

**North West
Minerals Province**



NORTH WEST QUEENSLAND ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY

Implementation Plan to 2025

**Department of State Development,
Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning**



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) acknowledges the Country and people of Queensland’s First Nations. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge the continuous living culture of First Nations Queenslanders – their diverse languages, customs and traditions, knowledge and systems. We acknowledge the deep relationship, connection and responsibility to land, sea, sky and Country as an integral element of First Nations identity and culture.

This Country is sacred. Everything on the land has meaning and all people are one with it. We acknowledge First Nations peoples’ sacred connection as central to culture and being.

We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of First Nations peoples and commit to shaping our state’s future together. DSDILGP recognises the contribution of First Nations peoples and communities to the State of Queensland and how this continues to enrich our society more broadly.



Image: Sorghum is a high-value crop that has been successfully grown in North West Queensland.

Minister's foreword

North West Queenslanders are renowned for their hard work and resilience. From Mount Isa to Normanton to Hughenden, the region has been a pillar of the state's agricultural and resources sectors for decades, powering our economy and providing jobs for generations of regional Queenslanders.

With our local government, industry and community partners, the Palaszczuk Government is focused on driving economic diversification to secure new business and sustainable employment opportunities for North West Queensland communities.

The *North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy Implementation Plan to 2025* is the culmination of years of investment and commitment by this government. We have delivered real outcomes for the region through the \$39 million *A Strategic Blueprint for Queensland's North West Minerals Province* in 2017 and the \$33.3 million *North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy*. These strategic plans have facilitated \$2.3 billion in investment, and 1700 ongoing jobs for regional Queenslanders and continue to provide guidance for this Implementation Plan.

Other important outcomes for North West Queensland communities include:

- secured 1100 jobs associated with the Mount Isa Mines Copper Smelter by supporting re-bricking and maintenance works
- supported the establishment of the Queensland Flight Test Range at Cloncurry Airport for unmanned aerial systems
- successfully trialled new high-value crops to diversify the region's commercial agriculture production
- contributed to mineralogical datasets and secondary prospectivity work programs to inform and accelerate future mining operations



- delivered the *New Economy Minerals Investment Prospectus* which supports mineral development in North West Queensland
- contributed to a significant increase of visitors to the region through destination promotions and improved signage
- developed 10 local action plans to support vibrant regional towns.

This Implementation Plan is supported by an additional \$20 million investment to deliver new industry and businesses in the North West and reinvigorate supply chains from the east coast right across to our western border.

The resources, agriculture, tourism, business and industry sectors will grow and diversify this region by:

- helping investors to take advantage of the opportunities in North West Queensland
- innovating supply chains to promote new business opportunities
- delivering a range of services to foster and grow thriving, vibrant communities.

We will continue to invest in this region, harnessing local knowledge and leveraging opportunities to deliver jobs, economic development and prosperity for North West Queenslanders.

The Honourable Dr Steven Miles MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure

Introduction

North West Queensland has long been a significant contributor to Queensland’s economic growth, known for its welcoming communities and rugged and mineral-rich terrain. The region is a vital contributor to Queensland’s major industries, supporting local businesses and underpinning global companies in Mount Isa, Townsville, Cairns and Brisbane.

The Queensland Government is working in partnership with North West Queensland local governments, communities and industry to further develop the region’s vast potential and secure a sustainable and diversified economy for future generations.

The Queensland Government has committed up to \$20 million to 2025 to promote the area’s strengths, diversify into new business areas and explore and leverage emerging opportunities in a number of existing industries. Queensland Government agencies are also working in partnership with the community to prioritise community development and invest in our future workforce.

Investing in North West Queensland

A Strategic Blueprint for Queensland’s North West Minerals Province and the North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy (NWQEDS) established the Queensland Government’s partnership with local governments, communities and industry to build the region’s economic diversity and create opportunities for North West Queensland communities (Figure 1). Through these strategies, the partnership has facilitated approximately \$2.3 billion in investment and 1700 jobs, laying the foundation for future development to enhance prosperity in these important regional communities.

Figure 1: A Strategic Blueprint for Queensland’s North West Minerals Province geographic area



In collaboration with stakeholders, these strategies identified immediate and long-term actions to diversify and grow the region's economy across four sectors:

-  **Resources** – mining and mineral processing with a focus on critical minerals.
-  **Agriculture** – beef cattle production, cropping, fisheries
-  **Tourism** – predominately drive tourism, strong focus on outback experiences
-  **Business and industry** – small business/supply chain and emerging projects.

