

CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL

FEDERAL & STATE ADVOCACY PLAN 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

We at Charters Towers Regional Council acknowledge the first nations people of the land on which Charters Towers and its greater region are located, and where we conduct our business. We pay respect to their Elders past and present.

We are committed to a positive future for all.

2025 Charters Towers Regional Council

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OUR PRIORITIES

Charters Towers Hospital Replacement

Staff Accommodation

Higher Education

Water Infrastructure Upgrades



 Towers Hill Lookout

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



It is an honor to introduce our Advocacy Plan – a roadmap designed to advance the needs, aspirations, and visions of our community. This plan represents our shared commitment to making the Charters Towers Region a better place for all who live, work, and thrive here.

At its core, this Advocacy Plan focuses on four main priorities; a new hospital, staff accommodation, support for higher education, and water infrastructure upgrades. It is a clear plan of action shaped by the input and needs of our community. By addressing challenges and seizing opportunities, we aim to build a stronger, more equitable future while preserving the unique character that makes this region special.

We invite each of you to engage with this plan, champion its goals, and contribute to its success. Together, we can turn aspirations into achievements and ensure our Region remains a strong, resilient, welcoming, and forward-thinking community for generations to come.

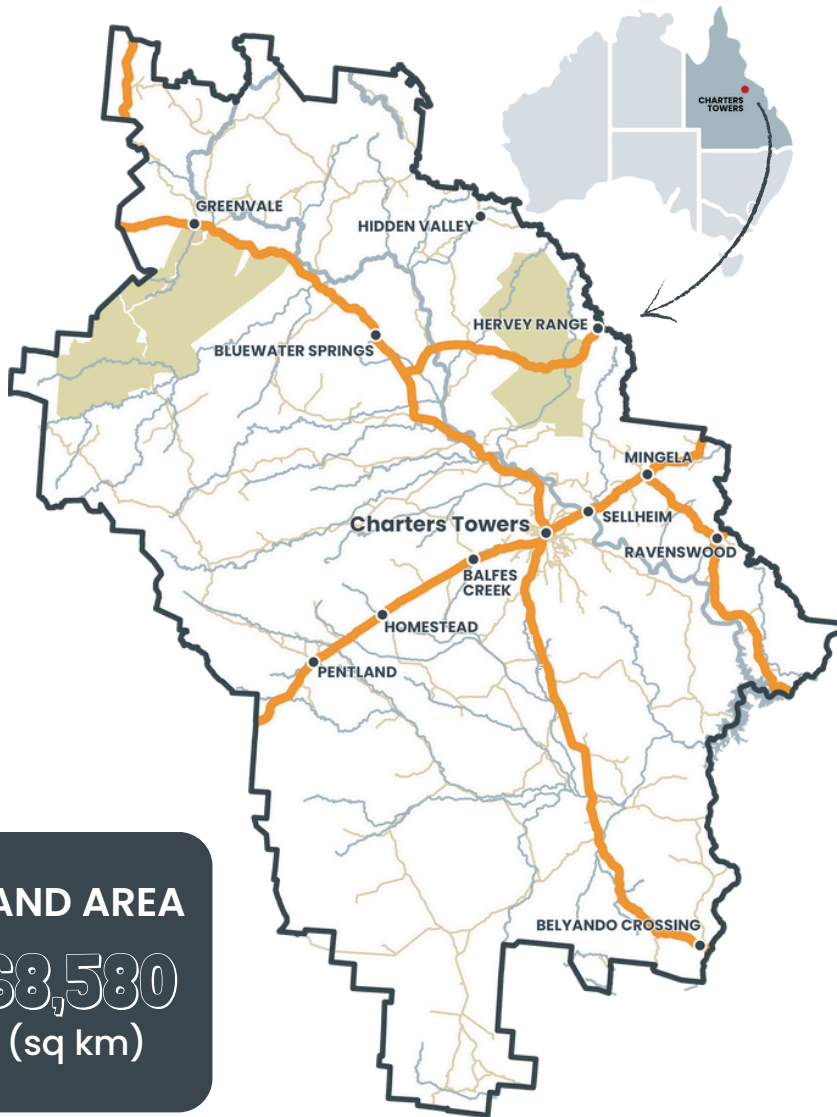
Mayor Liz Schmidt

Advocacy Committee Chair



THE REGION AT A GLANCE

\$1.101M GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT*



KEY ECONOMIC PILLARS



Mining



Agriculture



Education



Tourism

LAND AREA

68,580
(sq km)

THE TOP INDUSTRIES FOR EMPLOYMENT INCLUDE:

- Education & Training (14.5%)
- Health Care & Social Assistance (13.5%)
- Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (13.5%)
- Mining (11.9%)

#

POPULATION



12,013*

AVE HOUSEHOLD INCOME PER WEEK



\$1,658#

FAMILIES 2,831[#]

- 18.2% Couples with children
- 23.8% Couples without children
- 9.9% One parent families

Statistics sourced from dataAU

* ABS: As at 30/06/2023

ABS: 2021 Census



Charters Towers Hospital Replacement Project

Replacing outdated & inadequate health infrastructure

Overview

The Charters Towers Hospital, founded in 1887, is outdated and faces significant issues, including failing infrastructure, an inadequate layout, and non-compliance with health, safety, and fire standards.

A new hospital site has been identified near the Eventide Residential Aged Care facility, offering a central location, ample development space, and easy access for vulnerable community members.

