welcome commercial art galleries and Indigenous art centres to sell and showcase art by Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. It is committed to providing an ethical marketplace for the sale and purchase of Queensland Indigenous art and supporting the career development of Queensland Indigenous artists.

Since the first event in 2009, CIAF has grown to be one of the most recognized Art Fairs/Festivals in Australia. Event organisers are actively seeking private sector funding for the event but, in recognition of the event’s significant contribution to the indigenous arts community, require a commitment from all levels of government to secure the future of the event.

Federal government recommendation

1. Contribute funds to the Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair to secure the future of the event.

City Deals - Cannon Park/Showgrounds/Light Rail

Council is concerned about the future of two of the region's key community and recreational facilities, namely Cannon Park Racecourse and the Cairns Showgrounds.

The existing Cannon Park area is an asset which has served the region well with many key calendar events. Council has serious, and what it considers to be legitimate concerns about the long term viability of the racing industry in Cairns under its current circumstances, as well it has concerns over the future of the operation of the Cairns Show at the existing showgrounds. These activities are operated at two large sites, both in close proximity to the CBD.



While the issues surrounding each site and the entities occupying and managing them could be dealt with separately, Council has, at a very high and concept level, developed in-house a possible joint solution to the issues faced. The joint solution has effectively emanated from ideas which have been floated around the Cairns community for many years, and which are consistent with more modern funding and planning concepts, and would involve land and facility sharing by both parties and perhaps other local sporting and community bodies.

To better advance the concept of further developing Cannon Park as an improved facing facility and possibly a multi-use facility, and to consider alternative and higher uses of the existing Showgrounds site, Council considers that it would be appropriate to conduct a master planning exercise for each site.

The city also lacks an outdoor entertainment venue for major concerts, particularly those targeted at the youth and young adult demographic. The suitability of this type of facility will be considered at a redeveloped Cannon Park.

While Council will not seek to pre-empt any master planning exercise, Council considers that a future Cannon Park would be a multipurpose destination containing purpose built facilities that could serve at least dual and ideally multiple purposes, including grandstands for horse racing as well as other equestrian events, pavilions that could house exhibitions, trade events and community and commercial short term hiring. A key consideration is whether the facility can host the Cairns Show and an outdoor entertainment venue.

Council has also explored in a preliminary way the possible use of part of the showgrounds site for the development of a rectangular stadium, with the balance of the site, most likely the northern end fronting Mulgrave Road, to be developed for higher uses.

Cannon Park is adjacent to the future Cairns Busway corridor, providing an ideal opportunity for the use of public transport for access to and from major events to bring the patrons back into the City and avoid

congestion on Mulgrave Road. This route is also adjacent to the probable site for a rectangular stadium, again providing a transport option from a high-capacity venue.

With such prime pieces of land, Cairns Council has seen the opportunity to better utilise these assets. This is an initiative which could have a profound impact on the future of the City. The master planning of Cannon Park has recently commenced and is likely to be completed by June 2017. Consideration of this matter must also include an understanding of the City's future transport requirements. It is considered that the future redevelopment of Cannon Park and the Cairns Showgrounds, along with the future introduction of a more efficient public transport system form the key ingredients for a "City Deal". Council would like to advance discussions with the State and Federal Government to explore this option.

Federal government recommendation

1. That the Federal government works with the Queensland State government and Cairns Regional Council to explore "Cairns City Deal".

Atherton Allied Health and Medical Service Precinct

Tablelands Regional Council has identified an opportunity to provide improved health services within the region which would support the operation and development of Atherton Hospital as a regional facility servicing the Tablelands region. This in turn would alleviate pressure on the health facilities and infrastructure at the Cairns Hospital.

Travel to Cairns is currently the only available option in order to access specialist services and there are limited opportunities for residents to access medical/health services after hours. The Atherton Tablelands Retail Analysis (HolmesDyer, June 2016) identifies that attendance at health specialists is the greatest single reason for visiting Cairns. Current 'escape expenditure' is around \$26.4m to \$27.9m in 2016 and is expected to grow to approximately \$34.4m to \$36.2m by 2036. By 2026 it is expected that an extra 67,000 people will live in the hospital catchment area, and close to one in five will be aged over 65.

