

# Central Highlands towards 2020



# Central Highlands towards 2020

Central Highlands Regional Council is a strong and proactive local government that partners with state and federal governments for the long-term prosperity and liveability of its region.

We support and endorse the proposals put forward in the Australian Local Government Association's Local Government's Plan for an Innovative and Prosperous Australia and seek, with this document, to establish a link between these proposals and tangible outcomes for our communities for the term of the next federal government.

## Central Highlands TOP 3

### Central Highlands Meat Processing Plant

A meat processing facility to supply domestic and international markets.

### Central Highlands Intermodal Freight Hub

Road to rail junction strengthens the regional natural resource, agriculture and horticulture economy.

### Sealing the Springsure Tambo Road

Unlocking the potential of Queensland's central link for the movement of livestock and grain to the coast.



## Central Highlands Intermodal Freight Hub

An inland multimodal transport facility will transform local industry business practice and improve the safety and efficiency of regional roads.

A facility to transfer containers between road and rail will deliver an efficient, cost-effective and safe method of freight transportation.

Emerald will strengthen its position as a service and supply centre for the proposed mines in the Galilee Basin and provide incentive for the growth of regional agriculture and horticulture.

### Accelerating agribusiness

Special area precincts for meat processing, feedlot enterprise, oilseed and stockfeed processing, irrigated and dryland cropping and rural and natural resource industry investigation.

### Projects ready to go:

#### Central Highlands Meat Processing Plant

A new \$100 million meat processing facility near Emerald with the capability to process more than 100 000 head of beef cattle per year to supply the domestic and international markets.

#### Oilseed and Grain Processing Facility

A unique multi-functional oilseed and grain processing facility based at Emerald that provides significant competitive advantages to central and northern Queensland grain and oilseed growers, livestock producers and stockfeed businesses.

### Generating ideas ...

#### Food Innovation Centre

An independent, food safe, export accredited accessible facility that has market development and testing capabilities for new products will accelerate the development of innovative new high-value products and help remove the barriers around getting new product to market.

Council seeks funding of \$12 million for supporting infrastructure to enable the freight hub and agribusiness precinct projects.

### ISSUE

Developing agribusiness – freight and food

### ALGA proposals

A permanent doubling of Roads to Recovery funding (to at least \$700 million per annum)

Establish a Local Government – Higher Productivity Investment Plan of \$200 million per year for five years.

### Our priority projects

Central Highlands Intermodal Freight Hub and associated feeder roads and infrastructure.

Central Queensland Agribusiness Precinct.

Development of freight connectivity network.

### Benefit to Central Highlands

Attracts economic investment.

Improves agricultural supply chain efficiency.

Improves safety, longevity and efficiency of road network.

Provides critical supply link in flood event.

Improves tourism development opportunity.

Improves disaster management and resilience.



## Freight connectivity network

This region is a nationally significant place for freight movement. It requires considered development that includes:

Creating the Queensland Inland Highway that involves upgrading the Carnarvon, Dawson and Gregory Highways to carry more traffic, which give an economic boost to towns along the route and provide a critical supply link between central and northern Queensland during flood events.

Establishing a feeder network of roads around the proposed Central Queensland Intermodal Freight Hub.

## Central Highlands Intermodal Freight Hub feeder road:

### Spine Road Construction – Arcturus Rd to Orion Rd

\$15 million

Seeking 80%

To facilitate efficient freight of grain to the Central Highlands Intermodal Freight Hub at Yamala.

### Feeder roads connecting to spine road

\$10 million

Seeking 65%

To enable the freight of produce from the farm gate to the spine road on local roads.



## Upgrading the Springsure Tambo Road (Dawson Developmental Road)

In partnership with the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council.

This road is Queensland's central link for the movement of livestock and grain to the coast. Around 225 500 head of cattle to the value of \$125 – 150 million are transported on this road by 2800 B-double and road train trucks every year.

Council in conjunction with Blackall-Tambo Regional Council is seeking \$77 million to pave and seal 148 km of the Springsure Tambo Road.



## Flood protection

The cost to Central Highlands Regional Council of the flood events in 2008 and 2010-11 was in excess of \$60 million.

In the face of more extreme weather events due to climate change, the risk to the Emerald community in particular, and other small communities is dire.

In the meantime, residents are paying an unreasonable premium for insurance, which adds to the high cost of living in the region.

No adequate surety of flood protection remains a barrier to the attraction and expansion of the local economy.

Council is completing a business case for the preferred flood mitigation option of 17 km of levees, which is expected to indicate a cost in the vicinity of \$250-300 million. In which case, council will forthwith commence a discussion with the Queensland and Australian Governments about the bottleneck water restriction impact of the Vince Lester Bridge and the Queensland Rail Bridge with the aim to examine the physical and economic viability of raising both structures.

## Disaster relief and rebuilding

Central Highlands Regional Council strongly supports maintaining the current level of support provided under the NDRRA.

Under the current NDRRA activation, council's day labour reimbursement will only apply to costs relating to the physical labour expense and only a fraction of the cost (about 27%) for council-owned plant and equipment.

