



Priority Development Area



Where Investment
Meets **Opportunity**

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Mackay Waterfront Priority Development Area (PDA).

Here in Mackay, we know the value of great places. Places that bring people together, spark ideas and create opportunity. That's exactly what the Mackay Waterfront represents, the future of our city's growth, investment and lifestyle.

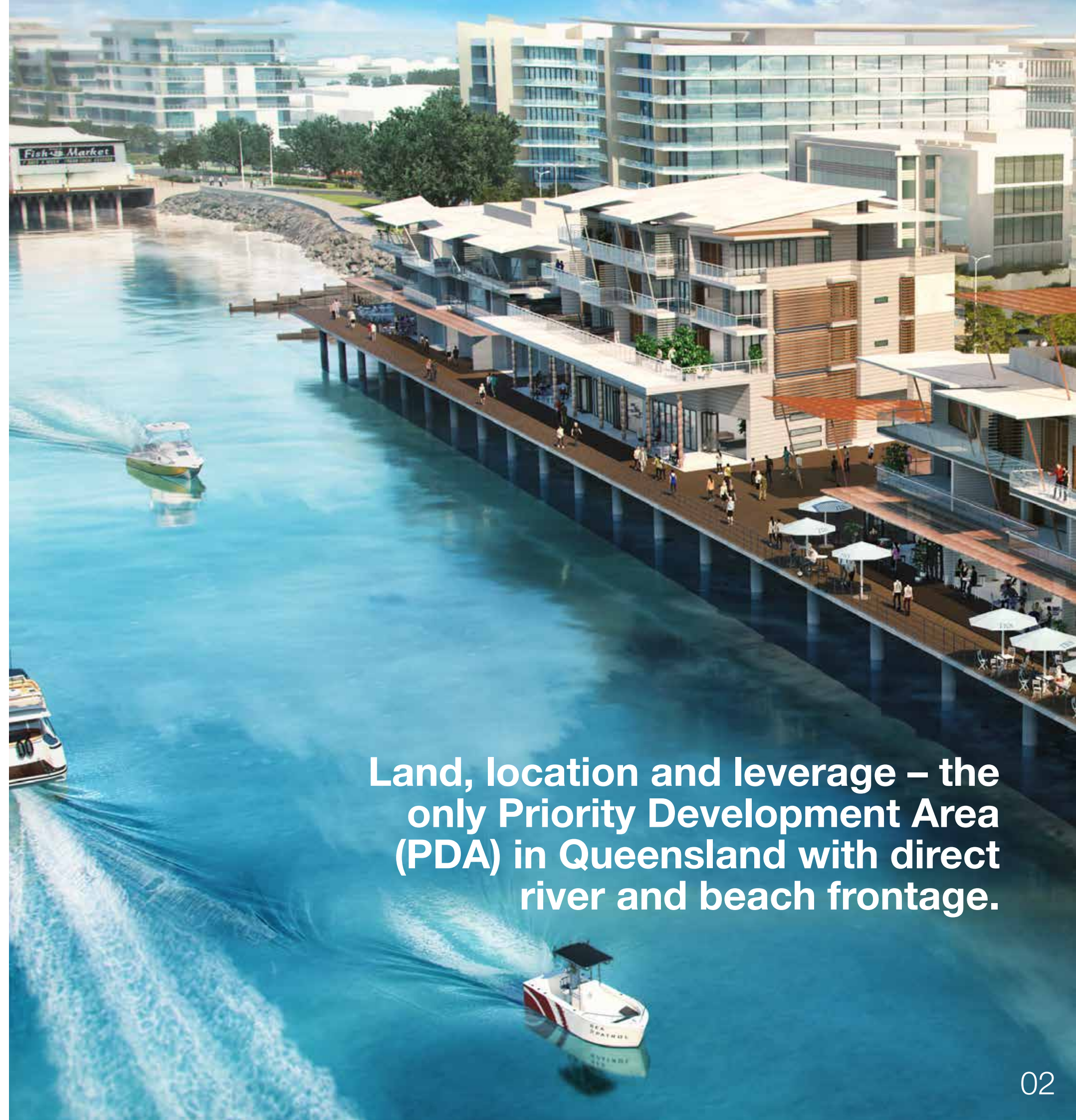
As a region, we've been defined by our resilience, ambition and strong sense of community. With more than \$35 billion across 450 projects in the pipeline in our region and an economy built on both traditional and emerging industries, Mackay is primed for transformation – and the Waterfront is at the centre of it.

