

CORPORATE PLAN

2025-30





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The Whitsunday Regional Council Corporate Plan 2025 - 2030 sets the strategic direction for the next five years, guiding Council's decisions, services, and investments to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for the region.

Council works to provide high quality leadership and responsible governance for residents and ratepayers, with effective resource management to support a vibrant and connected community.

This Corporate Plan outlines the key priorities and strategies that will shape the region's future, building on its unique natural environment, diverse economy, and strong community spirit.

While acknowledging challenges such as economic shifts, housing availability, and population growth, Council remains committed to advancing the region through effective leadership and long-term planning.

This plan provides a clear framework to navigate these challenges while embracing opportunities for sustainable growth and regional prosperity.

By aligning its projects and initiatives with the Corporate Plan, Council ensures transparency, accountability, and a shared vision for the Whitsunday Region, fostering a thriving community where residents, businesses, and visitors can flourish for years to come.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Whitsunday Regional Council acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the lands where we live and work.

We pay respect to Elders past and present, and we recognise their continuing connection to country and the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples play within the Whitsunday Region.



CONTENTS

Message from the Mayor and CEO	4
Our Whitsunday Region	6
Our Vision, Mission and Values	8
Corporate Planning Framework	9
Our Strategic Direction	10
Managing our Risks	15
Commercial Business Activities	16
Significant Business Activities	19

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND CEO



We are proud to present the Whitsunday Regional Council Corporate Plan 2025-2030, a roadmap for our region's future that reflects our shared vision, values, and aspirations.

This document is more than a plan—it is a commitment to the people of the Whitsundays to build a thriving, sustainable, and inclusive community.

Over the next five years, the Whitsundays will continue to experience significant growth and transformation. As stewards of this unique and vibrant region, we are dedicated to balancing economic development with environmental preservation, delivering essential services, and fostering a sense of belonging for all who call the Whitsundays home.

The Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines clear priorities and strategic directions to guide our efforts. From creating jobs and attracting investment to strengthening community services and safeguarding our natural assets, this plan provides a framework for achieving meaningful and lasting outcomes.

This vision is only possible with collaboration. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our community members, stakeholders, and partners who contributed their insights and feedback during the development of this plan. Your voice is at the heart of our decision-making, ensuring this plan truly reflects the needs and aspirations of our region.

As your Mayor and CEO, we are committed to working together with Council, our dedicated staff, and our community to bring this plan to life. Through leadership, accountability, and innovation, we will deliver on the goals set out in this Corporate Plan and ensure the Whitsundays continues to flourish as a place of opportunity and inspiration.

Thank you for your ongoing support and trust in Whitsunday Regional Council. Together, let us shape a bright future for our region—one that reflects the strength of our people, the beauty of our environment, and the promise of our potential.

Warren Bunker
Chief Executive Officer

Ry Collins
Mayor

COUNCILLORS



Our Council comprises the Mayor and six Councillors, each representing their local electoral division. The 2024 Local Government Elections took place on 16th March with Mayor Ry Collins elected as Mayor. This council term will conclude in March 2028.

The Councillors as they appear in the picture above include: Councillor Michelle Wright - Division 4, Councillor Gary Simpson - Division 5, Councillor John Collins - Division 3, Mayor Ry Collins, Councillor Clay Bauman - Division 2, Councillor Jan Clifford - Division 1 and Councillor John Finlay - Division 6.

OUR WHITSUNDAY REGION

The Whitsunday Region is home to approximately 39,712 permanent residents. However, when accounting for visitors and seasonal workers, the functional population is estimated to be around 50,000.

Renowned for its relaxed lifestyle, the region boasts beaches, rainforests and large tracts of national parkland, encompassing a total land area of 23,819km².

The region encompasses the five main townships of Airlie Beach, Bowen, Cannonvale, Collinsville and Proserpine with numerous rural and coastal communities and residential areas scattered throughout the region.

The 74 Whitsunday Islands are also within the Council area. Many of these islands are uninhabited national parks, some islands offer a variety of resort accommodation, all with the Great Barrier Reef and fringing coral reefs at their doorstep.