This Implementation Plan supports the government's priorities of growing Queensland's regions and supporting jobs in these sectors to achieve:

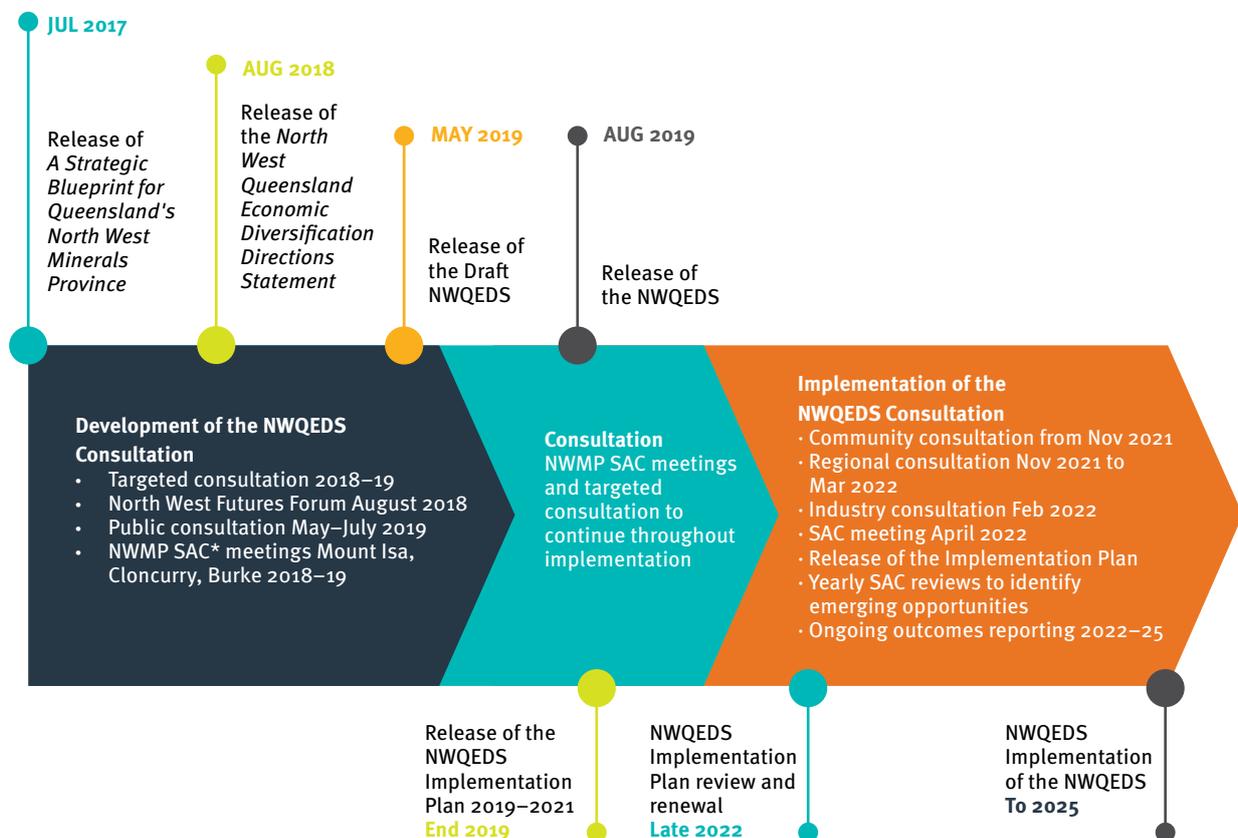
- an enhanced investment environment
- strong supply chains
- sustainable communities.

The Implementation Plan builds on previous strategies and harnesses new opportunities arising from changing investment and policy environments, new technologies and manufacturing processes, and emerging consumer demands. To achieve these long-term objectives, the Implementation Plan will also identify and leverage immediate opportunities to support jobs growth, skills development, small business, innovation and industry investment.

Figure 2 demonstrates how local government, communities and industry, along with other partners have contributed to the NWQEDS Implementation Plan's development and the anticipated implementation timeframes.

This Implementation Plan will be reviewed annually and progress reported through departmental mechanisms, including the department's website and annual report. These reviews build on existing work being undertaken and ensure that the NWQEDS continues to capitalise on emerging opportunities in North West Queensland.