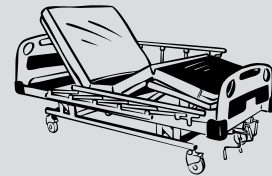
Residents of the Region, including western Queensland communities like Hughenden and Richmond, are frequently required to travel to Townsville for critical medical services, such as birthing, gynecological care, imaging, and CT scans. This places strain on the Townsville University Hospital and imposes financial, physical, and emotional burdens on patients.

INVESTMENT REQUIRED:

Queensland State Government to support Queensland Health

Widespread impact:

A 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. (Source: Townsville Hospital and Health Service Health Service Plan 2018 - 2028)



What are the benefits?

The new hospital will:

- Be purpose-built to meet the needs of the growing and aging population, including remote communities.
- Feature a patient-centered design with the latest technology for improved care.
- Enhance emergency, surgical, sub-acute, and outpatient services.
- Provide modern education and training facilities to attract and retain skilled staff.
- Create jobs during construction and ongoing operations, boosting the local economy.

RISKS OF DELAY

UNNECESSARY HEALTH COMPLICATIONS



UNABLE TO SUPPORT FUTURE GROWTH

FAILURE TO RETAIN & ATTRACT RESIDENTS



FINANCIAL STRAIN ON FAMILIES



CR LIZ SCHMIDT

ADVOCACY LEAD

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Funding for Staff Accommodation

Combating regional skills and accommodation shortages

Overview

Council is urging State and Federal Governments to fund staff accommodation in regional areas to attract and retain employees for critical roles. Rising interest rates, housing shortages, and high property prices, worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic, have made finding housing increasingly difficult.

With rental availability at just 0.1% as of July 2024, recruiting for vital roles like planners, engineers, and project managers is a significant challenge. Council is currently covering costly motel and hotel stays for staff, which is unsustainable.

Providing staff accommodation will increase job applicants, attract skilled workers, and offer housing solutions for critical employees, ensuring stronger workforces and better service delivery in regional communities.

What are the benefits?


Providing suitable staff accommodation will:

- Attract skilled workers by addressing housing shortages and affordability issues.
- Improve staff retention by offering secure and comfortable housing, reducing turnover in critical roles.
- Reduce costs by minimising reliance on expensive temporary accommodations.
- Ease pressure on local housing markets currently at critical capacity.
- Support local economies by increasing demand for goods and services.
- Ensure essential services are delivered effectively, improving community outcomes and regional development.

