



Regional  
Development  
*Australia*

LOGAN & REDLANDS INC

2021-2022

# ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN (ABRIDGED)



Regional Development Australia Logan & Redlands Incorporated

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## Background

Each year, Regional Development Australia Logan & Redlands Incorporated (the RDA) prepares and submits to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (the Department) an Annual Business Plan as required by the funding agreement between the Department and the RDA, applying the Australian Government's Regional Development Australia Better Practice Guide (May 2021).

This Plan is an operational document which brings together all aspects of the RDA's planned activities for the 2021 to 2022 financial year. It includes details of the RDA's work program, priorities and resources.

Building on the continuation of its funding agreement with the Commonwealth and the refreshed Regional Development Australia Charter, RDA Logan & Redlands held a strategic meeting on 27 January 2021.

The key areas of focus from the strategic meeting are aligned to the RDA's strategic document *Logan and Redlands: The Centre of Economic and Employment Growth for Queensland*. Identified immediate areas for development include:

- Infrastructure (hard, soft and public transport; and social);
- Research;
- Skills Audit against expected industry profile;
- Workforce skills development capacity;
- Analysis of and opportunities for investment;
- Industry 4.0; and
- Internal SEQ migration.

## Strategic Context and Regional Priorities

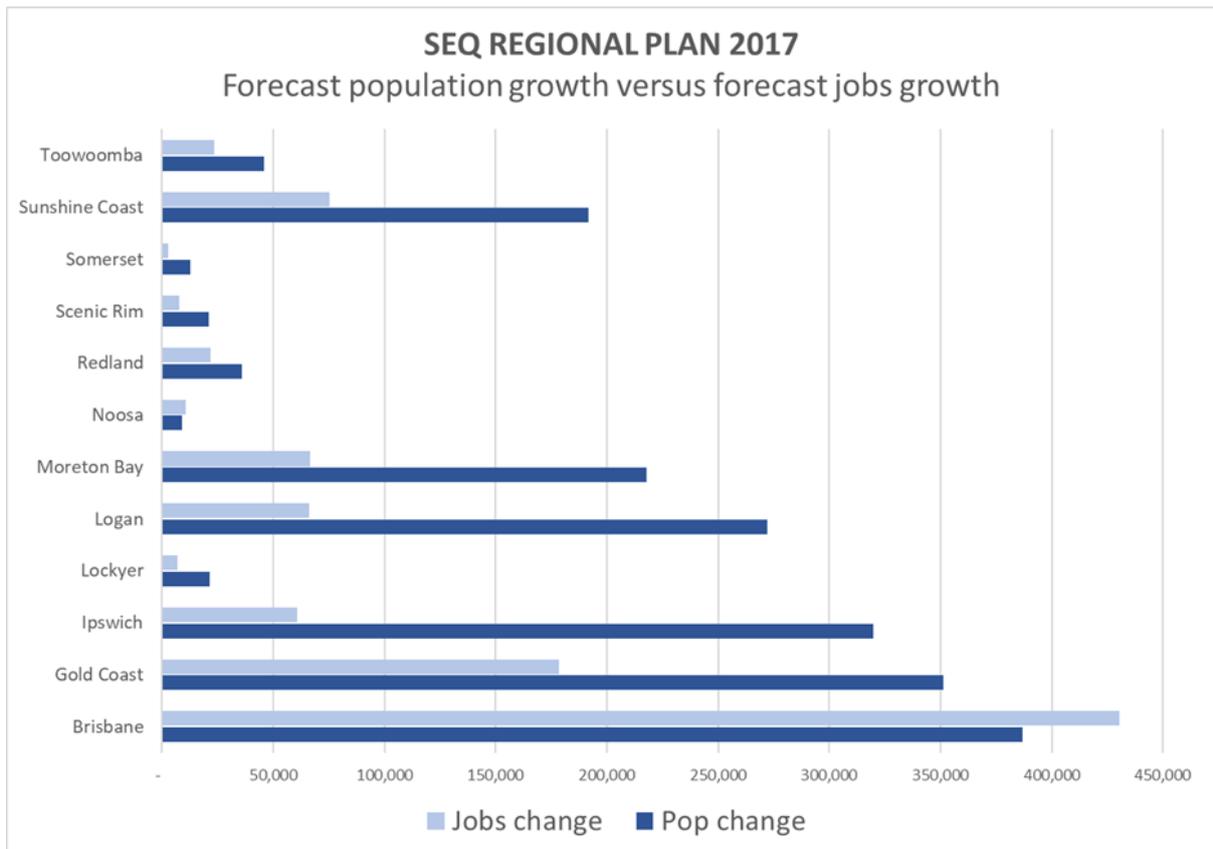
The Logan and Redlands Region is recognised as economically disadvantaged. To task the region with high rates of population growth and to also deprive it of funding support for necessary infrastructure is inequitable to say the least.

