



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL

FEDERAL & STATE **ADVOCACY PLAN** 2023 to 2025



Acknowledgement of Country

Charters Towers Regional Council is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our society.

We acknowledge the people of the Gudjala, Gugu Badhun, Birriah and Jangga first nation lands on which Charters Towers and its greater region are located, & is where we conduct our business. We pay respects to ancestors, Elders, past, present & emerging.

We are committed to a positive future for all.

OUR PRIORITIES

CHARTERS TOWERS HOSPITAL

CHARTERS TOWERS INDUSTRIAL PRECINCT

DALRYMPLE SALEYARDS REDEVELOPMENT

IMPROVING TELECOMMUNICATIONS

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

WASTE MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

REGIONAL HOUSING CRISIS

REGIONAL SKILLS AND LABOUR SHORTAGE

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE

Picture | Charters Towers Regional Council



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

It gives me great pleasure to present the Charters Towers Regional Council's Federal and State Advocacy Plan for 2023 to 2025. This plan is designed to provide a platform for key initiatives that we need "outside" support to

drive our community forward. Advocacy is a powerful way for communities to progress matters that are important to them and is most effective when community, Council and other levels of government work together constructively.

In fact, anyone can be an advocate for causes they believe in, and I invite you to consider being proactively involved in

community discussions, surveys and committees when opportunities arise, or alternatively connecting with Council if you wish to work together for a positive community outcome. These are ways we can continue to ensure we share a strong, united voice on the matters that are important to our Region.

Frank Beveridge
Advocacy Committee Chair
Mayor Frank Beveridge

THE CHARTERS TOWERS REGION AT A GLANCE

\$0.64B

GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

*30 JUNE 2021



LAND AREA
68,580
(SQ KM)



KEY ECONOMIC PILLARS



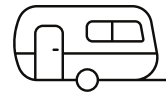
Mining



Agriculture



Education



Tourism

The top industries for employment include:

- Education & Training (12.7%)
- Health Care & Social Assistance (10.6%)
- Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (18.1%)
- Mining (16.3%)

FAMILIES 2,831

- 21.6% Couples with children
- 23.6% Couples without children
- 10.1% One parent families

Statistics as at 30/02/2023 from: economy.id.com.au/charters-towers



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL

**CHARTERS TOWERS
HOSPITAL**

ADMINISTRATION BLOCK

OUT
PATIENT'S
DEPARTMENT

**CHARTERS TOWERS HOSPITAL
REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Charters Towers Hospital Replacement Project

Replacing outdated & inadequate health infrastructure.

The Charters Towers Hospital was founded in 1887. As a health and medical facility, it is grossly outdated and presents with many issues. These include piping, plumbing, inadequate layout and obsolete design. Most concerning of all, many of its treatment and service areas do not meet health, safety or fire standards.

The current Charters Towers Hospital site has many limitations including being heritage listed and no physical room to expand and develop new buildings. A vacant block has already been earmarked for the new hospital beside the Eventide Residential Aged Care facility that ticks many boxes including, central location, extensive development space and easy access by vulnerable community members.

Residents in our Region and the western Queensland communities of Hughenden and Richmond are having to conduct frequent travel to Townsville to receive essential, life-saving medical treatments. These include birthing, gynaecological treatments, x-rays, ultrasounds and **computed tomography (CT) scanning**. This puts additional pressure on the Townsville University Hospital in coping with additional patients and causes undue financial, physical and emotional distress to travelling patients.

This diagram from the recent business case conducted by Queensland Health and the Townsville Hospital & Health Service shows around 41% of patients from Richmond and Hughenden and 49% of patients from Charters Towers need to travel to up to **700km** to Townsville for life saving treatment.



Health Service Plan 2018-2028 Townsville Hospital and Health Service | Townsville HHS | Planning

Community Benefits

The new hospital will:

- Be **purpose built** to meet the healthcare needs of the **regions growing and aging population** and for **remote western communities**
- Focus on a **patient-centred** approach within the **design of the facilities**
- Ensure the most **up-to-date technology** can be applied to the **patient experience**
- Support **high quality patient care** and provide a **safer patient environment**
- Increase the capacity for **emergency, surgery, sub-acute** and **outpatient services**
- Have greater capacity for **education and training facilities**, helping to retain and skill
- Address the real issue of staff retention and **attract high-quality staff** to the area
- Boost the local economy by **creating jobs** both in the construction phase and once the facility is operational



WHAT'S NEEDED

Queensland State Government to support Queensland Health in building a new Charters Towers Hospital.