Figure 2: Implementation timeframe and review



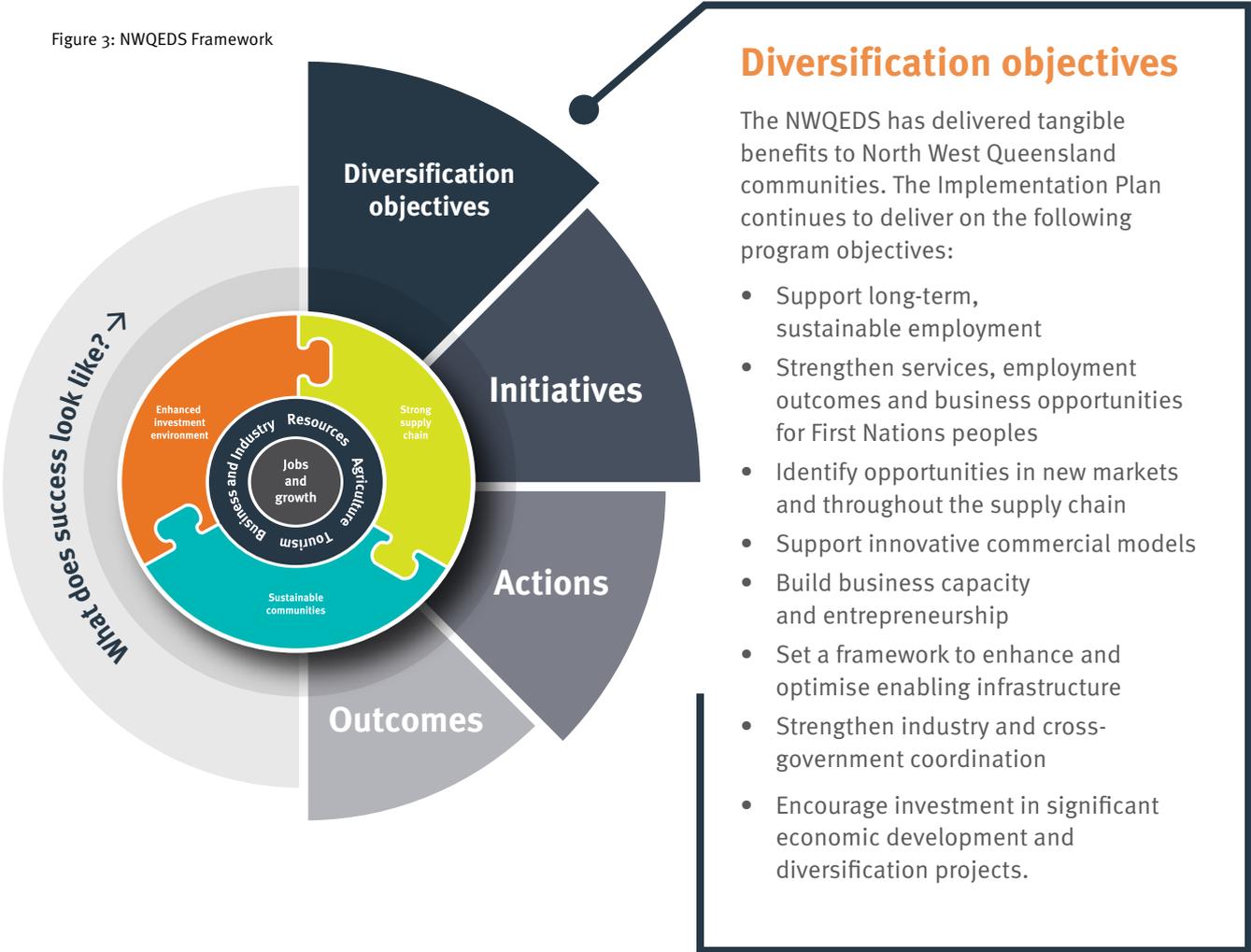
*NWMP SAC – North West Minerals Province Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Objectives

The NWQEDS aligns with the Queensland Government’s priorities for advancing Queensland and continued economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. It builds on work already underway across government and within the community to increase economic resilience and reduce the region’s vulnerability to market fluctuations, geopolitical shifts and climatic conditions.

Figure 3 illustrates how Implementation Plan initiatives align to its three themes and support its overarching objectives of creating jobs and economic growth. This approach provides a framework to drive investment and growth, create jobs and ultimately build a sustainable and thriving regional economy.

Figure 3: NWQEDS Framework



Reframing Queensland's resources industry

The Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan (QRIDP) has now been released following consultation in November 2021. The QRIDP was developed in consultation with industry and recognises that the resources industry has been a vital contributor to the economic prosperity of Queensland's regional communities, including Mount Isa. It identifies global trends impacting the resources industry, and identifies opportunities that these trends present for Queensland.

The QRIDP identifies the critical minerals sector as a key area of growth for Queensland's resources industry, particularly as the world seeks to decarbonise. This could be a major opportunity for the North West Minerals Province, given its abundance of minerals used in electric vehicles, renewable energy products, low-emission power sources and consumer devices.

This Implementation Plan is complemented by the QRIDP's key focus areas, including growing and diversifying the resources industry and building a safe and resilient future workforce.

www.resources.qld.gov/qridp

A collaborative approach to economic diversification

The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) will oversee the rollout of initiatives within this Implementation Plan. A cross-agency committee will leverage programs across government and deliver additional, targeted economic and social outcomes for the region.

The department will regularly consult with and report to the North West Minerals Province Stakeholder Advisory Committee (NWMP SAC) to ensure that actions within this Implementation Plan continue to effectively respond to the region's requirements.

The Queensland Government undertook community consultation on NWQEDS initiatives from December 2021. Feedback from the community provided insights into local opportunities to be actioned as part of this Implementation Plan.

DSDILGP's North West Queensland Regional Office in Mount Isa will continue to work directly with regional councils, business and industry stakeholders, and community representatives to deliver NWQEDS outcomes for local communities.

Part 2 of this Implementation Plan provides details of funding allocations and actions to achieve the Implementation Plan's objectives.

