

CEO Update

There are a lot of exciting things happening in our region at the moment. We have had confirmation of \$405m in funding for a new hospital, funding for a stadium, we believe that the decision on Chalco is just around the corner, and we are awaiting the declaration of Abbot Point as a State Development area. In addition to this, there are \$28 billion in projects for the region listed on the Regional Development Register. No wonder we are having trouble keeping up.

Even REDC is undertaking change at the moment. Darryl Camilleri has stepped down as Chair to take up the position of Deputy Mayor of the Mackay Regional Council (a backward step we say !!) and Julie Boyd has stepped up as the new REDC Chair. With Julie's move we found we were without a deputy chair, and the position was unanimously given to Mike Bruner. I look forward to working more closely with both Julie and Mike who



have been very supportive in the past. The board positions are in the process of being changed to ensure that the mayor of each new regional council has a seat on the board.

We also adding a new infrastructure position, and combining retail and small business into one. A special general meeting will be called to accept the changes.

Change is happening across the State with Ross Contarino being appointed the new CEO of Advance Cairns. Ross was formerly the Regional Manager for AusIndustry based out of Townsville, and covering the Mackay Whitsunday region. REDC has worked with Ross for a number of years and look forward to continuing the relationship. Ross is well deserving of the position and we wish him the best of luck.

The Department of Tourism, Regional Development & Industry are convening a meeting of all the regional economic development organisations (REDO's) in Qld, in Mackay in August. We are very excited that the Minister has selected Mackay as the location for the first event of its kind. We look forward to developing strong relationships with the other REDO's across Qld, and talking about our experiences and projects in order to learn from each other.

REDC's focus leading into end of financial year is on finalising our 2007/2008 projects, starting on our 2008/2009 projects, and getting some serious outcomes for the region.

"Trade & Transport in the Tropics"

The next leadership forum will be held on Wednesday the 25th June, in the foyer at the Mackay Entertainment centre. It will feature Minister John Mickel, who is the minister for Transport, Trade & Industrial Relations. As our region grows, the focus will ever increase on transport and trade and so it will be a good opportunity to hear from the State Government minister about the plans for our region.



The forum will also feature a presentation from Julie Boyd, REDC's Chair, and the newly appointed Special Trade Representative to Japan, South Korea and the Philippines. Julie will talk about her new role, and what it entails.

The forums provide a good opportunity to network with other regional leaders, and to show a united voice to the State Government. You will also have the opportunity to put questions to Minister Mickel.

Invitations to the forum have been sent out by email, and the RSVP date is the 13th of June. Please respond to [Melanie Woodman](mailto:Melanie.Woodman@mwredc.org.au) at mwoodman@mwredc.org.au

Project Update—Liveability Audit

REDC's Liveability Audit is well underway. Researchers from the Institute for Sustainable Regional Development (ISRD) at Central Queensland University have begun shaping the questionnaire that will be used to survey residents on aspects of our region's liveability.

In order to determine what aspects of liveability the survey will address, the ISRD team looked at similar studies elsewhere and recent work on quality of life and wellbeing before holding two focus groups with a diverse mix of regional residents to fine tune the ideas.

Once finalized, the survey will be put to randomly selected residents across the Whitsunday, Mackay and Isaac Regional Council areas. A random survey of residents in South East Queensland will also be used to compare perceptions of liveability.

The results of the liveability audit will be available to the region once the study is completed in August this year.

This project is possible thanks to the support of the Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, Rio Tinto Australia and Isaac Regional Council.

Regional Priorities Workshop

Subsequent to the Ministerial Forum held in April, Minister Desley Boyle asked that all regions across the State submit their top 5 regional priorities. A workshop was held on the 23rd of May will all Forum invitees asked to submit their ideas prior to the workshop.

Participants were asked to assess the priorities submitted under the following four categories:

- Must be an infrastructure project
- Must be of regional significance
- Must require the State's involvement for the project to happen
- Must be a State Government responsibility

The top five priorities identified by the group were:

1. Baseload Powerstation for Nth Qld
2. Affordable Housing Provision
3. Regional Freight Transport Network
4. Statutory regional plan / Regional Infrastructure Strategy
5. Connors River Dam / Regional Water Infrastructure for Future Development

REDC will be compiling fact sheets on all of these projects in order to have detailed information to present to visiting Government officials. It is our suggestion that these priorities be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure in this rapidly changing economic climate that other projects are not missed and that new projects are assessed and added if need be.