The local economy is diverse and robust, driven by key industries such as tourism, grazing, agriculture, mining, and marine services. Tourism remains a foundation of the regional economy, with the Great Barrier Reef and Whitsunday Islands attracting visitors from around the globe.

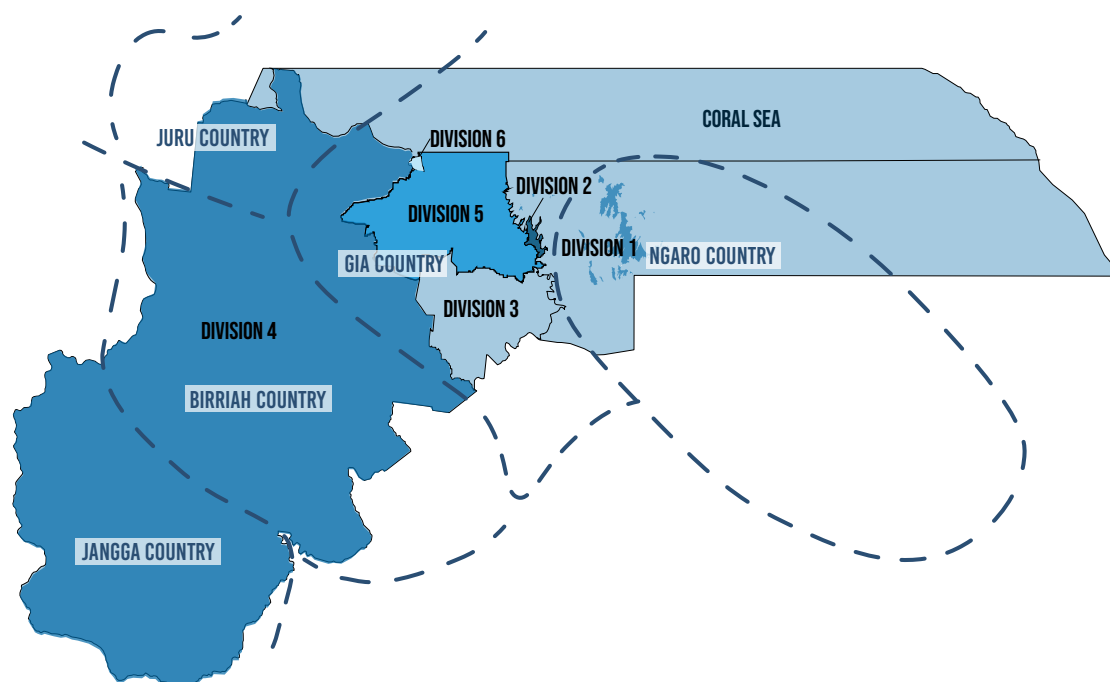
Agriculture, particularly sugar cane and horticulture, contributes significantly to the region's economic output.

The mining sector, particularly coal mining in the Bowen Basin, also plays a vital role in supporting the local economy.

The region is a well-established transport hub with the council owned and operated Whitsunday Coast Airport located 10 minutes' drive from the township of Proserpine, and a number of smaller aerodromes in Bowen, Collinsville and Mt Coolon. Privately owned airports are located on Hamilton Island and Jubilee Pocket.

It is less than 2 hours by air to the Queensland state capital of Brisbane from the Whitsunday Coast Airport. The Bruce Highway is the major transport corridor running from Brisbane in the South to Cairns in the North.

Five groups of traditional owners occupy the country known as Ngaro Country, Gia Country, Juru Country, Jangga Country and Birriah Country (pictured below).