Implementation summary

Theme	Initiatives	Theme Funding*
Enhanced investment environment	1.1 Maximise the regional economic benefits of private sector projects	\$18,031,000 [^] in funding and an additional \$4,800,000 through the New Economy Minerals Initiative
	1.2 Strengthen economic development planning across the province	
	1.3 Support common user infrastructure opportunities	
	1.4 Support development of a critical minerals industry including secondary prospectivity	
	1.5 Increase agricultural production	
	1.6 Develop a pipeline of tourism projects	
	1.7 Coordinate the capture and analysis of regionally specific tourism data	
Strong supply chain	2.1 Build the capacity of businesses and entrepreneurs to respond to market opportunities	\$870,000
	2.2 Maximise local business participation in regional supply chains	
	2.3 Facilitate industry-led training opportunities	
	2.4 Increase the economic benefit of tourism	
Sustainable communities	3.1 Enhance community liveability and sustainability through supporting local actions	\$1,220,000
	3.2 Improve regional employment outcomes through optimised workforce planning	

* Funding amounts include GST

[^] Includes carryover funding from 2019-21 Implementation Plan

DAF Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
 DCHDE Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
 DESBT Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
 DoR Department of Resources
 DSDILGP Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

DSDSATSIP Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
 DTIS Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport
 GSD Gulf Savannah Development
 MITEZ Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Zone
 TEQ Tourism and Events Queensland
 TIQ Trade and Investment Queensland

Implementation lead	Implementation stakeholders	Timeframes for completion
DSDILGP	DTIS, DoR, Councils, private sector industry proponents, MITEZ, GSD	Underway, to 2025
DSDILGP	DSDSATSIP, Councils, MITEZ, GSD, DTIS, DESBT	Underway, to 2025
DSDILGP	DoR, Industry, Councils	Underway, to 2025
DoR	TIQ, DSDILGP, private sector industry proponents	To June 2024
DAF	DSDILGP, TIQ, Councils, private sector industry proponents, Agricultural Development and Investment Group	Underway, to 2025
DTIS	DSDSATSIP, DSDILGP, TEQ, Councils, MITEZ, GSD	Underway, to 2025
DSDILGP	DTIS, TEQ, Councils, MITEZ, GSD	2022–25
DSDILGP	DESBT, DTIS, Councils, MITEZ, GSD, DSDSATSIP	Underway, to 2025
DSDILGP	DSDSATSIP, DESBT, TIQ, Councils	Underway, to 2025
DSDILGP	DESBT, Councils, MITEZ, GSD	To 2025
TEQ	DSDILGP, DTIS, Councils, MITEZ, GSD	To 2025
DCHDE	DSDILGP, DTIS, DESBT, DSDSATSIP Councils, MITEZ, GSD	2022–25
DSDILGP	DSDSATSIP, DESBT, Councils, MITEZ, GSD	Underway, to 2025

Theme one: Enhanced investment environment



Theme one initiatives leverage the region's competitive advantages and work towards building an investment environment that is conducive to economic growth and business development. Companies interested in investing in the region will be partnered with the most appropriate government agency and complementary businesses, to overcome supply or development challenges and expedite potential developments. The department will also assist local businesses to take advantage of emerging opportunities, and innovative approaches to business processes, to expand their operations.

A key focus will involve facilitating access to common user infrastructure and facilities to mitigate risk and reduce startup and operational costs. Providing access to facilities that can be used by multiple companies, including smaller ones that do not have the capital to set up their own dedicated facilities, will help to attract investors and facilitate future off-take and commercial agreements. This will provide opportunities for new and local businesses to diversify, thereby creating new employment opportunities in the region.

* \$4,800,000 is funded through the New Economy Minerals Initiative

^ includes carryover funding from 2019-21 Implementation Plan

The Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan

The Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP) outlines how Queensland's energy system will transform to deliver clean, reliable, affordable power for generations.

The QEJP leverages Queensland's natural advantages to:

- build a clean, competitive energy system for accelerating economic and industry growth
- deliver affordable energy for households and businesses, and support more rooftop solar and batteries
- drive better outcomes for communities as partners in the energy transformation.

The QEJP will ensure Queensland achieves the 50 per cent Queensland Renewable Energy Target by 2030 and supports the continued growth of renewable energy to achieve two new renewable energy targets: 70 per cent by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035.

By 2035, the 'Queensland Super-Grid' will have around 25 gigawatts of renewable generation, two world-class pumped hydro energy storage assets, new high voltage backbone transmission, more batteries and other key storage and firming technologies.

The Queensland Government has made an initial \$4 billion down payment on Queensland's energy transformation. This is on top of the \$2 billion committed in recent years through the Queensland Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund.

The Queensland Government cannot deliver the QEJP alone. It is estimated that \$62 billion worth of private and public investment is needed, detailed in the Super-Grid Infrastructure Blueprint released with the Plan, together with opportunities for local supply chain growth.

For more information visit
<https://www.epw.qld.gov.au/energyandjobsplan/about>

Achievements by 2025

By 2025, through the implementation of economic development strategies, councils will be attracting new investments to the region, and community members will see tangible outcomes from these developments, including new workforce opportunities. These economic development strategies will help to secure new work for local businesses and support the NWQEDS' long-term goal of diversifying the economy.

Across the region, prospective commercial ventures will be identified and opportunities to develop resource, agriculture and tourism sectors will be actively pursued. Common user infrastructure will significantly mitigate the challenges involved in establishing new agricultural and mining businesses, leading to increased investment, supply chain and job opportunities.

In the resources sector, new approaches to minerals processing are being piloted. This will enable companies to pivot to accommodate demand for critical minerals and take advantage of new commercial opportunities. In the long-term, this will help companies to be more resilient to market fluctuations. New business partnerships using existing infrastructure and supply chains will be fully explored to help diversify and grow the region's economic base.

In the agriculture sector, private investments are starting to capitalise on the opportunities that the extensive North West's gulf river catchments present. The confidence to make these major investments has, in part, been the result of trial and demonstration cropping undertaken as part of the NWQEDS.