New Staff Profile



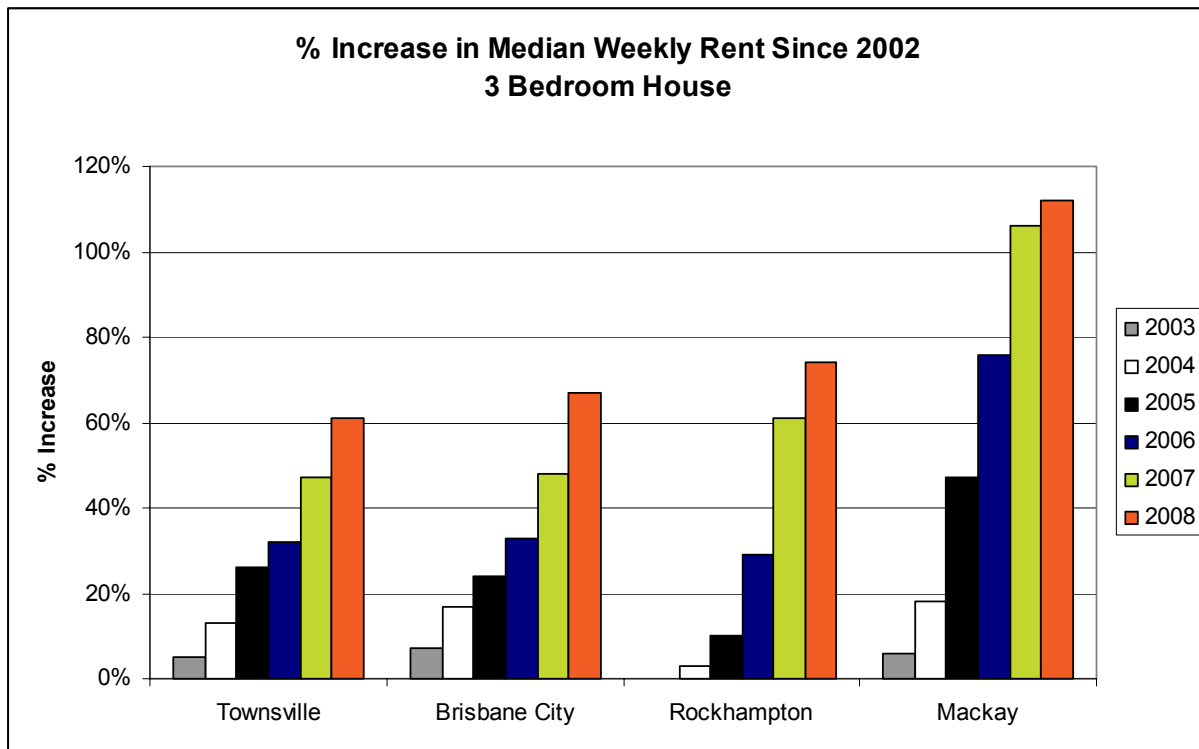
Name: Laura Sorensen
Birthplace: Rockhampton
Last Job: Office Co-ordinator, Black Duck Kitchens
Current Position: Research Officer
Part time school Job: Hungry Jacks
Education: Certificate III Business
Currently completing Psychology Honours Degree with CQU.
Favourite place in region: Mackay Marina

Did you know.....?

Mackay Tourism has been appointed by Reed Exhibitions for the 2008 Queensland Mining & Engineering Exhibition, to provide a one-stop accommodation booking and purchasing service. All accommodations in Mackay have now been fully occupied for the QME. However rooms are now available in Airlie Beach or on the Fantasea MV Ammari docked at the Mackay Marina Harbour.

If you have any queries please contact Veronica Malagueno, Special Projects Executive, Mackay Tourism on 07 4944 5859.

