

GW3 launches regional transformation document

Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3) today launched a regional advocacy document to steer Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday's recovery from the impacts of COVID-19.

The "Transformation Region-COVID-19 regional response" document was launched in Bowen today at a meeting of the Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors attended by Mayor Andrew Willcox (Whitsunday), Mayor Anne Baker (Isaac) and Mayor Greg Williamson (Mackay).

Chair of GWCoM, Mayor Andrew Willcox said the document highlights the significant projects that require government investment or fast tracking across the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region.

"The document has been developed by GW3 in collaboration with the three regional councils and focuses on three key areas: funding vital regional infrastructure; supporting key industries and enabling future growth," he said.

"Funding future major infrastructure projects in these three areas will cement this region's position as a regional economic powerhouse and lead Queensland and Australia's post COVID-19 economic recovery.

"Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has experienced significant impacts from COVID-19, particularly in the Whitsundays as one of Australia's premium tourism destinations.

"Our regional economy is driven by the mining, agriculture and tourism sectors.

"REMPPLAN research has revealed that nine out of every ten GW3 businesses have experienced direct impacts as a result of COVID-19 with the average impact seeing a reduction in turnover of almost 50 per cent," Mayor Willcox said.

"There can be no doubt that this region, despite our strong essential-industry workforce, is experiencing severe pain and requires Federal and State government investment for projects now."

Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3) CEO Kylie Porter said the economic landscape has dramatically changed in the wake of COVID-19.

"By working collaboratively together, our region is able to demonstrate to key decision makers that investing in Mackay Isaac Whitsunday protects jobs and drives future economic growth," she said.

“This document articulates projects that are not just about the here and now, but provide a pipeline of opportunities and growth across our region.”

Isaac Mayor Anne Baker said as a GW3 region of just over 170,000 people, in a ‘good’ year, we contribute more than \$22B in Gross National Product.

“Agriculture, Mining and Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS) are the cornerstone pillar of the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday economy,” she said.

“Exports from this region drive the Queensland and Australian economy and supporting performance in these markets is critical.

“The message from Mackay Isaac Whitsunday is simple: invest so that we lead the economic response for Queensland and Australia.”

Mackay Mayor Greg Williamson said new projects and developments are essential to the continued growth and prosperity of regional Queensland areas.

“Mackay Isaac Whitsunday has a strong, diverse industry base and a depth of technical knowledge and experience,” he said.

“This region is committed to leveraging these strengths and parlaying them into establishing new industries which will enable future economic and, more importantly, jobs growth.”

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