INVESTMENT REQUIRED:
\$1.25 Million to support the delivery of the “Bow Street Modular Housing Project”

Project Scope:

- Certified removal of ACM
- Removal of trees, vegetation and grinding of stumps
- Demolition of remaining structures and removal
- Purchase and installation of two (2) modular three (3) bedroom houses



RISKS OF DELAY

LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING



DECLINE IN ECONOMIC GROWTH



DECLINE IN SKILLED WORKFORCE



INCREASED PRESSURE ON HOUSING MARKET

HIGH RECRUITMENT EXPENSES



ADVOCACY LEAD

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Supporting Higher Education

Addressing skills shortage through higher education

Overview

The Charters Towers Region faces a critical shortage of skilled workers, hindering economic growth and community development. Key industries struggle to find qualified candidates, creating service gaps and limiting business expansion. This challenge is worsened by limited access to higher education, forcing locals to relocate, study online, or forgo further education.

The Regional University Study Hub is vital for improving access to higher education and support systems. A local hub would provide resources, academic guidance, and networking opportunities, making higher education more accessible. By cultivating a skilled workforce, the Region can boost its economy, attract businesses, and support upskilling.

With the nearest university 130km away, the lack of local options causes isolation and financial strain, underscoring the need for investment in education to secure the Region's future.

What are the benefits?

Providing higher education options will:

- Address the skills gap by creating a local pipeline of qualified workers.
- Support business growth and attract new industries to the Region.
- Provide academic resources and networking opportunities to boost student success.
- Reduce financial strain and isolation by offering local education options.
- Encourage upskilling and lifelong learning to build a stronger workforce.

INVESTMENT REQUIRED:

\$2M to support Higher Education with the establishment of a Regional University Study Hub

Actions to date:

- Established a Charters Towers Country University Centre Working Group to drive the completion of the project.
- Earmarked a potential location for the Study Hub.
- Community engagement and support gained through letters of support and surveys.
- Application submitted for the Australian Government | Department of Education's Regional University Study Hub Program (Cohort 5)



RISKS OF DELAY



ADVOCACY LEAD

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Water Security Key Upgrades

Providing essential services to the community

Overview

The water infrastructure servicing Charters Towers is in urgent need of upgrades, including the main reservoir and water mains. Much of the system is outdated and requires immediate attention to secure the region's water supply.

Key upgrades required include works at the Towers Hill reservoirs, a new reservoir and pump station near the Racecourse, and a new DN500 main connecting the reservoir to Towers Hill. A new reticulation main would link the reservoir to the Water Treatment Plant.

Additional improvements required include a new lower head pump station at the Water Treatment Plant, refurbishing the Towers Hill concrete reservoir for smaller storage, and slip-lining the current water main to extend its life. These upgrades are vital for ensuring reliable water services.

What are the benefits?

Completing the Water Infrastructure Upgrade Project 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, which will in turn reduce operating time and extend life expectancy.
- Increased water storage capacity to provide water to the town during infrastructure failures or natural disasters.

INVESTMENT REQUIRED:
\$45-\$50M to invest in the essential water services and ensure the future

- Actions to date:**
- Planning report complete
 - Concept designs for entirety of project complete
 - Detailed Design currently being undertake for packages 1 and 2
 - Funding allocated for Detailed Designs of package 3 to 7
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RISKS OF DELAY

<p>WATER SUPPLY INTERRUPTIONS</p> 	<p> REGULATORY AND LEGAL RISKS</p>	<p>UNABLE TO SUPPORT FUTURE GROWTH</p> 	<p> LOSS OF REPUTATION</p>	<p>HIGHER MAINTENANCE COSTS</p> 
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ADVOCACY LEAD

For more information or any questions relating to this project, please contact Cr Barr on:

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CR ALAN BARR





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