REGIONAL SNAPSHOT



OUR ENVIRONMENT

- Land area 23,819km²
- 514km of coastline
- 11 rivers
- 58,380ha of high ecologically significant wetlands
- 84,801ha of National Park and Conservation Park
- 118,300ha of essential habitat for endangered/vulnerable animals and plants
- 60,210ha of declared fish habitat area



OUR COMMUNITY

- 39,712 residents (2023)
- Resident population growth 2.2% p.a.
- Median age 40 years
- 8,769 families (2021)
- 121 parks and open spaces (530 HA)
- 55 community centres and facilities
- 4 libraries
- 17 schools



OUR ECONOMY

- 4,201 GST registered businesses
- 20,355 workers
- Gross Regional Product (GRP) \$4.4B (2023)
- Growth State Product \$5.3B (2023)
- Average unemployment rate 3.3% 2023
- Functional population 50k + (11,500 average nightly visitation)
- Tourism largest employer
- \$1.06B tourism expenditure



VISION

A united community working together to drive a resilient and diverse economy and a liveable environment

MISSION

To ensure the Whitsunday Region thrives for everyone now and in the future

WHAT WE VALUE

Connection | Innovation | Sustainability

ROLES

Deliver

We identify opportunities and make them happen for our community

Support

We assist community groups and drive services through responsible policy, decision making and funding

Partner

We nurture relationships and promote our region in the interests of everybody

CORPORATE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Corporate Plan

A statement of strategy that sets out what the goals and objectives of the council are for a 5-year period.

Operational Plan

Council is required to adopt an annual Operational Plan which sets out how council will progress the goals in the Corporate Plan.

Budget

Council prioritises annual expenditure toward program outcomes, services and projects, by taking into account emerging issues, community feedback, advice from Council's management and employees and the Corporate Plan.

Business Plans

Each department develops a business plan which complements the Operational Plan setting out the goals and objectives of that department for the year.

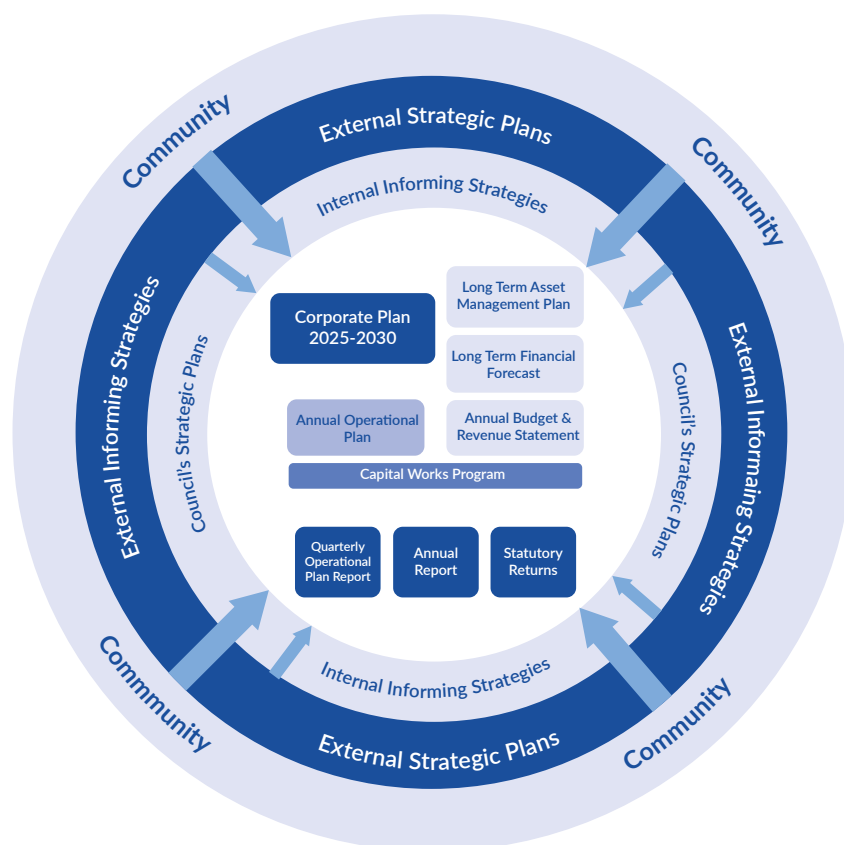
Reporting

There are many ways in which council reports to the community its progress towards implementing the Corporate Plan.

The Annual Report details council's progress and performance to the community, highlighting our achievements and challenges throughout the financial year. Council's Chief Executive Officer presents a quarterly report detailing council's progress towards achieving the Operational Plan.