This 172-hectare PDA is not just a development project, it's an opportunity to invest in a region that's already on the move. With fast approvals and proactive planning, the Mackay Waterfront is ready for investment. Whether you're looking at tourism, housing, health and wellbeing, education, hospitality or commercial opportunities, we have the foundations and the momentum to make it happen.

This is your invitation to join us. To invest in a place that's vibrant, liveable and growing fast. A place where people want to live, businesses want to grow and communities thrive. We look forward to working with you.



Mayor Greg Williamson
Mackay Regional Council



Land, location and leverage – the only Priority Development Area (PDA) in Queensland with direct river and beach frontage.

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WHY MACKAY? WHY NOW?

Opportunity doesn't wait, and neither do we.

With a diverse, future-ready economy, an ambitious regional growth agenda and billions in public and private investment already in motion, Mackay is more than just a great place to live - it's the smart place to invest.

Natural strengths, built advantages

- Positioned between the reef and rainforest
- Access to markets through the Port of Mackay and Port of Hay Point
- Strategic location with prime agricultural land and proximity to the resources in the Bowen and Galilee Basins
- Mackay Airport, the fifth busiest in Queensland
- Rail connectivity to the north, south and west
- A marina that supports recreational boating and local maritime industry

A smart, liveable investment destination

- Short commutes, vibrant public spaces and a relaxed lifestyle
- Access to quality health services, education, sport, recreation and arts and cultural activities
- Tropical climate all year round
- Coastal city built alongside the Pioneer River and beaches