Interesting Statistic



In 2002, the median weekly rent for a 3 bedroom house in Mackay was \$170.00. In 2008, the median weekly for the same sized house is \$360.00 – an increase of 112%.

In Mackay, the period of highest growth was between 2004 and 2005 where median weekly rents rose 25%.

This chart shows the percentage increase from 2002 value in annual median rent prices for the years 2002 to 2008

Project Update—Freight Transport Study

Stage One of the Freight Transport Study is nearing completion. A draft final report has been received from the consultant, Synergies Economic Consulting, and is currently being reviewed by the project steering committee.

Thanks to all stakeholders who completed the survey on freight transport constraints and opportunities.

Stage One of the project aims to identify regional demand drivers, major freight corridors and freight flows and potential infrastructure gaps into the future. This information will lead into a more focused investigation in stage two.

REDC's partners for the Economics of Freight Transport Study include the Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, Mackay Port Authority, Mackay City Council and Brigalow Logistics.

Regional Development Register—Update

- A new \$405 million Mackay Hospital to be located on existing site
- Bridge Road Medical Suites to include bulk billing medical centre, pharmacy, dentist & accommodation
- Harbour City Central industrial complex
- Several new coal, copper, gold and silver mines under study
- Goonyella-Riverside and Peak Downs Open-cut Mines considering expansion
- Upgrade of the Goonyella-Abbott Point rail network under consideration
- Abbott Point Coal Terminal upgrades continue
- A number of gas projects in the Bowen Basin

Community Profile—MWNRM Group

Mackay Whitsunday NRM Group is a natural resource management body based in Mackay. Our role is to involve community and businesses to actively manage land, water and biological resources in this region through cooperative programs. These programs are developed through consultation with community groups, local, state and federal government and private industry inputs.

We partner with commercial investors, agricultural industries, research groups, Traditional Owners, Landcare & catchment groups, local, state and federal government, scientists and researchers to leverage the protection, restoration and long term sustainability of our natural and indigenous assets.

In 2007/08 our projects included some ground breaking reports for our region, including the launch of the Mackay Whitsunday Water Quality Improvement Plan. This substantial and thoroughly compiled document, if implemented, will improve the water quality and ecological health of the waterways, estuaries and the Great Barrier Reef within the 33 catchments of the Mackay Whitsunday region. Hard copies are available on request or as pdfs on www.mwnrm.com.au

The Sustainable Landscapes project is another successful program which offered financial incentives to

sugarcane farmers and graziers for implementing on farm environmental improvements such as fencing along creeks, weed eradication, installation of tail water pits and sediment traps. Through this program farmers have been able to make additional strides in their environmental improvements and crucially, increase or sustain their profitability.

Mackay Whitsunday NRM Group conducted a pilot project in Sarina through their Sustainable Landscapes program called the 'Sarina Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Program'. This three-year program is a cooperative project funded by Mackay Regional Council, BMA, Sarina Catchment Landcare Association, Mackay Whitsunday NRM Group and the Australian Government. It was launched by the Hon Tony Burke, MP Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in May 2008, with Kirsten Livermore MP for Capricornia and James Bidgood, MP for Dawson at Grasstree Beach in Sarina.



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N R M
G R O U P

The project will see the eradication of weeds on all 7 Sarina beaches as well as the planting of native species, installation of new amenities and also ensuring dune stability for nesting turtles and protecting the beaches from erosion.



Mackay Whitsunday NRM Group will be extending the project to Mackay beaches in the future and are currently looking for interested business partners.

There have been many other worthwhile projects in 2007/08 including Wetlands, Beach Scrubs, Indigenous Fish Traps and Indigenous traditional knowledge recordings. For information or involvement in any Mackay Whitsunday NRM Group projects, please log onto www.mwnrm.com.au or email jane@mwnrm.com.au

Board Profile



Name: Julie Boyd
Current Position with REDC: Chairperson
Sector/Organisation Represented: Special Trade Representative to Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines

Why are you involved with REDC?:

The rebirth of REDC has provided this region with the opportunity for this organisation to truly represent the region and speak for the region with one voice. Other communities have achieved this and have seen the flow on effects of investment in infrastructure and business. This region is the powerhouse of Queensland and yet we do not represent ourselves as that, we need to make sure that we are working collaboratively to achieve for all and I am keen to assist .