The need for a focus on the Region is highlighted by research conducted by Griffith University and the University of Newcastle and published in May 2020 by the Centre of Full Employment and Equity (CofFEE) which shows areas that have higher proportions of the types of jobs thought to be at most risk when economic activity declines. For South-East Queensland, the islands off the Redlands Coast (including North Stradbroke island) have topped the list for employment vulnerability with the Logan suburbs of Woodridge, Logan Central, Eagleby and Beenleigh also being at the top of the list.

The following graph outlines available forecast population growth across South East Queensland against forecast jobs growth. For Redland and Logan, the projected population growth outstrips the projected jobs growth <sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Graph provided by Suburban Alliance (<https://suburbanalliance.com.au/about/>)

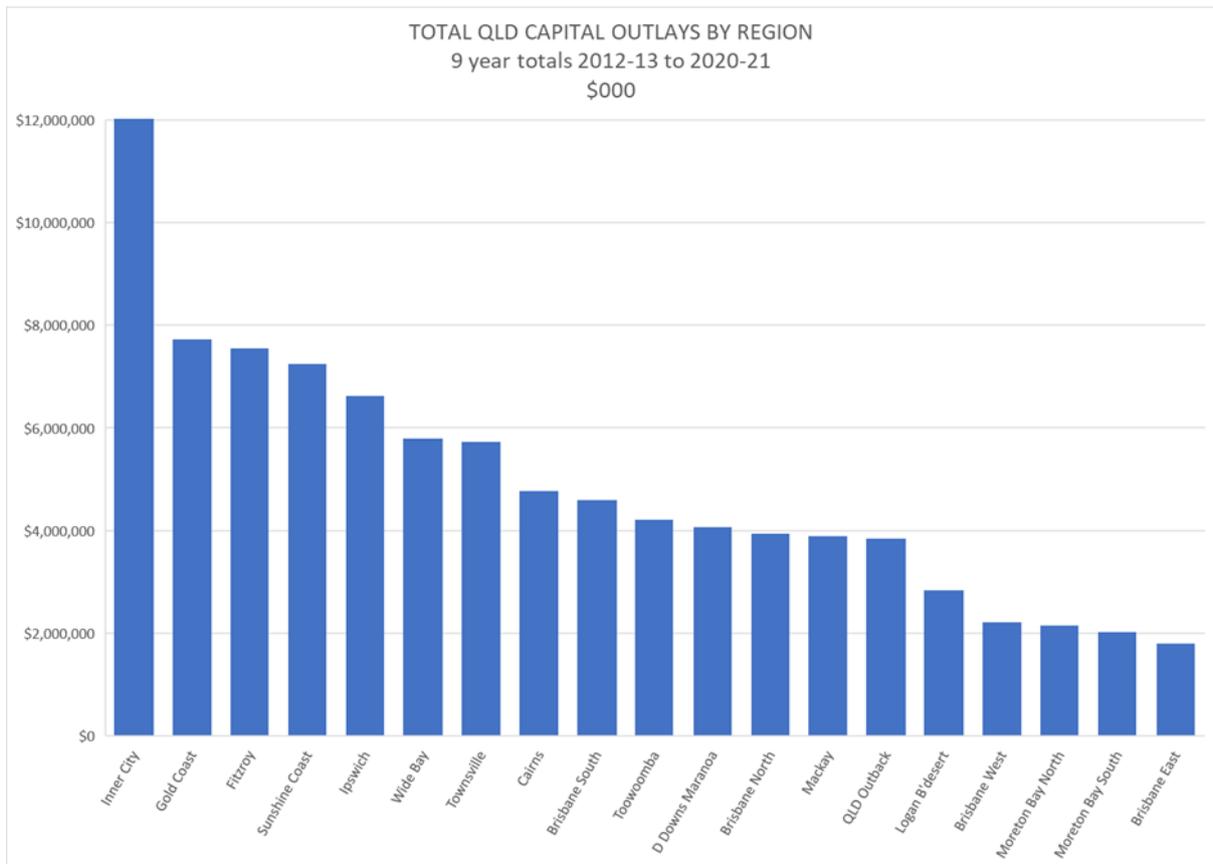


Priority expenditure in outer suburbs is per capita lower than inner city areas, but in addition, road and rail transit corridors in and around the Logan and Redlands Region have been about “passing through” rather than “getting around” the Region. In short, infrastructure expenditure has mismatched the need of the Region despite its strategic importance to economic and employment growth.