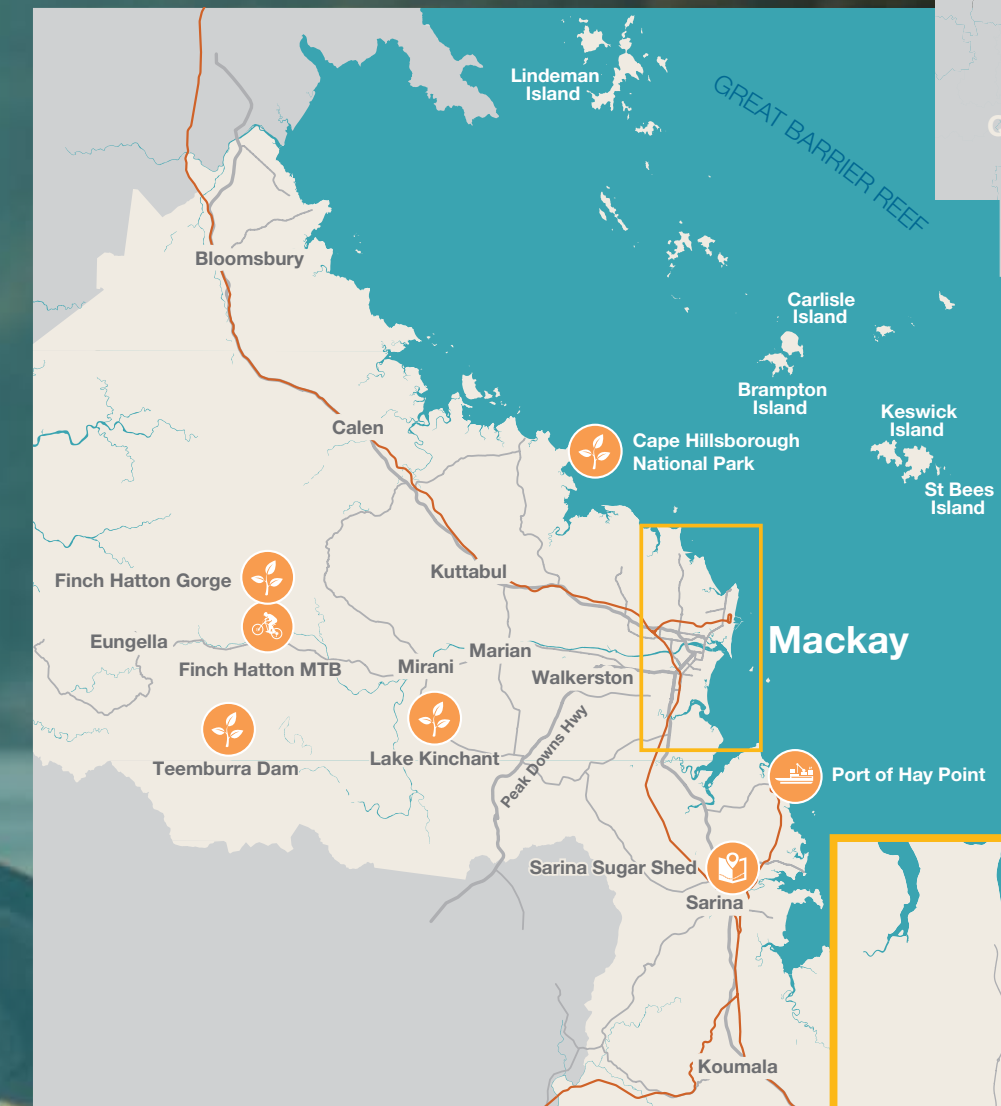
Economic and business environment

- Regional service centre with healthcare, education, retail and industry support
- Strong population base that is projected to grow
- Affordable industrial and commercial spaces with room to grow
- Established utilities infrastructure, including electricity, water sources and high-speed data networks

Industry strengths

- Agriculture: productive agricultural land, existing skilled workforce, established supply chains
- Tourism: natural attractions (Finch Hatton Gorge, Cape Hillsborough, Mountain Bike Trails), air access (1.5 hr flight from Brisbane), access to hinterland, islands and the Great Barrier Reef
- Natural Resources and Energy: natural endowments and renewable projects
- Resources: Significant resources in the Bowen and Galilee Basins, with Mackay acting as a major service hub for the resource industry (mining equipment, technology and services)

Mackay region



Map key

- Mackay Waterfront PDA
- Mackay Airport
- Mackay Railway Station
- Port of Mackay / Port of Hay Point
- Mackay Marina
- Tourism Attractions
- Finch Hatton MTB
- Great Barrier Reef (GBR) Arena
- Mackay Entertainment Convention Centre (MECC)
- Bluewater Lagoon
- Sarina Sugar Shed
- Rail (North Coast Main Line, Goonyella Coal System)



We are a region with momentum.

Mackay is the economic, logistical and population centre of the Greater Whitsundays - driving innovation, investment and industry across Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions.

As the region's commercial capital, Mackay provides critical infrastructure, higher education, healthcare and business services that support the broader area's growth. It is home to major institutions like CQUniversity, James Cook University, the Resources Centre of Excellence, and a recognised manufacturing and engineering sector servicing the Bowen and Galilee Basins.

Its strategic coastal location also makes it the regional gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and Queensland's mining and agricultural heartlands, enabling Mackay to play a leading role in tourism, supply chain coordination and emerging industries, like biofutures and renewable energy.

With strong connections across road, rail, sea and air, Mackay doesn't just support the Greater Whitsunday Region – it powers it.



Economy

2024 Population

128,361

More than 8,800 person increase from 2019

Employment

53,178

Local jobs (2023-24)

Businesses

11,010

In 2024, 687 growth from 2022

Tourism

Passenger Movements

2020-21 = **597,339**

2023-24 = **922,621**

54% increase from 2020-21 to 2023-24

Property Market

House Price

\$535,000

Median House Price (2024)

2046 Population

159,361

31,000 new residents over the next 20 years

Unemployment

2.4%

3.6% in QLD (Dec 2024)

Total Net Exports ⁽²⁰²⁴⁾

\$5,806 M

#1 exporter - mining
#1 importer - manufacturing

Key Industries by Value Add (2024)

Total Value Added
\$14.04 B

Top Three Industries

\$5,775 M
Mining

\$1,345 M
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services

\$930 M
Health Care and Social Assistance

Visitors

1.2 M

In 2023-24

Day trip = **46%**

Domestic overnight = **52%**

International = **2%**

Visitor Spend

\$631 M

Spend per day/ night =
\$230.7

Spend per trip =
\$506.1

Dwelling Forecast

16,249

Between 2021 and 2046

World-class outdoor recreation.

Finch Hatton MTB: Queensland's newest rainforest mountain biking destination, offering more than 14.5km of trails through lush sub-tropical terrain, with future stages set to position Mackay on the international MTB tourism map.

Rainforest hinterland: The Pioneer Valley and Eungella National Park offer a hinterland experience, just an hour drive from the Mackay CBD. Known for its rainforests and platypus viewing at Broken River, this hinterland supports eco-tourism ventures including hiking, nature-based retreats, wellness experiences and boutique accommodation.