◆ REDS Update ◆ REDS Update ◆ REDS Update ◆ REDS Update ◆

(REDS is the Regional Economic Development Strategy for Mackay Whitsunday)

The story below lists the projects REDC will be starting in 2008/09. These projects are the direct result of the ideas raised in the REDS discussion groups earlier this year. Members of the discussion groups will shortly be invited to nominate to sit on the Project Steering Committees for each project as funding is confirmed.

A full update of regional projects that deliver on REDS is currently underway. REDC's Research Officer, Laura Sorensen, is liaising with stakeholders to identify relevant projects. If you think your projects might contribute to the achievement of REDS, please contact Laura by emailing research@mwredc.org.au

For a copy of REDS, go to www.mwredc.org.au/mackaywhitsredc/projects/

New Projects for 2008/2009

We are currently finalizing the new projects that REDC will undertake in 2008/2009. The project ideas were generated through the Regional Economic Development Strategy process, where we engaged stakeholders in discussions about what challenges required immediate action in order to secure our long term future. We would like to thank everyone who participated in the discussions and contributed to the final projects, especially people who travelled from Isaac and Whitsunday to attend.

We decided that we would undertake a small number of regionally significant projects, rather than a large array of small projects.

Full details of the projects will shortly be posted on our website (www.mwredc.org.au) and or contact Tanya Radke at REDC (t.radke@mwredc.org.au) for further information.

The 2008/2009 projects are:

1. Impacts of Future Growth
2. Investment Attraction
3. Regional Skills Strategy
4. Carbon Footprint

We are in the final stages of having these projects approved by the Department of Tourism, Regional Development & Industry, and we will then be seeking additional funding from stakeholders who will directly benefit from the outcomes of these projects. Should your organisation wish to become a project sponsor, please contact Narelle Pearse at REDC (n.pearse@mwredc.org.au).

2020 Summit

Report by Narelle Pearse

I recently attended the 2020 Summit in Canberra convened by Kevin Rudd. Whether you think the 2020 summit was a publicity event or merely a “talkfest”, the fact remains that for the first time in political history, the Government asked the people what they needed to do to move Australia forward. Being chosen as one of the 1,000 people to attend the 2020 Summit was an extraordinary experience. I was selected to be part of the “Future Direction of the Australian Economy” stream, and I was particularly keen to ensure that regional issues formed part of the agenda. I learned a lot from the experience, and did my best to make a strong contribution to the debate and represent regional Australia.

There has been a lot of press about the Summit, and from my perspective, as usual, they got it wrong.....but of course, newspapers need to be sold !!

Overall, I met some extremely interesting people at the summit, both high profile and no so high profile. All people were treated exactly the same regardless of whether they were high profile or not. I liken the weekend to a “leadership workshop” similar to something I’d attend in the region, which was not intimidating at all.



Where's Wally? (Sydney Morning Herald)

The clear message to the Government was that we need to keep the momentum going long after the closure of the summit and all participants were keen to be involved on a continuing basis so as to bring the ideas to fruition. At the end of the day there were no big, surprising ideas—we know what needs to be done and now it’s up to the Federal Government to make them happen.

I would also like to thank both James Bidgood and Julie Boyd for supporting my application to be part of the 2020 Summit.

Misconceptions

- * It wasn’t stacked with celebrities and Prime Minister’s mates – I met a lot of people just like me.
- * None of the Government people there tried to heavy us, nor push us towards consensus – it was about generating ideas
- * There was no interference in the preparation of the final “big ideas” from each stream, just a lack of time to prepare them properly.
- * The standing ovation for the PM was genuine – no one whipped us into standing up.
- * All participants were there because they believed in the process, and were keen to have their say.
- * We were not limited to a minute and half per person – we all got the chance to have our say, and we were listened to.

REDC Membership

For information on how to become a member of REDC, contact Narelle Pearse at n.pearse@mwredc.org.au or call 07 4953 2655.