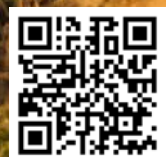
CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL



CHARTERS TOWERS INDUSTRIAL PRECINCT COMMERCIAL LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Picture | Charters Towers Regional Council

Scan the QR Code for more information



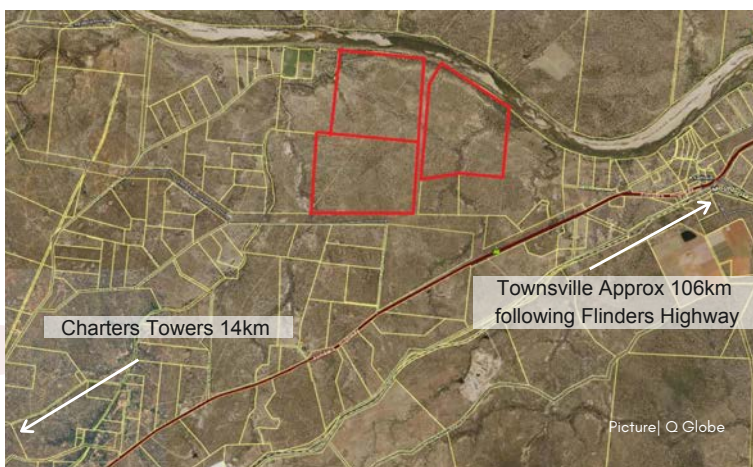
Charters Towers Industrial Precinct

Investing in the commercial future of the region.

In recent years the Charters Towers Region has seen an increase in interest from industry investment due to its prime location and abundance of natural resources. Unfortunately, the lack of suitable, shovel ready land available in the region has meant that investors are forced to take their business elsewhere.

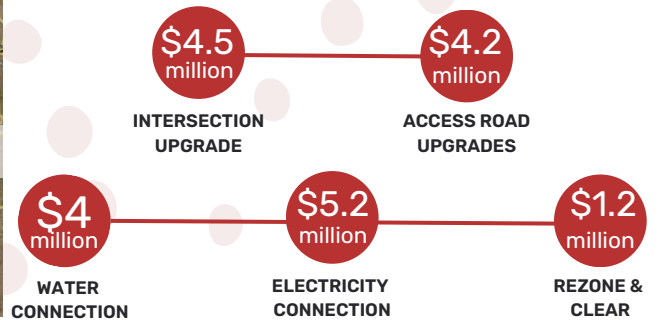
The Charters Towers Industrial Precinct is a new commercial and industrial precinct to secure the future of economic investment and growth in the Charters Towers Region, with proximity to Charters Towers CBD, access to electricity, and features that make it versatile and attractive for a variety of commercial and industrial uses.

Located East of the City fronting Stockroute Road and the Burdekin River, this 777 hectare Council-owned holding will form the Region's premier heavy and specialised industrial precinct.



Breakdown of Investment:

We need \$23.1 million to invest in the precinct immediately to secure several active enquiries:

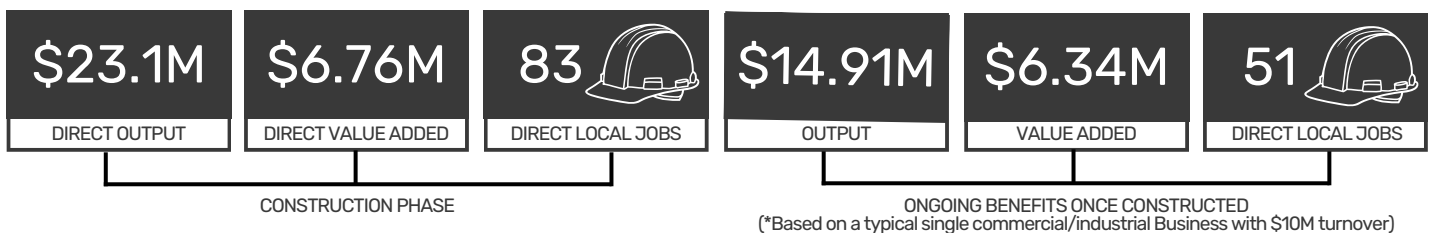


Community Benefits

The development of the Charters Towers Industrial Precinct will benefit the community in the ways described below:

- Increased local industry results in more revenue in the community and stimulates job creation
- Having the project shovel ready will help to attract new industry and enhance industry diversification
- Economic development has a flow on effect for all industry in the local economy and helps to retain and expand the current industry in the region
- Increased tax revenue for community projects and infrastructure
- Improved quality of life for the people of the region through more jobs, improved infrastructure and increased liveability

ECONOMIC BENEFITS



INVESTMENT NEEDED

\$19.1 million

To develop the Charters Towers Industrial Precinct and unlock its full potential .



DALRYMPLE SALEYARDS REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Dalrymple Saleyards Expansion Project

Ensuring the future of an economic pillar.

The redevelopment of the Dalrymple (H.M. Clarke) Saleyards is a major infrastructure and livestock industry project for the Charters Towers Regional Council and for North Queensland.

The saleyards are pivotal to the North Queensland rural sector, providing a regional livestock auction and live export processing hub, as well as hosting premier stud bull and horse sales and offering a rural, social and networking hub for the region at large.

Council is working with key stakeholders to develop plans to expand the saleyards and relocate the Equestrian Centre.

Redevelopment of the Dalrymple Saleyards will deliver an industry leading beef cattle processing facility, situated on the outskirts of the historic regional Gold City of Charters Towers and servicing large tracts of the Queensland beef catchment.

The project will upgrade the 53-year-old cattle auction and live export facility to meet current safety, animal welfare and livestock management quality standards, as the premier regional livestock processing and equine sports facility in Queensland.

Redevelopment of the saleyards is identified as a priority infrastructure project by the Charters Towers Regional Council, to support our community and our region. Dalrymple Saleyards is owned and operated by the Charters Towers Regional Council.

Developing and expanding rural industry and employment opportunities and increasing the liveability of regions is critical from an economic perspective and for the flow-on benefits of increased services, education and health support to rural communities.

From initially meeting local grazier needs in the 1960s and 1970s - processing under 50,000 head of cattle per annum, Dalrymple Saleyards has set sales and throughput records in 2019/20/21, with more than 270,000 cattle now managed annually in domestic store cattle and prime cattle sales (beef processing and herd restocking;) and accredited live export shipments.

In 2019, 2020 & 2021 the Dalrymple Saleyards set sales and throughput records with more than 270,000 cattle being processed.

The scope of works will include:

Saleyards Redevelopment:

- Increasing holding/spelling capacity
- Renewal of essential facilities: cattle dipping, loading ramps, etc
- Improved use of technology at the facility
- Animal welfare improvements
- Sustainability improvements

Highway Intersection Upgrade:

- Preliminary & concept design
- Traffic Management Plan
- Event Management Plan
- Detailed design (including road lighting)
- Internal Traffic Management Plan

Community Benefits

The renewed/upgraded Dalrymple Saleyards will benefit the community in the following ways:

- Generate employment
- Improve animal welfare and safety
- Support rural and regional business
- Support a thriving national industry
- Promote the region as a tourism destination
- Increase regional skills, development, training and education
- Promote regional resilience

INVESTMENT NEEDED

\$50 million

To undertake increased holding capacity for cattle sales, live export and spelling, upgrade the entrance/intersection & relocation of Equestrian Centre.