Current infrastructure and facilities limit the opportunities to attract medical specialists to the area and consequently there are few local health workers trained and employed within the region.

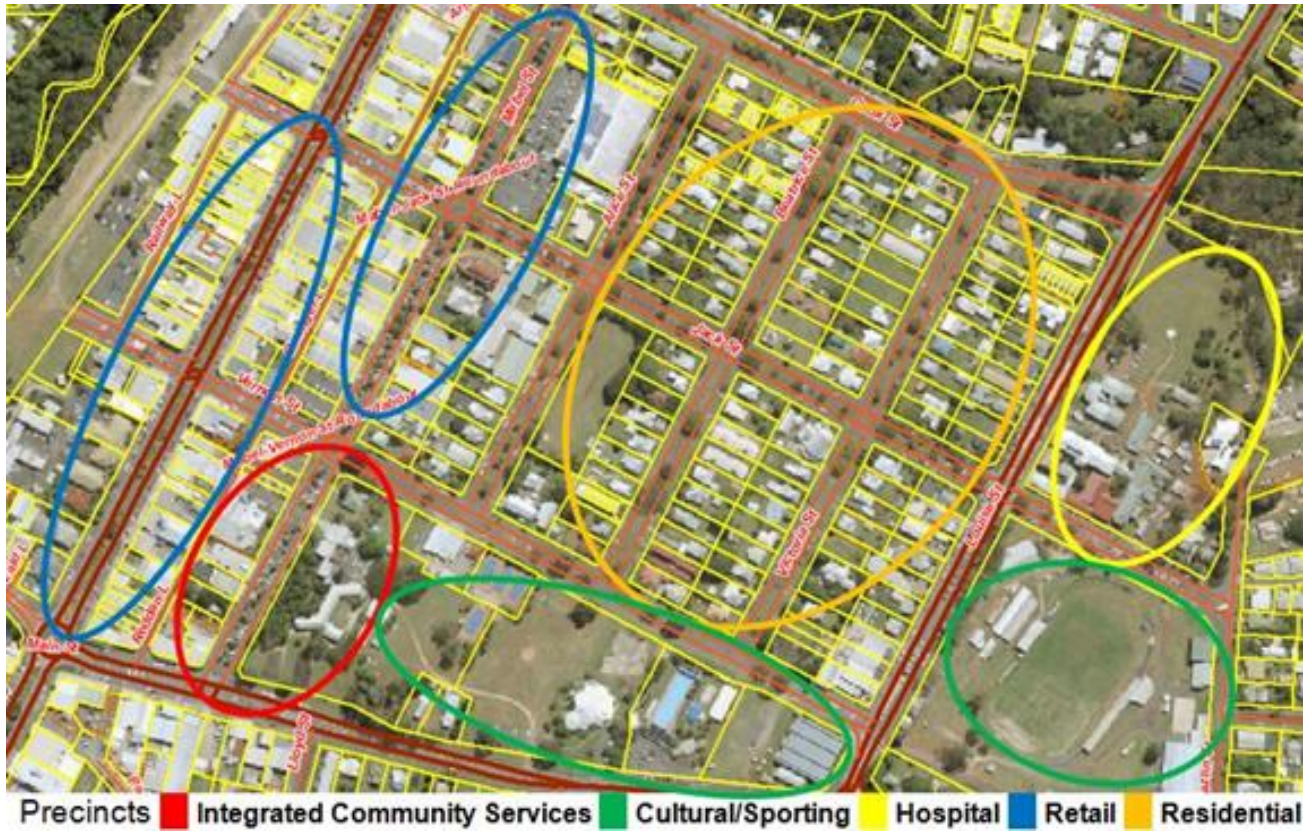
Resident surveys indicate that health services and access to specialists are the key improvements sought by the majority of respondents (65%)

Council has a prime town centre freehold site in which a master plan proposed the comprehensive development of the site for retail, community and civic/public uses however Council believe that a government allied health and medical service precinct would provide greater benefits to the community.