While the cattle industry continues to go from strength to strength, the region is beginning to demonstrate the potential for long-term cropping. On the back of the NWQEDS' focus on and investment in cotton, new crops like sesame, mung beans and chickpeas are being established.

Targeted market analysis of sesame, one of these key emerging crops, has been undertaken.

This work will shape the direction of future activities that will look to secure export opportunities.

NWQEDS' focus on government and private sector investment will position North West Queensland for agricultural development well into the future.

The tourism industry's contribution to the regional economy is increasing through NWQEDS' strategic approach to investment and growth. By 2025, signage for tourist attractions will be more visible, supporting an increase in visitor numbers at these locations. More tourists will also enjoy holidays in North West Queensland towns, providing a direct boost to these local economies.

What will success look like over the life of the NWQEDS?

High-value agricultural crops have been established, creating new jobs and upskilling opportunities in the region. Over the life of the NWQEDS, these crops have proven to be robust and resilient, giving local producers confidence to farm them in increasing volumes. Demand for these new crops is growing both locally and as emerging export opportunities are explored, while private investment in processing and supply chain infrastructure continues to deliver new technologies and jobs. In this way, the local agricultural industry provides direct employment and supply chain opportunities for locals, and attracts seasonal workers and new families to the region.

The tourism sector emerges as a growing economic contributor, providing vital opportunities for new businesses and employment for community members. Visitor data provides valuable insights into tourist requirements and trends, encouraging investment into the tourism infrastructure pipeline.

The resources sector continues to be a major employer for the region with new partnerships and output diversification boosting the region's economic output. The potential of critical minerals is being harnessed, supporting the development of new supply chains and businesses for years to come.

Initiatives

Theme 1 – Enhanced investment environment



1.1 Maximise the regional economic benefits of private sector projects

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DTIS, DoR, Councils, private sector proponents, MITEZ, GSD

Support

- \$5,500,000 to investigate mine waste reprocessing to support new and continued industry operations and facilitate new mineral processing infrastructure

Timeframe

Underway, to 2025

Actions

- Facilitate private sector projects to progress in a timely and coordinated manner
- Identify cross sector synergies and circular economy opportunities
- Fast-track new resource developments and mineral processing infrastructure, where possible
- Guide investment and support commercialisation of new technologies.

Outcomes

- New commercial projects are fast tracked to development phases to maximise benefits for the community
- New proponent and project requirements are known in advanced, thereby maximising opportunities for local workers and businesses to be involved
- Businesses can connect with complementary businesses to reduce operating costs and explore expansion opportunities
- By moving towards a circular economy, local businesses become more innovative and competitive.

Vanadium processing common user facility

The Queensland Government is commissioning the construction and operation of a common user minerals processing plant. The facility will extract minerals from mined rocks so they are ready for industrial use. The Queensland Government will invest at least \$10 million in the facility, with the final amount depending on the outcome of a construction tender.

This facility will expedite the development of the vanadium industry in North West Queensland, while also being available to third parties to process other critical minerals. The combined outputs are expected to support economic development, diversification and employment opportunities across northern Queensland.

statements.qld.gov.au/statements/93871



Image: The fishing and resources sectors are major contributors to the North West Queensland economy



1.2 Strengthen economic development planning across the province

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DSDSATSIP, Councils, MITEZ, GSD, DTIS, DESBT

Support

- \$75,000 to support local economic development planning

Timeframes

Underway, to 2025

Actions

- Roll out an Economic Development Toolkit to support Councils to:
 - » develop and implement economic strategies
 - » align economic development objectives with regional priorities including freight transport, land use and infrastructure planning
 - » identify project synergies and partnership opportunities across local government areas.
- Work with councils to review and update Economic Development Strategies prepared by councils periodically
- Engage with councils and industry to identify opportunities for collaboration
- Assist with the development of investment prospectuses, as required.

Outcomes

- Development of a major projects pipeline that identifies opportunities in the region
- Workforce and training requirements are identified during project development stages, providing time for employers and training service providers to source and skill-up employees
- Councils, supported by the Queensland Government, secure new investors or developments in their region that use and grow local supply chains
- Councils target strategic investment opportunities that are suited to their region
- Councils have direct access to state government investment agencies and are well-equipped to work with investors and suppliers, to secure new business developments.



1.3 Support common user infrastructure opportunities

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DoR, private sector industry proponents, councils

Support

- \$6,000,000 to investigate and facilitate common user solutions

Timeframes

Underway. Until at least the end of 2025

Actions

- Continue to work with industry and regional partners to identify and explore common user solutions in the resources and agricultural sectors
- Identify options to secure sulphuric acid supply for mines, minerals processing and fertiliser manufacturing
- Facilitate offtake agreements to encourage investment in the region and mitigate investment risk.

Outcomes

- Existing jobs in the resources and manufacturing sectors are maintained
- Common user infrastructure opportunities reduce risk and outlay for new and smaller companies, resulting in expanded operations and new resource and manufacturing ventures
- Shared facilities lead to collaborations between industries, creating local commercialisation, supply chain, training and employment opportunities
- Timeframes for bringing new projects in the region into production are reduced.