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL



IMPROVED TELECOMMUNICATIONS SAFETY | LIVEABILITY | EFFICIENCY

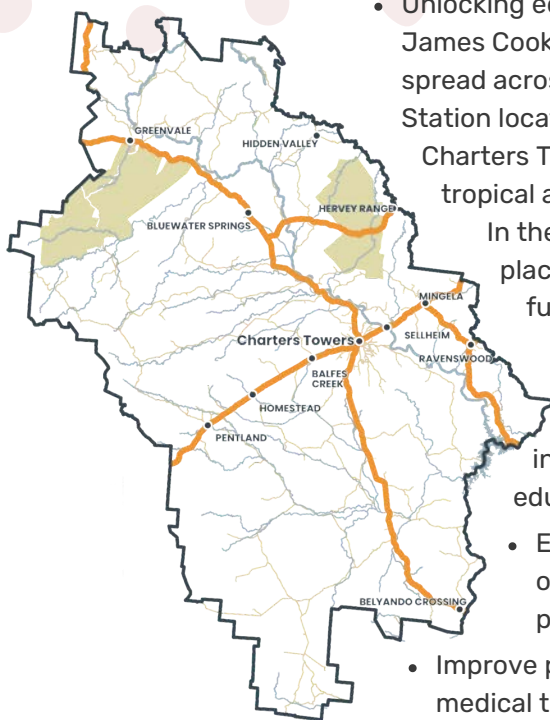
Mobile Tower Expansion Project

Connectivity & Essential Services Across Regional QLD.

Council has been advocating for improved telecommunications along the Gregory Developmental Road (98B) & (98C) between Belyando River and the township of Greenvale to enhance connectivity within the region. The Gregory Developmental Road is a Road of Strategic Importance. The route has significant throughput by tourists and caravanners during the winter months. Tourism is one of the four economic pillars for the Charters Towers Regional Council. The Gregory Developmental Road is a major route for freight and livestock movement as well as a supply route for freight to the north, south and east. Unreliable to non-existent connectivity is a cause for concern by local emergency services personnel. The issue is primarily safety. Emergency Services personnel request that the mobile reception blackspots within the Charters Towers Region and on this highway require further assessment and interrogation with a view to improving the connectivity for the general public and emergency services.

Community Benefits

- Release the full potential of identified priority economic projects in Council Economic Development and Innovation Strategy and Charters Towers Destination Management Plan (Tourism Strategy)
- Creation of employment opportunities through major projects including, but not limited to:
 - Big Rocks Weir
 - Australian Singapore Military Training Initiative
 - Bravus Mining & Resources Coal Project
 - Film productions throughout the Charters Towers Region
- Unlocking of economic opportunities for a number of agricultural farms and grazing properties along the upper Burdekin Catchment with the construction of the Big Rocks Weir
- Unlocking economic opportunities to the west of Charters Towers and improving public safety on all state controlled corridors and Council road networks.



- Unlocking educational opportunities from primary school to tertiary. James Cook University currently has research and teaching facilities spread across mid, north and west Queensland including Fletcherview Station located in the Basalt Region of North Queensland near Charters Towers. This facility enables world leading research in tropical animal health and environmental resource management. In the near future it will be also incorporating a virtual farm placement activity for the veterinarian students, as well as further research in the role of digital technologies in beef cattle management and biosecurity. The region has many grazing properties where children are schooled through the Charters Towers School of Distance Education. To increase connectivity on this corridor will assist with the education and training in these remoter areas of the region.
- Enable Emergency Services personnel to carry out their operations without hindrance to ensure the safety of the persons and situations that they are called to.
- Improve public safety by allowing timely access to life saving medical treatment and Emergency Services.

INVESTMENT NEEDED

\$10 million (Approx.)

To construct ten mobile towers and enable connectivity across the major highway corridors.



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL



PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT SAFEGUARDING OUR ECOSYSTEMS

Protecting our Biodiversity

Better initiatives to combat pest weeds and animals.

It is estimated that if 2% of grazing land is lost to pest weeds, the beef cattle industry suffers a potential \$5M loss of income.

The Charters Towers Regional Council area is diverse and covers a massive 68,580 km², including 2,896 km² of wetlands, eight (8) National Parks, a world heritage area, four (4) distinct bioregions, twenty-six (26) sub-catchments, distinct ancient volcanic and geological features, a saline lake and rugged mountains. Protecting this vast and diverse landscape from pest weeds and animals is an important challenge made harder by the two major highways that divide the region, the abundant waterways, and, the impact of the livestock industry present throughout the region. All of these unavoidable circumstances subsequently help to transport pest weeds throughout the region at an alarming rate.