Alongside other strategic initiatives, the proposal forms part of a long term development strategy for Atherton as a major regional service centre, as identified in the Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009 – 2031.



Qld State Government Challenge - "In a growing and ageing population, there will be increasing demand for high quality public services, many of which have a relatively high cost to government.....the largest pressure on the state budget in future decades is projected to come from increasing demand for health services.....the need to deliver these services differently is imperative." (Dept. of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, 2016)



State and Federal government recommendation

1. State and Federal governments to work in partnership with Tablelands Regional Council to further develop the Atherton Allied Health and Medical Service precinct.

Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council is one of the largest indigenous councils in Queensland. It hosts 60km of coastline and is bounded by the Murray Prior Range. While it gives the illusion of isolation it is 60km by road or 12km via sea from Cairns. There is an opportunity for the Council to capitalise on this.

They see local employment opportunities in areas such as tourism, sea transport and art and culture. Successive councils have been proactive in identifying opportunities and attempting to attract private investment into the region.

While the Council would like to take Yarrabah forward it is hampered by fundamental essential needs for their community such as housing, water, sewage, waste and street lights. Yarrabah currently has 4,500 people living in the community; there are 394 social houses with approximately 800 people waitlisted. Providing housing and other essential services for the community will aid in local employment, mitigate health concerns and better enable their community to move into the next phase of economic growth and self-dependence.

Council is committed to delivering private ownership of housing to the residents of Yarrabah and developing accommodation models that positively impact on availability and affordability of accommodation in the Shire.

Yarrabah Housing and Trunk infrastructure

Yarrabah currently has a catastrophic housing crisis with over half the population homeless. There are 4,500 people living in the community with 394 social houses and approximately 800 people waitlisted.

Yarrabah has 99 year leases available which could be leveraged to assist resolve this issue.

Yarrabah needs 700 new dwellings, associated trunk infrastructure and upgrades, repairs and maintenance of existing housing.

Investing in new dwellings, infrastructure and upgrades, repairs and maintenance will provide an opportunity for local employment, mitigate health concerns and meet basic human needs.

Resolving this issue requires the support of both the State and Federal Governments.

State and Federal government recommendation

1. 700 new dwellings - \$231 million
2. Associated trunk infrastructure - \$210.5 million
3. Upgrades to existing housing - \$14.04 million
4. Repairs and maintenance to existing housing - \$4.26 million

Yarrabah Upgrade Town Water Supply

Yarrabah is a growing community and the current water supply system is insufficient for community growth. They require commissioning of the existing bore and urgent maintenance. They need to replace existing asbestos mains and weir intake as well as investigating sustainability and demand management of sources.

Resolving this issue requires the support all levels of government.

Yarrabah Environmental Protection – Sewer and Waste

Yarrabah is located on the coast overlooking the World Heritage Great Barrier Reef. They acknowledge they have a cultural and legislative responsibility to look after land and sea. They are concerned about the environmental impacts of their Sewage Treatment Plant and Solid Waste Facility. As Yarrabah has limited rateable properties they are dependent on grants and funding to service their community, protect the environment and meet legislative requirements.

Resolving this issue requires the support all levels of government.

Yarrabah Sewage Treatment Plant (Lagoons)

Yarrabah would like to improve the quality of effluent released into Mission Bay. To do this they need:

- Improvements in the effectiveness of treatment in the lagoons;
- De-sludging of treatment lagoons and upgrade pump stations;
- Investigate improved secondary or tertiary treatment, and
- Public and Environmental Health education.

Yarrabah Solid Waste Facility

Yarrabah has significant environmental and public health concerns and need to meet compliance requirements at their solid waste facility. They need:

- To fence their waste facility;
- Obtain funding for design and construction of a transfer station
- Investigate Recycling/Reuse and minimize packaging program

State and Federal government recommendation

1. Funding support to upgrade the:
 - a. Yarrabah town water supply;
 - b. Sewage Treatment Plant;
 - c. Solid Waste Facility.

