



28 January 2010

Sunshine Coast Regional Council  
Draft Economic Development Strategy feedback  
Reply Paid 84374  
SUNSHINE COAST MAIL CENTRE  
QLD 4560

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Dear Sirs

Please find attached our response to Council's draft Economic Development Strategy (EDS). Given the strategy is about economic development, our response is framed within the context of successful, conventional business practices, to produce a targeted / specific / measurable EDS. From our perspective, past economic development strategies have been unconnected, uncoordinated, isolated and independent. Council has this opportunity to craft a truly regional jobs and investment focus to achieve private and public stakeholder buy-in with clearly enunciated outcomes.

If the Council wishes to work with the business community to achieve 250,000 jobs by 2031 in the region, then the Sunshine Coast Business Council stands ready to work in conjunction with you to develop and promote job targets in identified key industry sectors. To this end SCBC / USC / CSIT have designed a critical Gap Analysis project to initiate required strategies for creating the additional jobs to achieve regional job targets.

We invite Council to support / resource the Gap Analysis project with us and thereby produce the vital data around which an EDS and Action Plans tasks can be calibrated. We look forward to pursuing this at the earliest opportunity.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maurie Hill', is written over a dotted line.

Maurie Hill  
Chairman

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# RESPONSE TO THE SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL Draft ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2009 - 2014

## SUNSHINE COAST BUSINESS COUNCIL

The Sunshine Coast Business Council (SCBC) is the peak body for business advocacy on the Sunshine Coast. SCBC holds to three principal tenets with respect to developing business. These are:

- Improve Sunshine Coast regional business conditions;
- Prevent detrimental business policy; and
- Advocate "OPEN FOR ALL BUSINESS" policy and resource (people and money) allocation.

In reviewing the draft EDS, SCBC acknowledges much of the underlying economic analysis and concurs with many of the aspirational goals contained within the document. However, any Economic Development Strategy has to be about **investment** (public and private) and **job creation**.

SCBC therefore recommends that the draft EDS be reviewed as set out below.

## SCRC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – CONTEXT

The Sunshine Coast is a region that cannot be viewed in isolation. The region trades goods and services intra-state, nationally and globally and relies on resources (food, water, electricity, labour and so on) supplied from outside the region. The Sunshine Coast is a constituent sub-region within South East Queensland and is recognised as such in the SEQ Regional Plan 2009 – 2031. Using this baseline, population projections can be readily converted into economic activity and more specifically, jobs and investment to create employment.

SEQRP: The draft EDS (and accompanying Action Plan) require context. It should therefore acknowledge that;

- The SEQ Regional Plan proposes a population approaching 500,000 people by 2031 requiring significant social infrastructure to be provided by the public and private sectors;
- In turn, to support the 500,000 population approximately 225,000 – 250,000 regional jobs will be required by 2031 i.e. 90,000 – 115,000 new jobs to be created in the next 21 years;
- The SCRC EDS requires specific 5 year objectives e.g. New Job Creation – by 2014 the creation of 20,000 new jobs in the private and public sectors within the Sunshine Coast Region;
- The EDS Action Plan requires incremental 1 year time frames targeting specific industry sectors (those most likely to deliver on job creation).

BASELINE: The SEQ Regional Plan provides the context for the EDS but the priorities for Council, as expressed in the EDS Action Plan, should be derived from the SCRC Corporate Plan 2009. For example at the Community Conference held on 20-21 November 2008, SCRC requested 70 community representatives to prioritise SCRC Corporate Plan themes presented to them. Community priorities were recorded as follows:



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- Robust economy
- Great governance
- Ecological sustainability
- Innovation and creativity
- Health and well-being
- Social cohesion
- Accessibility and connectedness
- Managing Growth

Most importantly, a robust economy was considered by the community to be the highest Corporate Plan priority. The employment issues associated with having, retaining and creating jobs are acknowledged by all workers, parents, grandparents and governments (at state and federal levels) as the No1 priority. Therefore, to achieve community priorities expressed in the Corporate Plan, the SCRC in its **Economic Development Strategy 2009 – 2014 must address the specific public and private investment priorities required to create 20,000 jobs on the Sunshine Coast by 2014.** Only then will the proposed new SCRC Planning Scheme have a context as the tool to regulate private investment. Consequently, implementation will achieve the Government SEQRP goals and the SCRC Corporate Plan objectives.

### **SCRC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – SCBC KEY POINTS**

**Key point 1: Job creation – people, jobs, lifestyle.** The SCBC 10 Point Plan sets a target of 225 – 250,000 regional jobs by 2031. This is formulated on the explicit projections of the SEQ Regional Plan, utilising a lower job participation rate of 40 – 45%, reflecting established demographics / lifestyle choices in the region.

The EDS must recognise that a healthy and sustainable economy does not materialise without jobs. The EDS must concentrate on maintaining *and* creating jobs. SCRC has the opportunity to partner effectively with business which has the potential to grow, expand into new sectors and create jobs.

**Key point 2: Stakeholders – must be more inclusive than currently recognised.** Stakeholders are a greater and wider collection of partners than those (mainly government) acknowledged in the draft EDS.

The SCBC recognises the importance of both public and private investment and in so doing, expands recognised stakeholders to include amongst others, industry specific bodies, professional representative bodies and community service groups. The EDS must distil what stimulus role government can effectively play with its infrastructure investment and what must be left to private sector enterprise ie. those with the ability to respond to the stimulus and create jobs.

**Key point 3: Economic sectors – sector identification must be rational not simply aspirational.** The SCBC 10 Point Plan applies a Driver / Responder analysis to identify 5 driver industry sectors and 5 responder industry sectors as the primary job creation engines. Sector identification is a rational analysis of both *existing and emerging* regional industries.

The draft EDS identifies 11 emerging regional industry sectors. Many of these sectors are unsupported by the draft's EDS baseline data. The EDS Action Plan for 2009-10 should differentiate the 'driver and responder' industries and concentrate scarce SCRC resources where to best stimulate identified industry sectors. If the EDS Action Plan 2009-10 is specific about creating 4,000 jobs then 'projects' with specific jobs outcomes should be included so that it can be demonstrated that the scarce SCRC resources are directed to achieve the objectives.



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**SCRC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – SMART ACTION PLAN**

SCBC strongly advocates a more precise and deliverable EDS Action Plan which is directed at the SCRC Corporate Plan priorities. To achieve this Council should apply SMART filtering to all Action Plan tasks:

**S**pecific – **M**easurable – **A**chievable – **R**ealistic – **T**imely

SCBC recommends the key Action Plan tasks as follows:

1. Set incremental, 1 year job targets (4,000 new regional jobs / year for 5 years);
2. Focus exclusively on identified industry sectors, the primary job creation engines;
3. Partner effectively and work with private enterprise, not in isolation;
4. Specifically allocate personnel to projects, with a brief, budgets, timetables and stated outcomes;
5. Regularly monitor and periodically review Action Plan toward achieving the Corporate Plan goals.

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25 January 2010



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