Human behaviour, an expanding tourism trade and a healthy agricultural sector, together with more pest weeds and plants being introduced to the region than ever before changes the dynamics on how Council manages the increasing threats associated with these biosecurity risks. While partnerships and consultation are the cornerstone for success, it is fostering a culture of continuous learning, technological advancement, and a commitment to on the ground works that will make a difference.

Protecting the environment and local ecosystems is not achieved with platitudes and nice thoughts, it requires an investment of time, skills, finances, and a willingness to make a difference. Agriculture is one of the regions strongest economic pillars accounting \$242M in output each year.^[i] The industry relies heavily on the control and management of pest weeds and animals to survive. Charters Towers Regional Council is fighting hard to combat this escalating issue that has the potential to have devastating effects to the local economy and liveability throughout the region.

Not all things are created equal, managing a large area (4% of Queensland) with small rate base within the confines of what the community can afford, is a battle that is being lost. Assistance is required at the highest levels to help promote the region and push for on-the ground funding opportunities to manage pest weeds and animals that is scaring our landscape.

Prevention is better than cure - failure to act quickly on pest weed and animal management will have costly consequences.

Community Benefits

Controlling and managing pest weeds and animals:

- Helps to enhance the tourism industry and the local economy
- Improves community safety from toxic weeds and feral animals
- Addresses threats to biodiversity and natural ecosystems
- Maximises potential yields for agriculture and on-flowing businesses while minimising potential losses, for example feral pigs
- Providing clean recreational areas augments regional image
- Drives sense of community buy in if Local Government takes initiative
- Helps to stop the spread of disease and extinction of natural flora and fauna

\$600M^[ii]

ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST OF INVASIVE PLANTS TO QUEENSLAND STEMS FROM MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL EFFORTS AND LOST AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

\$720M - \$1B^[ii]

CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATED ANNUAL COSTS OF INVASIVE ANIMALS TO THE AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY FROM MANAGEMENT & LOST PRODUCTION

[i] <https://economy.id.com.au/charters-towers/value-of-agriculture>

[ii] Queensland invasive plants and animals strategy 2019-2024

RECOMMENDATION

The state and federal governments provide more funding to equip and enable communities to manage the impact of pest weeds and animals.



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL



WASTE MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS ROAD TO A ZERO WASTE SOCIETY

Waste Management Solutions

Combating The Waste Crisis in Disadvantaged Regions

Historically, the management of waste has often followed the least path of financial resistance, which in most cases means burying waste, or potential valuable resources, at landfills. Times are changing as Queensland evolves to become a zero-waste society, and this requires a coordinated approach for the growth of recycling and resource recovery, promoting more sustainable waste management practices and the transition to a circular economy. To position Council on the road to a zero-waste society, a number of projects are being assessed both locally and at a regional level to achieve the vision and targets.

Charters Towers Regional Council is under significant financial pressures to ensure legislative compliance. With the introduction of the Waste Levy in 2019, Charters Towers is significantly financially disadvantaged compared to other regions included in the levy zone due to the lack of access to fully equipped transport networks, competitive markets and waste industry access. To add to these disadvantages, the current waste and refuse infrastructure at the Charters Towers landfill is nearing its end of life and is not sustainable long-term.

To ensure the Charters Towers Region is compliant with new legislation three (3) major projects have been identified: essential upgrades of two (2) regional landfill facilities, a kerb side recycling service and, a new landfill facility to be located in Charters Towers.

Charters Towers Regional Council must look towards diversifying, innovating and investing in waste management solutions and infrastructure to ensure an environmentally sustainable future for the health, safety, liveability and prosperity of the region.

Project Breakdown:

Charters Towers Regional Council has identified three (3) key projects that combine to create an overarching waste management solution:

REGIONAL LANDFILL STATION UPGRADES

Charters Towers Regional Council is responsible for four (4) regional landfill facilities across the region with two (2) of these being identified as needing essential upgrades. These waste transfer facilities are located in the townships of Greenvale and Pentland. The upgrades are expected to cost \$750,000 each and will ensure the facilities meet legislative compliance and make them safer, cleaner and more environmentally friendly.

KERBSIDE RECYCLING INITIATIVE

Recycling is a pathway to a more sustainable future. The provision of a kerb-side recycling service reduces Council's environmental footprint while enhancing waste management services provided to the community. Kerbside recycling reduces waste to landfill while maximising the use of valuable resources. It is estimated this investment in the future of the region will cost approximately \$1.4M.