Yarrabah Street Lighting

Street lighting within Yarrabah is limited which has an impact on Public safety, crime and road safety.

Yarrabah requires:

- Installation of street lighting throughout the community, and
- Upgrade of existing insufficient street lighting.

Resolving this issue requires the support all levels of government.

State and Federal government recommendation

1. Funding support for the upgrade and installation of street lighting throughout the Yarrabah community.

Yarrabah Community Roads and Pathways

Yarrabah has environmental health and safety concerns due to unsealed roads, poor drainage, limited foot and bicycle paths, and pavement failure. Traditional funding arrangements require matching or contributing funds; as council does not have the ability to match funding, a significant amount of time and effort goes into trying to align funding applications and hope announcement dates allow them to deliver by the funding bodies due date. This process is high risk and takes a significant amount of time (with limited people resources) to undertake. All it takes is for one of their funding options to fail and they have to start again. This process may also give the perception that council cannot deliver projects.

Resolving this issue requires the support all levels of government.

State and Federal government recommendation

1. Dedicated funding to upgrade roads and paths at substandard condition.

Yarrabah CBD Revitalisation, including Cultural and Sporting Precinct

The central business district (CBD) of any community is the economic hub which has the potential to drive economic development. Combining this with a cultural and sporting precinct meets a number of the elements needed for community social health and pride of place – it is a significant contributor to the sustainability of a community.

The Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning is completing an Economic Needs Analysis. To support this Economic needs analysis Yarrabah will require:

- Design works and associated documentation
- Community Infrastructure such as open space, parks, cycle and pedestrian pathways (\$2.75m)

State government recommendation

1. \$2.75 million for parks, cycle and pedestrian pathways.

Appendix A Further details

Kennedy-Burke Heavy Transport road Link (Ootann Road)

Ootann Road (91.4km in length (83km within the Mareeba Shire Council)), most of which is unsealed is a local government owned Local Road of Regional Significance (LRRS) and is a critical link in the region.

The main contributing factor to the majority of the 90km length of Ootann Road not yet being sealed is that although the road is the responsibility of Mareeba Shire Council, it is well away from any populated areas and is an arterial road linking State roads together. The road is predominantly used by cattle and mining haulage road trains to access southern markets. The majority of road users do not contribute to the rate base in Mareeba Shire that is responsible for the maintenance and upgrade of Ootann Road. Although the road is technically a Council owned asset the usage of the road more closely aligns with a State owned asset. It is very difficult for Council to fund road upgrades and gravel re-sheeting on this 91.4km link.



Figure - Ootann Road

The cost of upgrading this road (roughly \$65 million) and is well beyond the capacity of Mareeba Shire Council, with its residents identified as being amongst the most disadvantaged in Australia. Around a quarter of Shire households are estimated to be living below the poverty line, using internationally recognized criteria and data from the 2011 Census. 26% of the Shire's population live in small areas (SA1s) considered amongst the 10% most disadvantaged in Australia (ABS SEIFA, 2011). Further, there are just over 9000 rateable properties in Mareeba Shire, dispersed over 53,457km². This cost gap means that without significant federal or state assistance, this road is likely to continue to deteriorate and the service gap will widen.

The road is considered a critical link as it:

- Links the Burke Development Road with the Kennedy Highway
- is a Type 2 road train route, used predominantly for cattle and mineral ore transport. Many large cattle properties to the west of Chillagoe (Nychum, Bolwarra, Wrotham Park, Mt Mulgrave, Gamboola, Highbury, Dunbar etc) and further to the north in the southern reaches of Cook Shire transport cattle to southern and eastern markets.
- Saves 260km to 680km per trip when compared to the alternative route of Almaden through Mareeba and Atherton. This is as a result of the need to de-couple which adds an additional 260km for a B-Double through to 680km for a Type 2 Road Train to their trip each way.