Fishing, boating and camping: the region's diverse waterways, including the blue Pioneer River, expansive offshore reefs and inland dams, create abundant year-round opportunities for anglers and boaters. Coupled with accessible camping locations and boat ramp facilities, Mackay provides great opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Access to the reef: The Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and secluded beaches are all within easy reach.

Access to the beach: Mackay offers 31 beaches, with four of them being patrolled by lifeguards. Three of these patrolled beaches are conveniently located within 30 minutes of Mackay's CBD.



Events and entertainment

International sporting fixtures: Mackay is increasingly hosting top-tier events, from international cricket matches at Great Barrier Reef Arena (Harrup Park) to elite level basketball and athletics.

NRL games: BB Print Stadium hosts high-profile matches, expanding access to top-tier sporting entertainment.

Annual events calendar: From festivals to foodie events and family-friendly community days, Mackay delivers a vibrant calendar of experiences for all ages. Major events have included Elton John, Kiss and Jimmy Barnes.



31 beaches –
most within 20
to 40 minutes
of the CBD



Rainforest
Hinterland



Short
commutes
and relaxed
family friendly
lifestyle



World-class
universities
and education



Over \$35 billion
in the project
pipeline



Great Barrier
Reef access



Strong
economic
foundation of
agriculture,
mining and
tourism



Service hub for
the Bowen and
Galilee Basin





**Invest in a
place that's
vibrant,
liveable and
growing fast.**

MACKAY'S POSITION IN 2032 OLYMPICS

As one of only four regions in North Queensland confirmed to host an event as a part of the Olympics, Mackay is uniquely positioned to capitalise on the momentum.

From upgraded stadiums to transport and accommodation infrastructure, the Mackay region is poised to deliver lasting economic uplift, increased visitation and global visibility - making now the perfect time for private investment.

Global attention. New infrastructure. Legacy potential.



International cricket in Mackay

Great Barrier Reef Arena (Harrup Park), Mackay's premier stadium precinct, will host international world-class cricket matches during Brisbane 2032. This unlocks:

- Significant stadium upgrades and supporting infrastructure
- Demand for accommodation, dining and entertainment
- Legacy potential for future events, national tournaments and destination marketing



Olympic sailing in the Whitsundays

Just over an hour north, the Whitsundays will host Olympic sailing events. Mackay will play a critical support role as:

- A key aviation and logistics hub, via Mackay Airport
- A regional service centre and employment base for support crews, hospitality and overflow visitation
- A strategic base for investment in recreation, retail and lifestyle infrastructure

Invest where the
world is watching.



WHY INVEST?

Fast approvals. Financial incentives. Strategic support.

Mackay Regional Council has created the conditions for confident investment. With its relaxed lifestyle, diverse economic base and skilled workforce, the Mackay Waterfront presents a prime location for sustainable and profitable investment opportunities.

Planning certainty

- Streamlined assessment under the Mackay Waterfront PDA Development Scheme
- Aligned with council's vision for growth, activation and private sector delivery
- Clear development parameters and fast processes
- Free planning advice
- Continuous support from feasibility through to construction

Hands on support

- Dedicated Mackay City and Waterfront team
- Dedicated Major Developments team in Development Planning and Engineering
- No-cost pre-lodgement
- Access to site-specific advice and economic data
- Economic Development team can provide industry specific advice and support

Incentives for eligible projects

- Up to 100% infrastructure charge reduction up to a maximum of \$2 million
- Deferred infrastructure payments to support cash flow
- Discounted service connection, food licensing and trade waste fees
- Car parking concessions and access to the Façade Improvement Scheme

Fast development approvals processing

From lodgement to decision #1 in QLD for

- Material change of use
- Reconfiguration of lot approvals
- Operational works approvals
- Negotiated decisions
- Concurrence referrals

#4 in QLD for minor change approvals (UDIA, Q4 2024)

“Council is doing an exceptional job of engaging with the development sector to ensure that the outcomes and approvals are achieved in a timely manner.”

Sean Sanford, SCG Urban



“You’re in a great location, amazing weather, fantastic people, a can-do council and cost savings that you can’t get anywhere else.”