Risk Management

Risk Management is an integral part of business planning and an essential element of sound corporate governance. Effective risk management helps to ensure the council minimises the impact of the risks it faces, thereby improving the region's ability to deliver on its Corporate Plan and improve outcomes to our community.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Corporate Plan is committed to strategic focus areas within which outcomes are prioritised. The identified focus areas are the strategies and indicators that are used to measure their successful realisation.

Our Economy

We plan for growth with the future needs of the community, business and industry in mind



What we want to achieve together

- Diverse economic opportunities where traditional industries and futuristic vision meet
- We're committed to identifying and driving innovation and opportunities
- Bolstering local business and attracting new investment

Our focus for the next five years

- Implement Whitsunday Economic Development Strategy and publish an attraction prospectus
Identifying priorities for advocacy and investment
- In partnership with our local businesses and industries, identify and define our regional priorities for advocacy, investment and growth
- Leverage council's commercial operations to support local industries, enhance regional connectivity and create new opportunities for business investment.
- Advocate to the Queensland Government for Abbot Point State Development Area planning and development, including the provision of critical infrastructure to enable industry growth
- Advance and advocate the region's growth ambitions through identifying a pipeline of major projects, infrastructure and events.
- Articulate future vision and areas of economic opportunity through the development of regional and precinct masterplanning
- Support the future planning and sustainability of regional key industries
- Develop an advocacy framework to provide one voice for the needs of the Whitsundays

Our measure of success

- Growth in economic output
- Growth in visitation and tourism spend
- Growth of high-profile events
- Growth in employment and increased job opportunities
- Business retention and attraction

Our Community

Our places and spaces enhance the liveability and diversity of our communities



What we want to achieve together

- Supporting everyone in the region
- Working with our residents to provide opportunities, programs, facilities and resources
- Building strong relationships and engagement which meets community expectations

Our focus for the next five years

- Invest in our parks, facilities and public spaces to ensure they are attractive and welcoming to members of the community
- Review of community and recreational grants support to ensure consistency and alignment with future stakeholder needs
- Ensuring appropriate community engagement to guide Council's decision making and project priorities
- Advocate for essential community needs including adequate education and healthcare
- Promotion of arts, events, culture and sport within the region
- Continuous development of the Proserpine Entertainment Centre as the arts and cultural hub of the region
- Plan for the future of our community services and public spaces through the development of targeted strategies and precinct masterplanning

Our measure of success

- Growth in population
- Increase in events, local arts and cultural activities
- Support for community groups
- Increased visitation and activation of Council's venues
- Opportunities for communities to connect and engage with Council

Our Environment

Our region is resilient and celebrates its natural assets



What we want to achieve together

- Promote our natural advantage for liveability
- Demonstrate a commitment to leave a responsible sustainable environmental footprint
- Minimise waste and encourage recycling as we work towards a circular economy through innovation

Our focus for the next five years

- Enhance the quality of our local waterways and stormwater runoff
- Develop a waste strategy to plan for future network investment, landfill remediation, service delivery and support improved community outcomes in education and waste recovery
- Ongoing improvements to community facilities energy efficiency and sustainability
- Advocate to other levels of government to support regional biosecurity, land and animal management initiatives
- Support initiatives to celebrate and protect our natural environment and recognise our place at the heart of the Great Barrier Reef, with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Parks and Queensland Government
- Build resilience and strengthen the capacity of our community to withstand natural disasters

Our Measure of Success

- Increased investment in renewable energy
- Improved green infrastructure network, safely connecting natural areas and wildlife habitats.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions from our operations
- Reduced bushfire risk on our managed land
- Increased waste is recycled and diverted from landfill

Our Council

People, business and community



What we want to achieve together

- At the heart of the organisation are our people and community
- Delivering accountable goals
- Ensuring good governance, agile procurement, consolidated systems and robust financials

Our focus for the next five years

- Undertake a business transformation project to support organisational growth, prioritise and streamline service delivery and deliver improved value to the community
- Progress a workforce management system that delivers improved outcomes to safety, wellbeing, retention and productivity
- Develop rating system to better reflect new land valuations, changes in land uses and expected growth
- Advance the independence of commercial business structures to promote their ability to grow and deliver improved returns to the community
- Ongoing improvement to asset management systems to support future planning, maintenance schedules and capital works forecasts
- Progress the implementation of the asset management framework and systems
- Implement Business plans for functions and process for periodic review of business models
- Deliver a strategic land initiative to identify and secure the options for future strategic land needs