- It is a direct inland route which connects major agriculture and beef industries to Southern and Asian markets via air and sea ports.
- This road is an economic enabler for Cape York Peninsula, Gulf of Carpentaria and Atherton Tablelands; supporting the expanding agriculture, cattle industries and supply chains.
- CSIRO's TRANSIT modelling has this road as the highest return on investment of the roads modelled.
- It links to the Hann Highway and improves connectivity to air and sea ports and southern markets. Its capacity is constrained as it is unsealed and affected by weather.
- In addition to the above kilometer savings, if combined with the Mareeba bypass there will be an additional saving of 101 kilometers. As an example, there are 11 Type 2 roads trains (triples) per week from Brisbane to Cairns carrying 1,000 tonnes of freight each. Currently they need to break down at Mt Garnet and ferry each trailer 164km to Cairns. Triple Road Train routes into Mareeba would bring the break point to Mareeba and much closer to Cairns (63km),

The widening and sealing Ootann t will deliver the following improvements to the supply chain:

- improved productivity and travel times by sealing unsealed sections of road
- improved access by sealing unsealed sections of road enabling high-productivity vehicle (HPV) access between Almaden and the Kennedy Highway.
- improved road safety by widening pavement width to current standard 9m wide.
- reduce damage and stress to livestock by increasing the sealed length of the link and reducing the overall roughness of the link.
- improved road safety by upgrading to seal standard
- reduced road closures during the wet season
- reduced whole-of-life asset management costs by strengthening and widening pavements to reduce accelerated road wear and damage by heavy vehicles

The Ootann Road progressive sealing project has links with the following initiatives supporting economic productivity and connectivity in the region.

- Peninsula Development Road Upgrade
- Burke Development Upgrade
- Kennedy Developmental Road (Hann Highway) Upgrade.
- Potential new mining activity should Ootann Road provide adequate accessibility post upgrade.

Ootann Road meets the definition for critical infrastructure using the Northern Australia Audit methodology. The road provides the only Type 2 Road Train link between the proposed Hann Highway (via the Kennedy Highway) to three areas of significant economic activity - Cape York Peninsula, Western Far North Queensland and the Gulf of Carpentaria. The road occupies a central position, by connecting

the Hann Highway with both the Burke Development Road via Almaden and the Peninsula Development Road in Cape York (via Type 1 Road Train Route Mareeba-Dimbulah Road and the Mulligan Highway).