1.4 Support development of a critical minerals industry including secondary prospectivity

Lead

DoR

Implementation stakeholders

DSDILGP, TIQ, private sector industry proponents

Support

- \$4,800,000 to re-examine old mine tailings and waste, and core samples for critical minerals under the New Economy Minerals Initiative
- Queensland Government funding and facilitation programs may be used to support critical minerals companies.

Timeframes

Underway. To be completed by June 2024

Actions

- Provide facilitation services for critical minerals companies
- Work with stakeholders to develop a commercialisation program for processing technologies to recover target minerals
- Accelerate data driven-exploration
- Unearth additional geological information to help industry identify new projects
- Investigate methods to reprocess mine waste to recover critical minerals.

Outcomes

- North West Queensland's mineral sector diversifies and is a leader in critical minerals, supplying local and export markets
- New mineral extraction studies and pilot programs lead to commercialisation opportunities and new businesses establishing in the region
- New long-term jobs and ongoing investment are secured in North West Queensland
- Critical minerals developments boost local economies and towns, contributing to thriving and sustainable communities.



1.5 Increase agricultural production

Lead

DAF

Implementation stakeholders

DSDILGP, Councils, private sector industry proponents, Agricultural Development and Investment Group

Support

- \$2,000,000 to support the establishment of the cotton industry
- \$250,000 for dry land chickpea cropping at Richmond
- \$1,000,000 for the import and establishment of new black sesame genetics, establishment of white and black sesame seed production, and supply chain development, including promotions in target export markets
- \$182,000 to establish an up-country grains handling facility at Richmond, including three silos and an auger
- \$100,000 for irrigation and trial peanut cropping at Etheridge
- \$100,000 to investigate an integrated cattle handling facility
- \$1,000,000 to research, evaluate and demonstrate the suitability of crops that have an identified commercial and market attraction. These crops could include mung beans, bambara ground nuts and alternate fodder options.

Timeframes

Underway. At least until end of 2025

Actions

- Continued development and de-risking of new commercial crops and identification of new opportunities
- Analysis of dryland opportunities and irrigated cropping to support local farmers
- Facilitate investment in common user agriculture infrastructure
- Support ongoing beef industry innovation and development
- Investigate new irrigation technology suited to the North West region.

Outcomes

- Facilitation and support to establish a common user cotton gin. This will reduce the emerging cotton industry's transport and processing costs and create new jobs within the region
- Facilitation of the use and uptake of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles for mustering, allowing for improved on-farm health and safety outcomes for grazing operations and improved efficiencies as part of mustering operations in North West Queensland
- Continued support for new agricultural proponents and local producers that are diversifying their crops, through DAF's facilitation services and information packages
- Continued soil moisture profiling to build on local information and resources for producers considering crop diversification
- New black sesame varieties available for commercial production in the region
- New grains handling facilities established in the province
- Exploration of targeted export markets, the identification of key supply chain components and the resolution of known obstacles to facilitate the export of agricultural commodities from the North West Queensland Minerals Province.



1.6 Develop a pipeline of tourism projects

Lead

DTIS

Implementation stakeholders

DSDSATSIP, DSDILGP, TEQ, Councils, MITEZ, GSD

Support

- \$950,000 to support Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline projects and facilitate the provision of accommodation at Croydon for people with disabilities
- \$400,000 for new signage to increase visitation to local attractions and assist in establishing unique identities for each local government area
- \$210,000 to prepare pre-feasibility studies for tourism projects including:
 - » Doomadgee Arts and Information Centre (including business case development).

Timeframe

Underway. To be ongoing

Actions

- Develop a prospectus of potential North West Queensland tourism projects to promote regional investment and increase use of local supply chains and workforces
- Contribute to the development of catalytic tourism projects
- Assist councils to prepare pre-feasibility studies for future tourism projects
- Continue to improve signage for tourist attractions.

Outcomes

- Prepare and publish an online North West Queensland Tourism Prospectus
- Undertake tourism business development workshops for local businesses
- Identify a long-term pipeline of tourism projects to support future construction and ongoing local jobs
- Tourism development opportunities are thoroughly scoped and ready for future government or private investment.



1.7 Coordinate the capture and analysis of regionally specific tourism data

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DTIS, TEQ, Councils, MITEZ, GSD

Support

- \$264,000 for the rollout of the Localis data analysis system

Timeframe

2022 to 2025

Actions

- Implement new tourism data capturing technology that enables councils to target marketing campaigns and support funding submissions. The system will provide simple and consistent data capturing capabilities
- Analysis of data, including visitor profiles, reasons for travel, accommodation type and direction of travel, to inform promotional activities and tourism infrastructure planning.

Outcomes

- Strategic investment and tourism development advice based on data analysis
- Councils use visitor information to promote and improve local attractions, increasing tourist numbers and spend in regional communities over the long-term.

Theme 2: Strong supply chain



\$870,000
in funding

Theme two initiatives focus on enabling efficient and stable supply chains that connect the region's business and industry outputs to markets.

Achievements by 2025

Local and state governments are facilitating strategic partnerships between local companies to increase regional productivity and capability. Business owners can overcome the challenges of remoteness, allowing them to access new markets and leverage opportunities in emerging industries. They are aware of and can access available government training and services. This will assist local businesses to capitalise on emerging industry supply chain opportunities.