Our Measure of Success

- Increased customer service standards and spend with local suppliers
- Improve staff engagement, safety, training and well-being
- Capital projects delivered in line with key milestones and Budget
- Delivering Operational Plan and long-term financial sustainability benchmarks
- Meet obligations of the local Disaster Management Plan

Our Infrastructure

Our region has infrastructure that meets current and future needs



What we want to achieve together

- Prioritise the needs of the region
- Plan and manage growth corridors for future expansion
- Develop and action masterplans that support community ambitions

Our focus for the next five years

- Develop growth management and housing strategies to determine infrastructure and land use planning needs required for future growth
- Complete network planning for the future across key infrastructure networks, including stormwater, water supply, sewerage, waste, roads and parks
- Upgrades to key major strategic roads on our state and local road network
- Advocacy for improved funding of rural roads
- Review and initiate an update the Whitsunday Planning Scheme to better align with community aspirations and meet future needs
- Development of improved transport and drainage infrastructure
- Advance the project management frameworks to provide improved long-term capital programming and value
- Enhance equitable access and user safety of our public infrastructure and networks

Our Measure of Success

- Improved connectivity of cycleways, footpaths and shaded tree cover
- Asset management plans in place for infrastructure
- Achieve and maintain statutory water and waste water performance requirements
- Development and building activity as indicated through development applications and building approval statistics, within statutory timeframes
- Develop and implement regional network plans



MANAGING OUR RISKS

Risk management is an essential part of Council's corporate planning and governance. It helps us to manage risks and opportunities that may impact on our ability to deliver on our vision and Corporate Plan.

We are committed to embedding a proactive risk culture across the organisation.

Our Enterprise Risk Management Program will continue to work towards a risk maturity that ensures sound risk management practices are integrated into strategic and operational planning, budgeting and project prioritisation processes.

While we typically have a low appetite for unmitigated risks, it is recognised we may need to take some considered risks to ensure that infrastructure and services is able to respond to projected growth and meet the needs of our communities now and into the future.

Emerging Risks

Council continues to focus on providing essentials services such as water supply, sewerage, waste collection, roads & drainage, planning considerations which results in challenges with respect to

financial sustainability, community engagement and infrastructure management. However, themes such as environmental sustainability, technological advancements, and demographic shifts further complicate the landscape, necessitating council to adopt forward-thinking strategies.

The following risk themes have been identified as emerging risks:

- Skills shortages and long-term vacancies in key roles
- Cybersecurity and data security
- Asset management
- Environmental, social and governance requirements
- Innovation and artificial intelligence
- Financial sustainability

COMMERCIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES



Whitsunday Coast Airport

Operated by Council, Whitsunday Coast Airport (WCA) is a key economic driver for the region, supporting tourism, business travel and freight services.

As a commercial business, WCA combines aviation compliance with a strong focus on customer experience, delivering high-quality services for passengers, airlines and local operators.

Located on 430 hectares with easy access to the Whitsunday Islands and surrounding towns, the airport features the region's longest runway and capacity for multiple commercial aircraft. It is serviced by major carriers offering direct connections to with key, strategically important Australian capital cities, boosting visitation and business opportunities.

The airport also supports freight growth through a purpose-built distribution centre, enhancing regional logistics.

Council applies the Code of Competitive Conduct, where practicable, to ensure the airport operates efficiently and competitively.

Shute Harbour Marine Terminal

Operated by Council, the Shute Harbour Marine Terminal (SHMT) is a commercial business with specialised infrastructure and resources to meet the demands of marine tourism businesses, island resorts, passengers, and the general public. In addition to marine compliance requirements, SHMT must also meet the requirements of its tourism role by providing residents of and visitors to the Whitsunday region with a world class marine port facility focused on the future.

With the key priority for long term growth of SHMT into a commercial marine port precinct integrated with Whitsunday Coast Airport as a marine transportation and tourism hub.