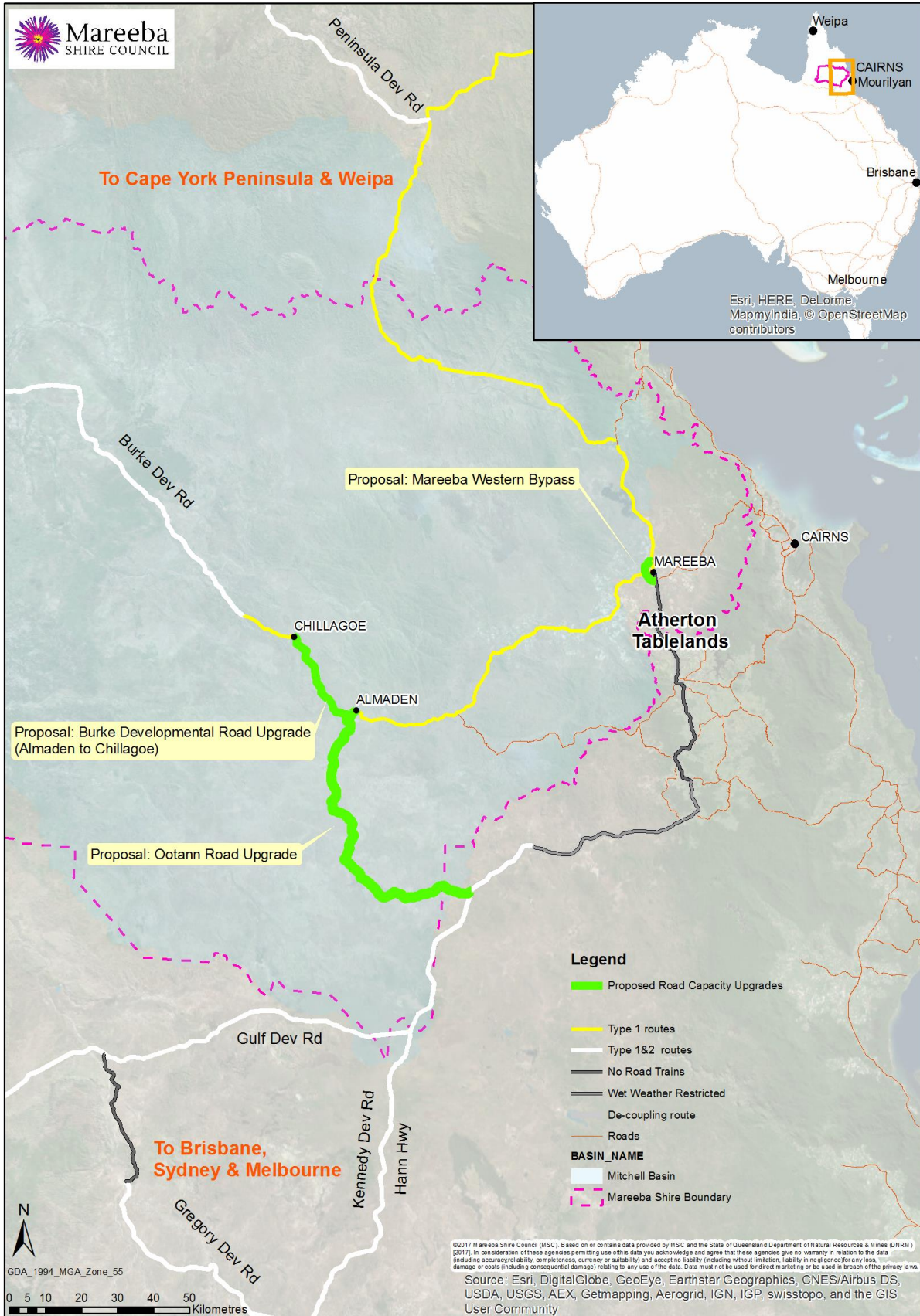
The Ootann Road progressive sealing project has an important role in unlocking the potential of the beef supply chain in far north Queensland. The package meets the objectives of the SIP by supporting growth, productivity and prosperity of the beef industry, connecting agricultural communities to markets, and improving sustainability and resilience of key beef supply routes.

CSIRO’s Transport Network Strategic Investment Tool (TRANSIT) Application to Northern Australia Beef Roads Programme (March 2016), estimated cost savings to cattle transport for a range of road infrastructure scenarios across Northern Australia. The TRANSIT model identified deficiencies of the Ootann Road route (CSIRO reference number 5.40, p32, TraNSIT), and modeled the scenario of sealing the road and upgrading Type 1 segments to Type 2. The modeled expected cost savings to the transport of cattle along the route and the beneficial impacts of beef freight flows along the road network are outlined in Table 1 - Summary data from CSIRO's TRANSIT model for Scenario 5.40.

Table 1 - Summary data from CSIRO's TRANSIT model for Scenario 5.40

	Savings per annum	Trailers per annum	Trailers after upgrade	Savings per head
Travel	\$60,130			
Vehicle Breakdown	\$4,570			
Broader network	\$23,643			
Total	\$88,343	51	367	\$7.83

The CSIRO’s TRANSIT model indicates that upgrading this route (Scenario 5.40) would result in overall savings of \$88,343 annually in cattle transport for the 51 cattle trailers travelling the route and would increase the number of trailers to 367 if the whole road was sealed.



Richmond- Croydon Road

The Croydon-Richmond Road (103km) is a local government road which provides access for all road users, including heavy vehicles hauling cattle livestock between Croydon and Richmond. The shortest alternative route is via Normanton and Julia Creek at 726km.

Development in the Croydon and Richmond Agricultural Areas is expected to drive traffic growth on this route over the next decade and beyond. The use of large heavy vehicles, including high-productivity vehicles, on dusty unsealed gravel roads poses a high safety risk.