LANDFILL UPGRADE PROJECT

Occasionally a certain suite of levers and investment is required to help meet specified legislation and community accepted targets in the waste management space. With the current landfill facilities nearing its end of life, a new state-of-the-art waste transfer station in Charters Towers with an associated front end drop-off recovery and recycling hub is the perfect vehicle to bring about behavioural change in the way waste is managed as we move towards 2050.

Breakdown of Investment:



INVESTMENT NEEDED

\$15 million

To ensure the Charters Towers Region can deliver a sustainable, long term, compliant waste management solution.



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL



REGIONAL HOUSING CRISIS

TOWNSVILLE & NORTH WEST QUEENSLAND HOUSING PROJECT

Modular Housing Development Project

Regional communities affordable and adequate housing.

Across Regional Queensland there is an ongoing housing crisis that is crippling economic growth and harming the livelihoods and liveability of the communities. Queensland's small communities are desperate for skilled workers to help them grow and flourish but can not attract them without adequate housing.

Housing shortages restrict the attraction of skills and labour to regions as people can not take on work in these regions with nowhere to live. This is seen as an issue across all industries including essential services such as education and medical.

Although the issue as a whole is complex and specific from region to region, a simple solution is apparent: **bring more available, affordable and adequate housing to regional communities.**^[i]

Charters Towers Regional Council is proposing all levels of Government support the Regional Development Australia **"Townsville and North West Queensland Housing Project"** which is a coordinated approach between 15 Local Government Associations in Townsville and North West Queensland. This plan shows a real, affordable, and sustainable approach to a nation-wide problem.

Details of the project:

This modular housing project involves a co-ordinated approach that would benefit up to 15 Local Government Areas with the aims of achieving affordability and efficiency. The model provides an affordable and versatile construction option whilst providing:

- Significant cost reductions
- Fast construction times
- Versatile designs
- Customisation of package for each LGA depending on their needs (eg, ability to include or exclude installation based on availability of local trades, etc).
- Stage One to provide 50 new houses to be rolled out across the region [ii]



Pictures: Artists Impressions of Modular Housing Design
Credit: Regional Development Australia



Community Benefits:

- Ease housing pressure and enable growth and prosperity across the regions
- Attraction of skilled workers to regional areas
- Provide more ongoing employment opportunities to regional areas
- Increased employment opportunities across the regions whilst the project is in construction phase

[i] Queensland housing crisis – LGAQ

[ii] Community Housing Project – Regional Development Australia (rdanwq.org.au)

INVESTMENT NEEDED

\$2 million

To ensure Charters Towers Regional Council can secure four modular homes to help alleviate the housing crisis throughout the Region.



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL



REGIONAL SKILLS & LABOUR SHORTAGE

A REGIONAL EDUCATION HUB TO COMBAT SHORTAGES IN SKILLS & LABOUR

Satellite University Study Campus

Regional education hub to combat shortages in skills & labour.

Between 2011 and 2016 about 180,000 regional Australians between 20 and 35 years old moved to capital cities seeking education and employment opportunities.

The number of occupations experiencing a skills shortage in Australia has almost doubled over the past year to reach a “staggering” level, new data reveals.

The National Skills Commission’s annual update of the skills priority list shows there are 286 occupations with national shortages, compared with 153 in 2021.

Newly listed occupations include dentists, paediatricians, a range of surgeons, specialised nurses, and intensive care and emergency medicine specialists. Teachers – primary, secondary and special needs – are also newly listed. General practitioners and registered nurses remain on the list, as they were in 2021.

The five most in-demand workers – based on job vacancy data – are registered nurses, software and applications programmers, aged, disabled and child carers and construction managers. Other occupations on the list include technicians and trades workers, electricians, carpenters, chefs and mechanics, machinery operators, drivers and labourers, and community and personal service workers.

To help combat these skills and labour shortages Charters Towers Regional Council is advocating for:

- **A satellite university study campus for 1st and 2nd year students**
- **A wider scope and levels of TAFE training packages to be delivered locally; through the Dalrymple Trade Training Centre.**



“Youth Immigration” has a negative impact on the communities left behind, including local workforce ageing, impact on the local economy and availability of services.