Council seeks to use its own labour, plant and equipment so that it can react to various situations throughout all stages of a natural disaster.

### ISSUE

Natural Disaster Protection

### ALGA proposals

Maintain the level of support provided under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).

Implement a dedicated program to support natural disaster mitigation

### Our priority projects

Emerald flood mitigation

Support of NDRRA

### Benefit to Central Highlands

Protection against major flood events.

Lower insurance premiums for residents.

Attracts economic development.

Replacement of infrastructure with stronger more resilient assets.



## Turning up the heat

The prediction is that Central Queensland will become hotter with more intense rainfall events.

This poses a number of risks for human health and agriculture, including mosquito-borne disease, heat stress, change in crop suitability, change in pests and weed species, more flood events, increase in power consumption, change in population, and change in tourism patterns. (The Critical Decade. Queensland climate impacts and opportunities. Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, 2012)

Council seeks funding to support its consultation with the community to undertake climate vulnerability assessments and develop adaptation plans and implement recommendations.

### ISSUE

Coping with climate change

### ALGA proposals

Support for councils to work with local businesses and communities to implement local and regional climate change plans.

\$100 million over four years.

### Our priority projects

Climate vulnerability assessments, adaptation plans and implementation.

### Benefit to Central Highlands

Will enable community consultation and strategic planning for projects required for the region to adapt to climate change.



## Unfreeze FAGs

The freezing of indexation of the FAGs until 2017-18 is having significant long-term impacts on councils, undermining equitable access to facilities and services.

The current base funding of approximately \$2.3 billion should be increased to better reflect the actual cost of local government services and infrastructure and should be restored to a level equal to at least one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

Year	2010/2011 (\$million)	2011/2012 (\$million)	2012/2013 (\$million)	2013/2014 (\$million)	2014/2015 (\$million)
Qld grant	407	427	420	446	453
CHRC grant	9.8 (2.41%)	9.9 (2.41%)	8.8 (2.41%)	9.0 (2.41%)	8.9 (2.41%)
CHRC grant with indexation	9.8	10.3	10.0	10.7	10.9
Difference	0	.5	1.2	1.7	2.0

Therefore the cumulative impact has been a real dollar loss of \$5.4 million over four years.

Council seeks immediate restoration and maintenance of indexation of the FAGs.



## ISSUE

Building a better Central Highlands

## ALGA proposals

Community infrastructure funding at \$300 million per annum over four years.

Increase in the quantum of Federal Assistance Grants (FAGs) to at least one per cent of Commonwealth taxation.

Restore the indexation of Financial Assistance Grants.

## Our priority projects

Emerald Airport upgrade

Enhance regional water storage capacity.

Telecommunications improvement.

## Benefit to Central Highlands

Facilitate tourism opportunity

Improve liveability in the region

Relieve rates pressure on households.

Provide incentive for investment in agriculture.

Reinforce supply and service capability to resource sector.



## Living in the Central Highlands

Properly maintained community infrastructure helps produce better quality outcomes for Australian communities as well as facilitating greater social inclusion.

It also achieves other important social and regional policy outcomes, including attraction and retention of skilled workers, community health and well-being, social cohesion and tolerance, building social capital and enabling broad-based education and learning.

**There are several priority community infrastructure projects for the Central Highlands that include:**

### Improving Emerald Airport

The Emerald Airport, servicing more than 225 000 people per annum, requires a runway extension and surface upgrade, and a terminal upgrade. This will assist to attract visitors, provide convenient travel for the community to attend to business and appointments in the capital city, and provide the essential transport link for mining activities in the region.

### Water for a rainy day

Increasing Fairbairn Dam's capacity to deliver water and therefore improve yields and minimise crop loss is fundamental to position the Central Highlands as North Queensland's premier agricultural and horticultural centre.

Providing security of water supply from Emerald to Capella via a pipeline will improve liveability and enhance economic prosperity in the town.

### Central Highlands – the place to be

Council is committed to improving liveability in the region by supporting the progress of projects, including implementing sporting master plans for Emerald and Blackwater, the construction of the Ivy Anderson Home for the aged in Springsure, and the development of a masterplan for the colocation of arts and cultural facilities in Emerald.

### Better connections - telecommunications

More mobile blackspot funding is required throughout the region because access to the fastest and most reliable internet and mobile phone coverage will enhance and diversify the economy, support growth, develop tourism enterprise, enhance education, reform medical treatment, and enrich community life.

Council seeks immediate funding for its 16 eligible blackspot funding sites and resolution for 24 spots that do not meet the funding eligibility criteria.

Council seeks \$2.5 million to upgrade the general aviation area of the airport to meet CASA compliance requirements and \$5.3 million to upgrade the airport runway.

Council seeks \$2.5 million to build the Ivy Anderson Home for the aged and \$3 million to develop an arts and cultural precinct in Emerald.



Telephone: 1300 242 686  
[www.centralhighlands.qld.gov.au](http://www.centralhighlands.qld.gov.au)