Bruce Coulson, Coulson Operations (Kool Beanz SUNS)



“The council takes on board suggestions in working towards a common goal....it shows their willingness to work with everyone...to deliver a quality product.”

Morgan Haber, Haber Xcavations



“It’s a beautiful place to live and it provides a great lifestyle opportunity for families to move to the region.”

David Argent, Urbex



WATERFRONT PDA INVESTMENT PRECINCTS

Positioned on Queensland's coast, the Mackay Waterfront Priority Development Area (PDA) unlocks rare river-to-ocean investment potential across five catalytic precincts. This unique combination will help to enhance activation levels and support commercial returns across the PDA. Declared in 2018, it spans 172 hectares from the Pioneer River, through the heart of the city, to the Coral Sea - making it the only PDA in the state with both river and beach frontage.

With nearly \$40 million already invested in public realm upgrades and enabling infrastructure, the PDA is primed for transformative investment. Backed by a dedicated council, streamlined planning framework and fast-tracked approvals, it offers unmatched development certainty and opportunity.



The Mackay Waterfront PDA will become a vibrant, liveable, mixed-use precinct, offering:

- An **activated river-to-ocean edge** with walkable connections
- **Premium lifestyle, tourism and dining precincts**
- **Innovation and enterprise hubs** to drive new industries and employment generation
- **Residential and short-stay accommodation** supporting city centre growth
- **Green spaces, cultural heritage and coastal identity** interwoven into the public realm



172 hectares



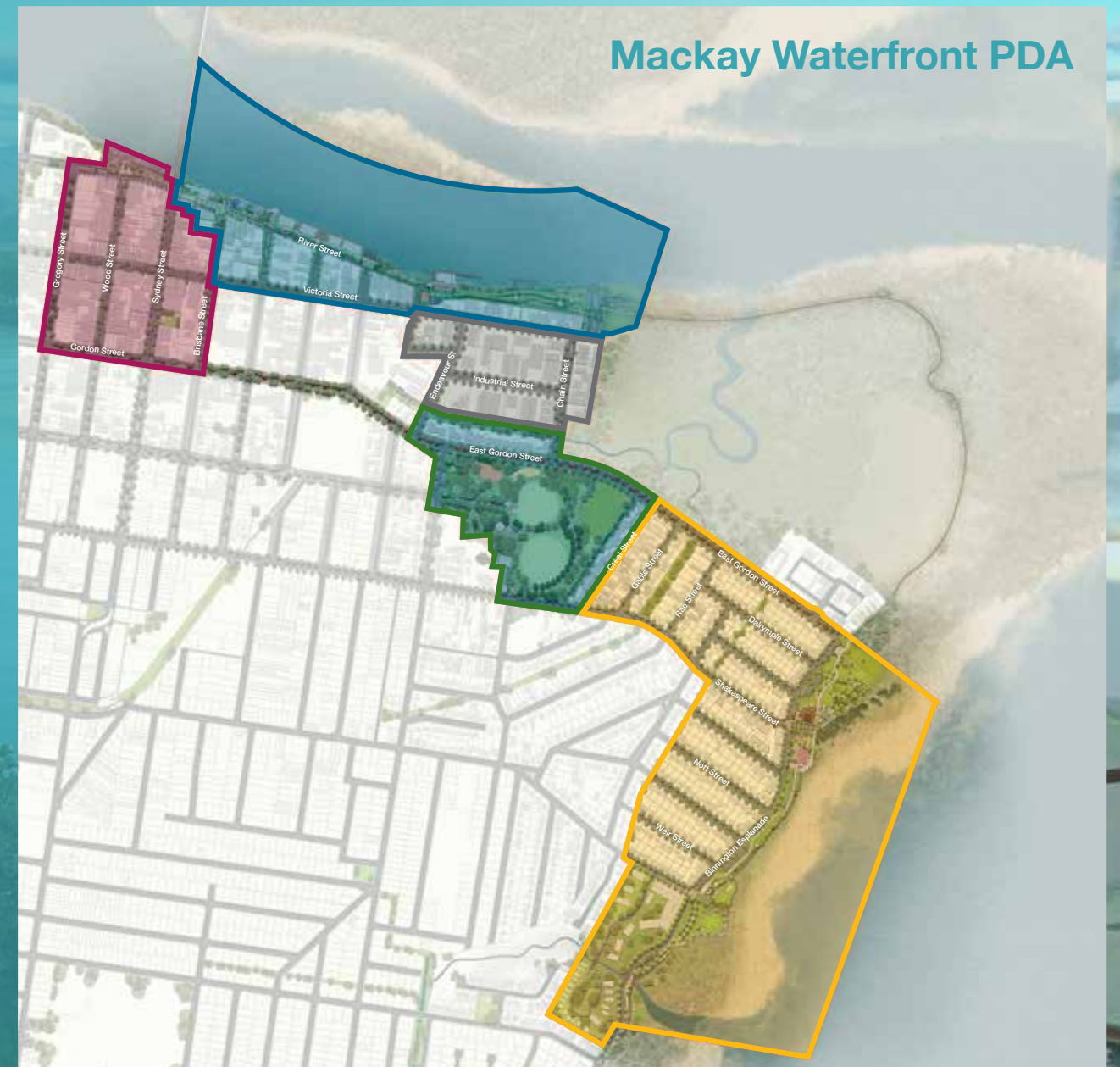
\$40 M
in infrastructure
and public realm
investment