The issue of inequitable funding for the region warrants consideration on the following grounds:

- Redlands (Brisbane East) and Logan (Logan-Beaudesert) consistently receive the lowest amount of state capital funding of any region in Queensland – on both absolute and per capita bases (see below graph <sup>2</sup>).
- The disparity is widening with capital intensive inner city projects like vertical schools and the Cross River Rail – with the latest Queensland budget more disproportionate than ever.
- This is notwithstanding that the Logan and Redlands region is tasked with delivering some of the fastest rates of population growth of any region in Queensland, under successive versions of the SEQ Regional Plan since 2005.
- This same regional plan touts centres like Cleveland and Springwood and Beenleigh as designated “Principal Economic Areas” yet the funding support to realise this ambition is not provided.

<sup>2</sup> Graph provided by Suburban Alliance (<https://suburbanalliance.com.au/about/>)



The region is characterised by small businesses, a vulnerable population cohort, a reliance on a limited number of industry areas and a diverse geography including substantial island populations.

The jobs to residents ratio for Redland City is 0.69, meaning that there were less jobs than resident workers. The jobs to residents ratio for Logan City is 0.71, meaning that there were also less jobs than resident workers.

As the Region continues to expand, the economy and population and the growing workforce needs must be accommodated and well connected to major employment areas. Growth fronts, together with key urban consolidation sites, are a critical consideration of the planning for transport infrastructure in connecting the future residential population of the region to economic activity centres.

Given the level of expansion anticipated, careful planning and quality urban design is required to ensure the desired level of amenity is maintained. These are also necessary to ensure the social value of the region matches its growing economic value, to attract the knowledge workers needed to support the growing economy. Preserving the natural environment and amenity while allowing for significant population growth is a major challenge for the South East Queensland region.

To enable development in these growth fronts, investment in catalytic infrastructure is required, including road, water, sewer, and communications. Water supply and sewerage projects are investments which will unlock the development potential of land to support residential growth. Transport networks play a regionally significant role by connecting the residential population to economic precincts and key labour markets.

As growth fronts are located on the fringe of urban areas, strategic investment in these emerging residential areas is particularly important, as they often require significant upfront works to enable residential development. The initial investment in these assets creates an environment that attracts ongoing, market-led private industry cluster investment and provides the capacity for future expansions.

The following key considerations will guide the thinking for translating strategic intent into action:

- Is there adequate hard and soft infrastructure (rail, roads, tunnels, public transport, telecommunications and social infrastructure assets) to best leverage the emerging strengths of the region and ensure sustainable regional economic growth?
- How can the region benefit from key learnings taken from COVID-19 and its impact on local markets and supply chains?
- How can the region best leverage investment opportunities at Government and private sector levels to develop, attract and retain skills within the region?
- How can the region best leverage investment to ensure there is adequate demand for skills to support local job creation for residents and strengthened commercial opportunities for businesses?
- Does the region have adequate provision of education, training and skilling facilities and services to meet the current and emerging skilling needs of industry?

### **Strategic Regional Plan**

Regional Development Australia Logan & Redlands Incorporated (the RDA) has considered the Commonwealth's following requirements:

- By 30 June 2021, determine whether there is a recognised, existing strategic plan in place, which is up to date, and for the most part, meets the needs of their region; or
- If a region does not have an appropriate strategic plan in place, nor plans to develop one, RDAs should develop a methodology for working with stakeholders to develop a new strategic plan. RDAs will be required to detail the outcomes of this work in their 2021-22 Annual Business Plan.

The RDA is of the view that, while a number of plans exist or are under development (discussed below), the *Region* does not have an appropriate strategic plan.

There are a number of information sources about the region. It is interesting to note the variations across these sources which indicates the critical need for the development of a Strategic Regional Plan.

The Commonwealth's guidance notes a Strategic Regional Plan (SRP) is a living document which provides a wide range of stakeholders, potential investors and policy-makers with a better understanding of the region - including strengths, challenges, and needs - and strategic priorities that outline the region's future ambitions. The audience for the SRP includes communities, community organisations, private enterprise and all levels of government.