There is a strong desire by government and industry to use larger and higher-productivity freight vehicles to improve overall supply chain cost and efficiency. However, many of northern Queensland's inland roads do not meet current design standards, in terms of pavement and structure width, to accommodate the use of more productive freight vehicles.

Queensland has embraced the use of high-productivity freight vehicles across its road network, however, ageing infrastructure reaching design capacity, combined with strong traffic growth associated with developments, such as the far north and north west Queensland Agricultural Area, creates a road environment that poses a significant risk to road users. A leading risk is heavy vehicles on sections of unsealed gravel road on the Croydon-Richmond Road.

Road crash data on this link is limited as accidents are not being reported to the proper authorities, this is mainly due to lack of telephone services and distance, it is approximately 125 kilometres to the nearest police station. Accidents have resulted primarily in vehicle damage with no or very minor injuries to persons. Most of these accidents are identified as being caused by poor road conditions, loose gravel, sharp bends, corrugations and poor visibility.



“The following linkages have been identified in the previous sections as being of regional significance and worthy of inclusion in a regional road transport network:

- *The Croydon to Richmond Road linking Croydon to cattle fattening country in Flinders, Richmond and McKinlay Shires. This route also links Croydon to southern centres and the Townsville to Mt Isa railway, as well as providing a link for cattle to be exported”* (Department of State Development, 2000)

Impacts of Not Proceeding

If the proposed upgrade works do not proceed, the condition of the Croydon-Richmond road will continue to rapidly deteriorate, leading to rapidly increasing maintenance costs with significantly reduced serviceability and safety. As a consequence, the Croydon-Richmond road will not be able to efficiently accommodate or promote increased traffic from development and growth of the beef industry in Queensland.

Unsealed gravel sections of the Croydon-Richmond Road have a direct impact on the cattle supply chain through:

- increased travel times contributing to increased transport costs and increased stress on livestock due to extended exposure to heat and dehydration; and
- travelling on rough and unsealed roads contributes to stressed and bruised livestock impacting on the overall condition of cattle.

The CSIRO's TRANSIT model indicates that upgrading the Croydon-Richmond Road would result in overall savings of \$305,964 annually in cattle transport.

Upgrading this link is a priority as land transport costs in the northern beef industry comprise up to 35% of the market price of livestock.

- Floods and seasonal road closures can isolate producers
- Open opportunities for agriculture.

The projects will deliver the following improvements to the supply chain:

- improved productivity and travel times by sealing unsealed sections of road – reducing maintenance and transport costs
- improved access by sealing unsealed sections of road enabling high-productivity vehicle (HPV) access between Croydon and Richmond
- improved access by addressing last mile access between Croydon and Richmond by sealing gravel sections of road
- improved road reliability through increased flood immunity at floodway areas by reducing the average annual time of closure from February to March each year for heavy vehicles which can isolate producers
- reduced whole-of-life asset management costs by strengthening pavements to reduce accelerated road wear and damage by heavy vehicles, and



“Freight transportation is reliant on access to the key external markets including Mt Isa, Townsville, Cairns as well as southern markets. The Department of Main Roads undertook a Beef Cattle Road Transport Study in July 1998. This study identified the key cattle freight routes are similar to those used to import freight to the region. Cattle are carted via:

- *Gulf Development Road via Georgetown/Forsyth/Einasleigh/Lynd Junction to Townsville;*
- *Richmond Croydon Road;*
- *Burke Development Road; and*
- *Wills Development Road to Cloncurry and to Julia Creek.”*
(Department of State Development, 2000)

- open opportunities for future agricultural and pastoral growth.

Table 2- Summary data from CSIRO's TRANSIT model for Scenario 5.14

	Savings per annum	Trailers per annum	Savings per head
Travel	\$258,601		
Vehicle Breakdown	\$1,888		
Broader network	\$45,475		
Total	\$305,964	2236	\$3.24



Figure - Gravel s-bend section north of Bora River Crossing