Accelerated
planning
approvals



Only PDA
in QLD with
direct river
and beach
frontage



INVESTMENT IN THE PDA



Completed projects

Queens Park Revitalisation - **\$8.86 M**
 Riverside Wharves Upgrade - **\$9.03 M**
 Riverside Pontoon - **\$2.44 M**
 City Centre Revitalisation - **\$18.60 M**
 Fifth Lane Upgrade - **\$0.77 M**

Projects underway

Sydney and River St Intersection
 Bluewater Trail Upgrade
 Mackay Waterfront Signage and Wayfinding
 ReNew Mackay Development Agreement

Proposed projects

Mackay Waterfront Place Strategy Action Plan



CITY CENTRE PRECINCT

The City Centre Precinct is the vibrant heart of Mackay. It's where dining, culture and commerce converge, and where the Mackay community comes to gather, celebrate and connect.

With active placemaking and improved pedestrian linkages to the riverfront, the City Centre Precinct is positioned for boutique development, hospitality, residential uplift and mixed-use projects that will boost activation of day and evening economies.

Where dining, culture and commerce converge.

Potential investment opportunities include:

- **Mixed-use developments** that combine retail, commercial and residential uses in the heart of the city
- **Urban manufacturing and small-batch production** (eg, breweries, distilleries, coffee roasting)
- **Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings** for restaurants, bars, co-working, creative studios or boutique accommodation
- **New infill residential** targeting professionals, downsizers and students looking for lifestyle and location (above ground floor)
- **Laneway activation projects**, including small-format hospitality, galleries and event-ready micro spaces
- **Catalyst retail and wellness offerings** that support a growing city workforce and the evolving visitor economy



CITY CENTRE PRECINCT

Precinct key

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Bluewater Trail | New or Improved Green Space |
| New Recreation Options | Streetscape Improvements |
| Pedestrian Crossing | Improved Amenities |
| Intersection Improvements | Pathways and Active Movement Link |
| Car Parking Reconfiguration | Bicycle Infrastructure |
| Cross Block Connection | Outdoor Gym Equipment |
| Food Beverage Activation | Events and Activities |
| Retail Activation | Tourism and Marketing |
| Residential Growth | Signage / Wayfinding |
| Governance and Coordination | Council Assets |
| Further Study Detail | Civic and Education Uses |

The heart of Mackay:

- Queensland's best-preserved collection of Art Deco buildings
- Dining destinations: Wood Street
- Public art trails, laneway murals, heritage walk
- Emerging day-to-night precinct supported by heritage charm and dining culture
- Wide streets allow for wide footpaths, alfresco dining and landscaping



Artist's impression of potential development in the Mackay City Centre.

RIVERSIDE PRECINCT

Positioned along the blue Pioneer River, the Riverside Precinct offers rare, activated riverfront development potential in the heart of Mackay. This precinct benefits from a dynamic mix of public realm investment, heritage anchors and waterfront connection that create a ready-made canvas for private sector investment.

With the Bluewater Trail, Bluewater Quay, Pioneer River Pontoon and the River Wharves, the precinct enjoys high visitation, visual appeal and direct water access. These public realm improvements have unlocked prime riverfront real estate, positioned for innovative private development opportunities.