## Annual Work Plan

The priority for Regional Development Australia Logan & Redlands Incorporated (the RDA) for 2021 to 2022 is the development of a Strategic Regional Plan. The immediately above section notes the proliferation of existing plans which likely serve specific purposes. However, the creation of a regional narrative is essential. It will allow for better advocacy on behalf of the Region and to provide integrated evidence in supporting the Region's ability to argue for greater inclusion in key initiatives (e.g. the 2032 Olympics) and funding (e.g., equity of infrastructure funding).

The development of the Plan will be led by the RDA whose members are influential through their engagement with the Region's business and social communities as well as having strong engagement with local and state governments. In addition the RDA is a member of all Regional Chambers of Commerce and regularly engages with community organisations.

The RDA views its role as taking a visionary view over a 20+ year period, involve itself in strategic issues and ensure the balance between economic development and social cohesion. It also committed not to duplicate or compete, but rather add value to current and emerging strategies for the economic, social and environmental sustainability and growth of the Logan and Redlands Region.

This vision sits comfortably with the development of a Strategic Regional Plan for the Logan and Redlands Region.

In parallel with the development of a Strategic Regional Plan, a number of key areas of focus will be pursued. These were identified by the Committee at its 27 January 2021 strategic planning meeting.

To support the capacity of Members to have the depth of knowledge to advocate within, across and on behalf of the Region, field tours of the Region will be organised.

As a concept, the RDA is considering a major regional investment Conference (2 day plus field trips) in partnership with Commonwealth, Queensland and Logan and Redland local Governments, Economic Development and Investment agencies, businesses, chambers of commerce, community and cultural groups (with contributions and sponsorships and possibly exhibitions to defray costs) at a time in a year which best presents the region.

Participants could include:

- Infrastructure Australia;
- Brisbane 2032 Committee and the Australian Olympic Committee;
- SEQ City Deal;
- Inland Rail;
- SEQ Council of Mayors;
- Key major infrastructure developers operating in the region;
- Business support industries (financial management, banks etc);
- Research facilities (e.g., Department of Agriculture and Fisheries);
- Universities (University of Queensland; Griffith University; Queensland University of Technology);
- Vocational Skilling entities (TAFE, AITC);
- Schools; and
- Island Progress Associations.

The conference would be about what happens within the region (rather than brand marketing to grow a business or a show and tell opportunity) and a requirement to speculate and add value to the region's profile as a lifestyle and business destination with case studies of opportunities being taken forward. The lead in and lead out activities must include analysis of and identification of opportunities for regional investment.

The past Building Better Regions Fund (Round 5) take up was the best for the Redland area since the program's commencement. Market engagement for Building Better Regions Fund (Round 6) will begin in July 2021 (4 months prior to expected invitation for applications opens). Workshops for small groups and individual organisations such as Councils and Chambers will be developed, tested and rolled out based on the Building Better Regions Fund (Round 5) Guidelines which are expected to be similar for Round 6 with perhaps an area of specific focus (e.g., Round 4 related to bushfire impacts and Round 5 related to Tourism impacts).

As local and global markets manage the impacts of COVID-19, it is critical to optimise the adoption of advanced technologies to build resilience now and emerge post-pandemic stronger and more competitive.

Industry 4.0 represents the next frontier in the adoption of advanced technologies to drive innovation. Whilst the advancement of Industry 4.0 capability has been a priority for government for several years the current COVID-19 context has accelerated the need for businesses to engage in digital and advanced technologies. This is required to remain competitive in a new world economy which has shaken globalisation and supply chains previously considered resilient.

Preliminary discussions on an Industry 4.0 project have surfaced the following steps:

- Identify the region's current businesses utilising Industry 4.0 applications and their capability to value-add;
- Showcase and highlight the region's current Industry 4.0 application enablers (support, programs and infrastructure);
- List the areas/types of Industry 4.0 applications where a cluster of capability exists;
- Identify the Industry 4.0 applications where limited to no capability was found;
- Identify businesses located outside the Region that are already partnering with existing Industry 4.0 leading businesses based in the Region, to become potential investment attraction targets; and
- Review current and future skilled workforce requirements to support businesses to implement Industry 4.0.

As noted by the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, "Industry 4.0 technologies have potential to provide a major boost to Australia's economic competitiveness. They can substantially offset our traditional challenges such as high labour costs and distance to markets."

Whilst this evolution has been underway for quite a while, COVID-19 and recent geopolitical issues have shone a spotlight on supply chain resilience, technology adoption, future of work and the imperative for digital transformation to remain competitive.