Local workers can easily access industry training and are supported to enter local employment. School leavers and young people can access programs to prepare them for the workforce, and are aware of the diversity of employment options within the region.

There is increased awareness and visitation of the region's tourism destinations. Tourists can easily find information on local attractions and use pre-prepared itineraries to experience the region all-year round, directly increasing local spend in North West Queensland communities.

What will success look like over the life of the NWQEDS?

New commercial partnerships are delivering direct and supply chain opportunities, which are being met by local businesses. This boost in regional productivity also works towards a more diversified economy, providing new and innovative career options for community members.

A steady increase in tourist numbers delivers an increase in reliable, full time jobs for locals, and also builds demand for hospitality and product-based jobs within the community.

Initiatives

Theme 2 – Strong supply chain



2.1 Build the capacity of business and entrepreneurs to respond to market opportunities

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DESBT, DTIS, Councils, MITEZ, GSD, DSDSATSIP

Support

- \$200,000 to build the online capabilities of local businesses
- \$100,000 to support business development initiatives.

Timeframe

Underway, to 2025

Actions

- Engage with industry networks to develop and deliver training and capacity building programs
- Build digital capacity and capability of businesses to undertake digital transformation activities
- Implement Indigenous business development training and accreditation programs
- Consultation with DTIS Indigenous Business Officers regarding tourism business and capability development
- Promote Queensland Government business development programs including:
 - » Mentoring for Growth
 - » Small Business Solutions
 - » Queensland Small Business Month initiatives
 - » Works with Small Business.

Outcomes

- Tailored workshops that meet the needs of local businesses
- New business investment and the expansion of existing local businesses contributes to a more resilient and diversified economy.



2.2 Maximise local business participation in regional supply chains

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DSDSATSIP, DESBT, TIQ, Councils

Support

- \$150,000 to deliver partnering events that develop and promote the capabilities of local businesses

Timeframe

Underway, to 2025

Actions

- Support buyers and suppliers to identify requirements and local contract opportunities
- Build the capacity and capability of local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Deliver tailored workshops and networking events throughout the region to introduce local suppliers to larger buyers
- Identify partnership opportunities between suppliers
- Develop a directory of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to increase Indigenous business participation in supply chains
- Investigate models for local business promotion, including to support major project development
- Investigate commercial opportunities regarding the Queensland Flight Test Range at Cloncurry Airport
- Continue to deliver business capability training, including the Contract Management, Capability Statement Development and Tendering for Business programs.

Outcomes

- Local businesses are aware of opportunities and have the skills to secure and deliver new contracts
- Supply chain opportunities are accessible and secured by new and existing local businesses
- Local business promotions and capability development programs increase the uptake of their services and their overall involvement in industry supply chains.



2.3 Facilitate industry-led training opportunities

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DESBT, Councils, MITEZ, GSD

Support

- \$100,000 to extend the Commerce North West industry training program across the region

Timeframe

2022 to 2025

Actions

- Roll out industry training focused on the retail, trade, resources and hospitality sectors
- Work with resource companies to provide industry-specific training or local apprenticeships
- Review learnings from the successful Commerce North West pilot, an industry-led training program providing school students with work experience opportunities
- Engage with industry groups and chambers of commerce to identify additional industry-led training and employment approaches
- Engage with peak industry bodies to identify training requirements and partner with them to deliver tailored training programs.

Outcomes

- Community members participating in these programs obtain employment
- A successful industry-led training program is implemented across North West Queensland and is effective in securing employment opportunities for community members
- An awareness of the value of industry training is established and opportunities for additional skilling-up programs are identified.

Queensland's next long term tourism industry strategy

In June 2022, the independent Queensland Tourism Industry Reference Panel released their Action Plan for Tourism Recovery (Action Plan), making 75 recommendations to achieve long-term sustainable growth and to increase visitor market share. Strategic areas identified as key for the growth and success of tourism include access and connectivity, particularly across regional Queensland; touring and drive tourism; new and refreshed tourism product and experiences; First Nations tourism; sustainability and climate adaptation; growing business events; accelerating eco-tourism; sustainable funding and adoption of innovation and technology.

The Government is developing a long-term tourism industry strategy to set the direction of tourism in Queensland for the next 10 years. A partnership approach is envisaged between the Queensland Government and tourism industry stakeholders, with institutions such as universities also playing a key role. To make the most of the opportunities ahead, address tourism's challenges, and collectively achieve the best outcomes, a cumulative phased approach will maximise efforts leading up to hosting of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Many of the tourism projects supported under the NWQEDS Implementation Plan will directly contribute to driving the priorities and outcomes of Queensland's tourism sector, in line with the Action Plan and long-term tourism industry strategy.

www.dtis.qld.gov.au/tourism/tourism-industry-reference-panel



2.4 Increase the economic benefit of tourism

Lead

TEQ

Implementation stakeholders

DSDILGP, DTIS, Councils, MITEZ, GSD,

Support

- \$220,000 for a targeted consumer awareness campaign, tactical marketing campaign and corporate relations strategy for North West Queensland (TEQ)
- \$100,000 for the promotion of local products and events (TEQ).