Community Benefits:

- Enable regional and remote students to access and complete higher education without having to leave their communities
- Meet a demonstrated gap in support for study in a regional, rural or remote community
- Support students who wish to stay in their community while they complete their course of study
- Enhance the experience of students studying within their own community
- Encourage strong links between the Centres and other organisations in the area, including other support services that students may access and local industry
- Strengthen the education industry and improve economic development throughout the region
- Creation of regional jobs

RECOMMENDATION

\$5 million

To establish a country universities centre in Charters Towers.



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL



WATER SECURITIES INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

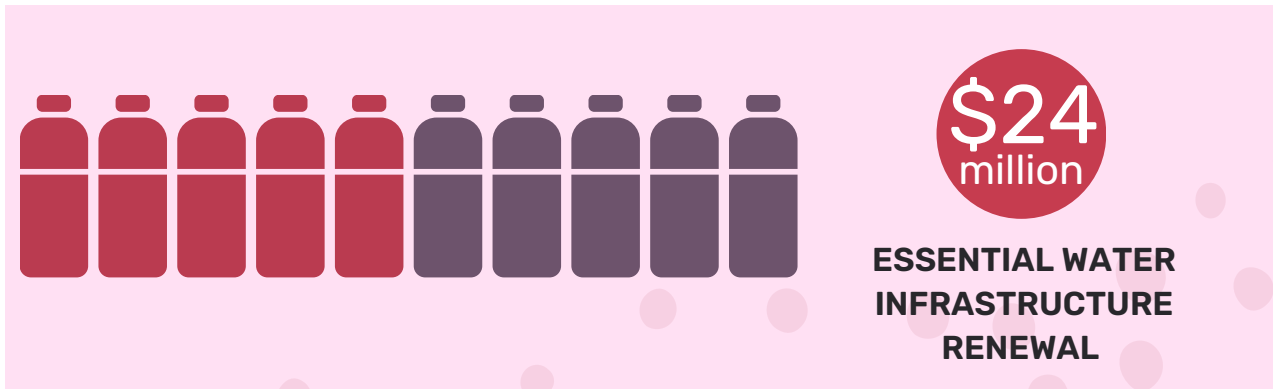
RESERVOIR & WATER MAINS



Water Security Key Infrastructure Upgrade

Providing essential services to the community

The water infrastructure providing essential services to the Charters Towers community requires significant and immediate upgrade including the main reservoir and water mains.



The scope of works will include:

Reservoir & Water Main:

- Inlet/outlet works at the Reservoirs on Towers Hill
- Construction of a new reservoir and pump station in the vicinity to the Racecourse
- Construction of a new DN500 main from the new reservoir to Towers Hill
- Construction of a new reticulation main from the new reservoir back to the Water Treatment Plant
- Construction of a new lower head pump station at the Water Treatment Plant
- Refurbishment of the concrete reservoir to provide a new smaller storage on Towers Hill
- Slip-lining of the current water main in order to reduce the effective diameter to ensure water turnover is sufficient to maintain the water quality

Community Benefits

Completing the Water Infrastructure Upgrade Project: Reservoir and Water Main will ensure

- Avoidance of the dire consequences of failure of the current water main
- Increased capacity to deliver water to Charters Towers to match the capacity of the Water Treatment Plant
- Improvement in water quality by having a dedicated delivery main to Towers Hill
- Improvement in pumping efficiency
- Increased water storage capacity to provide water to the town during infrastructure failures or natural disasters



INVESTMENT NEEDED

\$24 million

To ensure the people of Charters Towers are able to access essential services.



2023 Charters Towers Regional Council

This work is copyright. Permission to reproduce information obtained in this report must be obtained from:

Charters Towers Regional Council
PO Box 189
Charters Towers QLD 4820
Ph: (07) 4761 5300
www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au



CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL

PO Box 189 Charters Towers Qld 4820

ADMINISTRATION: 12 Mosman Street
Charters Towers QLD 4820

PH: 07 4761 5300 | **F:** (07) 4761 5344

E: mailecharterstowers.qld.gov.au

ABN: 67 731 313 583

www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au