The accelerating of a "sewing corridor" as a parallel area of focus should be undertaken as part of wider agendas of job creation and sovereign supply chain protection.

Throughout this Plan are references to Health Care and Social Assistance Industry issues. The demographics of the Region make this a key Industry in terms of employment and provision of services.

Linked is the emergence of secondary migration to the regions (enhanced through the Commonwealth's revision of the roles of capital city RDAs) by facilitating internal migration of families off the back of employment opportunities, recognising such a pursuit will need to encompass all aspects which would support the making of an informed choice to act.

Meetings have taken place with relevant and interested parties to consider:

- Scope of the activity (including participants);
- Government areas of focus;
- Identification of priority demand and supply regions;
- Environmental scan (current players, financial and practical supports, impediments, key issues housing etc);
- Planning and staged roll out (10% inspiration and 90% perspiration);
- What does success look like (incrementally and self sustaining); and
- Next steps.

A proposal is being put together for a pilot project (a bottom up approach as opposed to the previously dominant top down approaches) between the regions of Logan and areas in South West and Central Queensland.

The first order is to identify demand and supply markets (for example, point of origin being Logan along with an identified point of destination). Under a pilot this will involve the development of an integrated supply and demand data base with:

- the information on the demand side being job details, skills needed, acceptable evidence of possession of skills, type of engagement (contract, tenured, etc), location, commencement etc; and
- the information on the supply side being personal details (coded for privacy), skills held, evidence of skills held, availability, job preferences etc.

Such a data base would require appropriate interrogation facilities to enable searches such as:

- identifying best match of candidates to jobs;
- identifying any gaps in best matched candidates' skill profiles;
- Number of family members and accommodation needs;
- Educational needs of accompanying dependents;
- Social and community integration needs of intending employment migration candidates;
- etc.

This matching identification process is a starting point. A series of events would then be initiated but identification of environmental issues which would impact the operationalising of a family migration are to be identified and addressed first and include:

- availability of health and education services;
- affordable, suitable and available accommodation;
- access to schools, vocational education and higher education including having the capacity to provide recognition of prior learning/recognition of current competence to address any skills gaps on site;
- availability of child care services and facilities;

- availability of aged and related care services and facilities;
- secondary job opportunities for family members available including multiplier effect of growing the employed cohort;
- availability of social supports including sporting clubs, social clubs, choice of religion, entertainment, recreational opportunities;
- security of water supply, energy supply, high-speed internet and telecommunications and related infrastructure;
- access to transport;
- confidence of bushfire and flood immunity;
- etc.

In parallel with this, planning will be necessary to initiate and accelerate labour market analysis/projected industry mix to implement structural changes to the local economy including creation of jobs and subsidised skilling and reskilling of the workforce into emerging industries and occupations.

As such, key areas of research over the next 12 months will include:

- a Skills Audit against expected industry profiles; and
- associated research and analysis of workforce skills development (not only qualifications) capacity.

In addition, research will be undertaken to source and disseminate key economic and social indicators and identify effective process for maintaining currency.

### **Communications Strategy**

To ensure that the strategic and marketing goals of the organization are achieved, the following recommendations are being implemented concurrently with more targeted marketing activities.

To improve the RDA's understanding of its target audience, the following action items are being carried out:

- Conduct an audit of the existing mailing list to identify current and relevant contacts.
- Conduct a survey to better understand the needs of the existing audience (survey distribution via EDM and LinkedIn).
- Conduct an analysis of website analytics.

In doing so, the above will inform an understanding of:

- current behaviour;
- level of awareness;
- level of knowledge;
- preferred methods for receiving information; and
- motivations/barriers to hearing and believing/accepting information.

To improve brand visibility and encourage increased engagement from stakeholders:

- Establish a business account for RDA Logan and Redlands on LinkedIn and Instagram;
- Ensure consistency of branding and messaging across all platforms - Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and EDMs;
- Improve currency of information available on the RDA Logan and Redlands website, particularly in relation to available Grants and Funding and sponsored events; and
- Distribute regular EDMs (once weekly) with relevant and highly engaging content

RDA Logan and Redlands will monitor opportunities for sponsorship of relevant events to ensure organisational strategic and marketing goals are being achieved.

The RDA will encourage engagement from new stakeholders within the community by

- Engaging with relevant regional stakeholders and relevant groups via social media;
- Sponsor and attend relevant events; and
- Increasing the use of LinkedIn and Instagram to encourage increased brand exposure noting Instagram in particular to target a younger demographic and LinkedIn is a highly relevant tool for business networking.