Potential investment opportunities include:

Riverside dining and entertainment precincts, adjacent to Bluewater Quay and River Wharves

Residential with river views, designed for liveability and access to CBD amenities

Tourism infrastructure, including accommodation, marine tourism offerings and visitor hubs

Event-friendly commercial spaces to support markets, festivals and public programming

Leased or privately developed sites adjacent to the Riverside Precinct's public realm



Conceptual image.



Precinct key

Bluewater Trail	New or Improved Green Space
New Recreation Options	Streetscape Improvements
Pedestrian Crossing	Improved Amenities
Intersection Improvements	Pathways and Active Movement Link
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Mackay's riverfront transformation:

- Blue river with high tidal movement, artificial reefs and active marine use
- Includes Bluewater Quay, fishing piers, Pioneer River pontoon, River Wharves and River Street boat ramp
- Anchored by heritage icons such as Paxton's Warehouse, Fish Markets and the Leichhardt Tree
- Part of the city's major recreational spine via the Bluewater Trail





ENTERPRISE PRECINCT

Historically the city’s light industrial hub, this area is now transforming into a modern, mixed-use innovation and knowledge zone, offering affordable land, strong transport links and a direct connection between the City Centre, Queens Park and the Riverside Precinct.

With demand growing for light industry, manufacturing, digital enterprises and co-located training hubs, the Enterprise Precinct presents a compelling investment opportunity for businesses and developers seeking value, flexibility and centrality.



Potential investment opportunities include:

Light industrial and innovation-oriented commercial development (eg small-scale production, logistics, repairs and trades)

Knowledge-based business hubs, co-working spaces or satellite offices

Education, skills and training facilities

Indoor sports and recreation facilities

Strategic adaptive reuse of existing sheds and warehouses



ENTERPRISE PRECINCT

Precinct key

- Bluewater Trail
- New Recreation Options
- Pedestrian Crossing
- Intersection Improvements
- Car Parking Reconfiguration
- Cross Block Connection
- Food Beverage Activation
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- Council Assets
- Civic and Education Uses

Mackay’s innovation and knowledge hub:

- Once Mackay’s industrial core, now primed for adaptive reuse and commercial diversification
- Located on Chain Street, a key north-south connector between river and park
- Generous street widths and sizeable lots offer development flexibility
- Proximity to CQUniversity and TAFE supports talent attraction and training





QUEENS PARK PRECINCT

The Queens Park Precinct is a critical community and event destination and a strategic connector between the Enterprise, City Centre and Beachside Precincts.

Upgraded in 2020 as part of Mackay Regional Council's commitment to enhancing the public realm, Queens Park now serves as a central activation zone, a recreational anchor and a future-ready platform for commercial partnerships, health and wellness ventures and community event infrastructure.



Potential investment opportunities include:

Food and beverage venues (eg pop-up food/beverage vendors, licensed cafes, mobile infrastructure)

Health and wellness facilities (yoga studio, pilates, physiotherapy, mental health practitioners)

Residential and short-stay accommodation overlooking parklands

Event supporting amenities (pop-up stalls, mobile retail, temporary infrastructure)



QUEENS PARK PRECINCT

Precinct key

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
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A regional park with a city-building role:

- 11 hectares of revitalised regional parkland
- Home to Mackay's iconic Orchid House
- Includes cricket ovals, children's playground, dog park and outdoor events space
- Frequent host of community events, concerts and seasonal festivals