Timeframe

Underway, to 2025

Actions

- Work with councils to prepare local tourism investment attraction and experience development strategies
- Develop and implement a tourism awareness and tactical marketing campaign for the region
- Work in partnership with councils, Remote Area Boards and the tourism industry to identify strategies to attract visitors during the shoulder season and enhance visitor experiences
- Investigate options for councils to provide additional tourist accommodation
- Prepare and promote self-drive itineraries and trip plans for independent travel, tailored to the off-season climate
- Assist in the promotion of local products.

Outcomes

- A higher profile of the region and the unique experiences available to visitors
- Partnerships with regional airlines and tourism providers attract additional tourist to the region and its attractions
- Visitor rates increase, delivering additional direct and indirect tourism spend to local communities.

Theme 3: Sustainable communities



\$1,220,000
in funding

Achievements by 2025

Theme three focuses on improving the sustainability and liveability of towns and fostering thriving local communities with skilled, job-ready workforces.

Key activities involve harnessing more opportunities for community members to be involved in local businesses. This will be achieved by delivering training and development programs to skill-up workers, including young and Indigenous community members, and working with councils and businesses to secure on-the-job opportunities.

Other deliverables focus on community projects and enhancing liveability in North West Queensland towns, through improved housing and social initiatives identified by individual communities.

What will success look like over the life of the NWQEDS?

Viable housing solutions are identified for North West Queensland communities that meet local housing needs and support the attraction of new families and businesses.

State and local governments partner with industry to support and develop the local workforce, enabling workers to adapt to new industry opportunities and skill demands. Targeted community projects have been completed, ensuring North West communities continue to be vibrant and enjoyable places to live.

Image: Dinosaur-tourism is attracting a new wave of visitors to North West Queensland



Initiatives

Theme 3 – Sustainable communities



3.1 Enhance community liveability and sustainability through supporting local actions

Lead

DCHDE

Implementation stakeholders

DSDILGP, DTIS, DESBT, DSDSATSIP, Councils, MITEZ, GSD

Support

- \$1,000,000 to deliver Round 2 of the Building Sustainable Communities Grants Program to contribute to the development of vibrant community spaces
- \$10,000 to fast-track and support Local Housing Action Plans.

Timeframe

2022 to 2025

Actions

- Ongoing implementation of North West Minerals Province Local Action Plans – council-led plans that support liveability, increase workforce engagement and build on existing skilling programs
- Investigate housing investment and ownership models suitable for remote communities, including working with industry to identify worker accommodation options
- Collaborate with Cloncurry Shire Council to identify learnings and opportunities from the Cloncurry housing pilot program
- Support councils to leverage relevant Commonwealth and state government community funding programs, to progress projects that enhance regional towns and contribute to economic development outcomes
- Where appropriate, support the implementation of projects that contribute to population retention, community capacity building and economic development.

Outcomes

- Councils can access government services and funding that supports the attraction and retention of residents and contributes to the vibrancy and liveability of local towns
- Skilling and engagement plans support increased local participation in regional workforces
- Housing demand is identified and innovative strategies to address housing investment are being implemented.



3.2 Improve regional employment outcomes through optimised workforce planning

Lead

DSDILGP

Implementation stakeholders

DSDSATSIP, DESBT, Councils, MITEZ, GSD

Support

- \$150,000 to support skills training and workforce planning initiatives
- \$60,000 to support Indigenous training services and assist industry to exceed Indigenous employment targets.

Timeframe

Underway, to 2025

Actions

- Identify and pilot innovative industry and youth training programs that retain and attract new residents to local communities
- Optimise youth employment opportunities in North West Queensland
- Engage with major employers during project development to determine skills requirements
- Facilitate introductions between project proponents, community organisations and registered training organisations
- Support North West Queensland Workforce Strategy programs
- Support for First Nations training programs and for industry to exceed Indigenous employment targets
- Continue the DSDSATSIP Youth Employment Program which facilitates placements for Indigenous school leavers in training and apprenticeship programs
- Engage with Indigenous businesses to ensure they are aware of upcoming projects, thereby enhancing participation opportunities for jobseekers and businesses
- Link major employers to the DSDSATSIP Major Economic Projects team to support Indigenous employment outcomes.

Outcomes

- New opportunities within emerging industries are identified and relevant training programs are accessible to community members
- Potential and existing employers are linked to training and employment providers to facilitate access to a skilled, local workforce
- Targeted programs are delivered to effectively address the region's employment and training requirements.

Next steps

Many initiatives outlined in this Implementation Plan are already underway. DSDILGP will continue progressing each action in partnership with other government agencies, council and key stakeholders.

Lead agencies will implement and report progress through established departmental processes. DSDILGP, including the North West Queensland Regional Office, will continue to monitor progress of the overall Implementation Plan and provide regular progress reports to the NWMP SAC.

This Implementation Plan is designed to be updated periodically as new opportunities are identified. Some initiatives may need to be fast tracked or require longer implementation periods in response to unforeseen circumstances. DSDILGP will work closely with implementation leads, stakeholders and the NWMP SAC, to ensure diversification outcomes are achieved as soon as possible.

For more information on the implementation of the NWQEDS, please contact the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning:

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