Council, to the extent practicable, applies the Code of Competitive Conduct (CCC) to the relevant business decisions related to this business unit.

Foxdale Quarry

Council operates the Foxdale Quarry as a commercial business. The quarry supplies crushed rock materials for the construction industry which utilises it for the construction and maintenance of roads, subdivisions, housing, general industrial construction, and infrastructure projects.

The output from the quarry is sold to Council for its internal construction purposes as well as sold to external parties.

Council, to the extent practicable, applies the Code of Competitive Conduct to the relevant business decisions related to this business unit.





Whitsunday Holiday Parks

The Whitsunday Regional Council manages three key holiday parks - Lake Proserpine, Proserpine, and Queens Beach Bowen - as part of its commitment to enhancing community facilities and supporting regional growth.

These parks serve as valuable public assets, providing versatile spaces for recreation, community events, and local engagement.

Lake Proserpine Holiday Park offers outdoor recreation opportunities, including fishing, boating, and camping, promoting healthy lifestyles and community connection.

Proserpine Holiday Park is centrally located near local amenities, making it a convenient hub for sports, leisure activities, and community events.

Queens Beach Bowen Holiday Park combines coastal access with recreational amenities, serving as a key space for relaxation, social gatherings, and active living.

Council's management of these facilities ensures they are maintained to high standards, providing safe, welcoming, and accessible environments for residents and visitors alike.

Council's investment in these parks enhances public spaces, supports local businesses, and stimulates the regional economy by driving local spending and attracting visitors.

These efforts align with Council's broader goals of improving regional infrastructure and providing quality facilities that meet the evolving needs of the Whitsundays community.

Council, to the extent practicable, applies the Code of Competitive Conduct (CCC) to the relevant business decisions related to this business unit.

Proserpine Entertainment Centre

The Proserpine Entertainment Centre (PEC) is a modern events and convention facility serving as the Whitsunday Region's hub for performing arts and entertainment. Built to support community growth, the PEC offers a versatile space for everything from local performances to conferences and corporate events.

Centrally located on Proserpine's main street, the PEC provides diverse event spaces suitable for community, private and corporate use. Its proximity to the Bruce Highway and Whitsunday Coast Airport makes it easily accessible, enhancing its role as a key venue for regional events.

Council's management of the PEC provides a vital community facility that supports local arts, attracts events, and contributes to the regional economy.

The centre boosts local employment, drives visitor spending, and aligns with Council's commitment to fostering economic growth and enhancing community infrastructure in the Whitsundays.

Whilst the PEC receives funding from trading in goods and services, the overall objective of the Proserpine Entertainment Centre is to promote economic, artistic and cultural development within the community. Applying the code of competitive conduct would add expense without necessarily improving decision-making or the financial results of the activity, therefore, the code is not applied to the PEC.

SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS ACTIVITIES (SBA)

Whitsunday Water - Water & Sewerage Services

This business unit provides potable water to the water supply areas within the region. The business unit also collects wastewater (sewage) from the sewerage service areas and treats the collected sewage in keeping with license and environmental requirements before disposing of the treated effluent. Council also recycles treated effluent via fit for purpose use in selected public spaces and sporting facilities such as golf courses.

As per the definitions contained in the Act and the Regulation, this business unit is a Significant Business Activity (SBA). Council, to the extent practicable, applies full cost pricing principles in determining the pricing for water and sewerage and recycled water services.

Waste Services

This business unit provides waste collection, recycling and waste disposal services to the serviced area within the region.

The objective is to ensure the Whitsundays becomes a sustainable, low waste region in which human health and the environment are protected from the impact of waste and its mission is to provide long term sustainable waste management solutions to the community that enhance resource recovery and recycling outcomes.

As per the definitions contained in the Act and the Regulation, this business unit is a Significant Business Activity. Council, to the extent practicable, applies full cost pricing principles in determining the pricing for waste services.





CONNECTING WITH COUNCIL

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To receive Council news and information, please follow our updates via the following platforms:

Website: www.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au

Social Media: Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn

Online Engagement Portal: yoursay.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au