BEACHSIDE PRECINCT

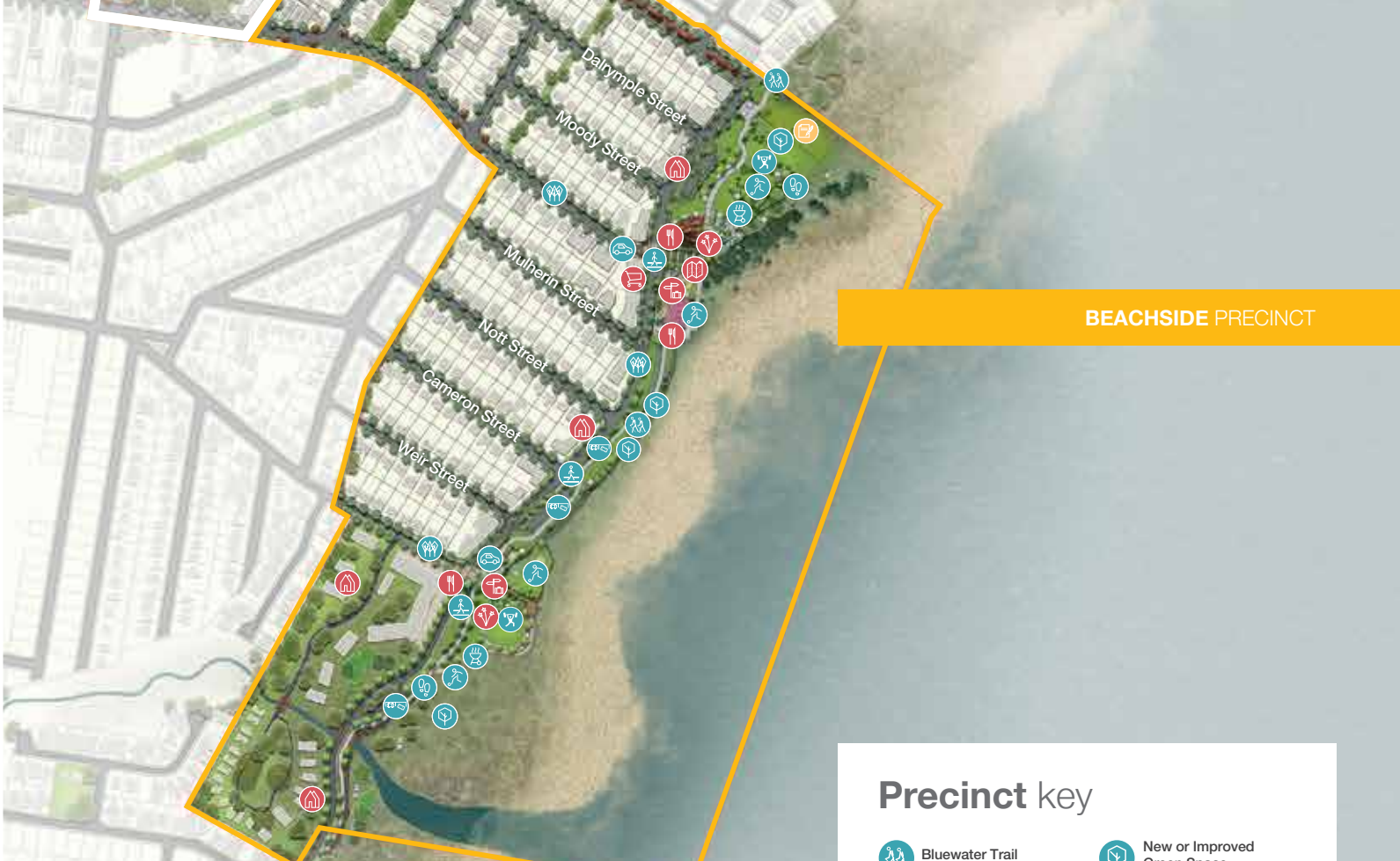
The Beachside Precinct is where Mackay’s urban footprint meets the sea. Connected directly to the City Centre and Riverside via the Bluewater Trail, this precinct offers a rare combination of beach amenity and inner-city walkability.

With direct access to Binnington Esplanade and nearby beaches, this precinct is a natural fit for residential development, coastal tourism experiences, health and wellness offerings and visitor infrastructure that capitalises on Mackay’s unique coastal setting.



Potential investment opportunities include:

- Residential infill or mixed-use developments** tailored to active lifestyle seekers
- Coastal accommodation** from hotels to short-stay apartments
- Health and wellness precincts** including spa and allied health facilities
- Tourism-oriented development** including recreation hire, food/beverage venues and marine access services
- Recreation and events offerings** (eg seasonal pop-ups, coastal markets, fitness activations)



BEACHSIDE PRECINCT

Precinct key

- | | |
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| Bluewater Trail | New or Improved Green Space |
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A coastal location with city proximity:

- Within walking distance of the CBD via the Bluewater Trail
- Direct access to beachfront and Binnington Esplanade
- Part of Mackay’s recreational core, popular with locals and visitors
- Surrounded by natural amenities: coastal reserves, parklands and shaded trails
- Identified as a lifestyle and tourism activation zone





Mackay is ready for investment and the Mackay Waterfront PDA offers a rare opportunity for those seeking to be part of the region's transformative growth. With streamlined approvals and ongoing infrastructure development, the time to invest is now.



For more information or to discuss potential investment opportunities, please get in touch with us:

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