5.04. QUEENSLAND TOURISM AND TRANSPORT STRATEGY

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DEPARTMENT: Development and Environment

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State government has released a discussion paper seeking industry comment for the development of the Queensland Tourism and Transport Strategy. Local government is identified as a key partner and the Shire has a strong dependence on tourism. Details of the discussion paper and proposed timeframes for the development of the Strategy are available on the State Department's website. It is anticipated that a draft Strategy will be released at the end of February that can be reviewed with a further report to Council.

BACKGROUND

Through the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) Council has been advised of the Queensland Government's release of the discussion paper titled, The Queensland Tourism and Transport Strategy, Transport and Tourism: Creating a World Class Visitor Experience (2015). The discussion paper has been compiled by the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

The discussion paper states that the Queensland Tourism and Transport Strategy (QTTS) will take a strategic long term view of what is needed to deliver world class visitor experiences and growth in the tourism industry into the future; as well as identify short and medium term priorities for action. The Strategy aims to achieving the following four outcomes:

1.   *For the visitor – delivering a seamless and connected travel experience that contributes to a positive Queensland holiday experience – from start to finish;*

2.   *For the industry – delivering greater quality, service and innovation to position the sector to develop new market opportunities while responding to changing visitor needs;*

3.   *For governments – ensuring policies and investment decisions take into account the needs of visitors and the industry; and*

4.   *For Queensland – ensuring new partnerships across tourism and transport create opportunities for investment, jobs growth and regional development.*

The State Government has called for input from industry on the issues, opportunities and challenges; the potential priorities; and opportunities for partnerships. In previous publications on this issue, industry had identified that access is crucial to Queensland's future tourism performance and described success as:

> "•   *an integrated transport system that provides safe and equitable access and allows visitors to easily move around the state to visit our destinations and iconic experiences;*
>
> •   *the right mix of transport options to meet the needs and expectations of all our visitors*
>
> •   *transport investment that builds aviation linkages, enhances drive tourism and ensures new cruise infrastructure is available to provide visitors a seamless transport experience."*

In respect to, *"Creating a world class visitor experience"* the discussion paper notes, *"signage and wayfinding play a crucial role in facilitating movement of visitors around destinations. Legibility, location and consistency are key measures of their effectiveness."*

The discussion paper identifies local government as a key partner playing, *"a critical role in growing the State's visitor economy by developing and maintaining precincts and sites that people want to visit. Through the collaboration of state and local governments and communities in planning, designing and managing transport infrastructure and public spaces, we can enhance visitor experience and the appeal of destinations."*

The process and timelines for the Strategy are expressed in the following diagram.

A copy of the discussion paper and details regarding the consultation process can be found on the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games website at the following link:

https://www.dtesb.qld.gov.au/tourism/tourism-and-transport-strategy

COMMENT

The State Planning Policy, Regional Plan and State codes consider the hierarchy of transport corridors that are reflected in the current Planning Scheme and *Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009*. State-controlled roads traverse half of the Shire in a north to south direction and westwards from the coast to the Mareeba Tablelands. Access to the Shire via the state-controlled roads is the primary form of access for visitors to the Shire. While the physical condition of the state-controlled road is the responsibility of the State, good communication between Council and the Department of Transport and Main Roads is beneficial in maintaining good access to the Shire for visitors.

The visitor experience journeying to and within the Shire needs to consider the practical need for direction and wayfinding of tourist activities and destinations together with balancing the visual scenic amenity that is integral to the high quality tourism product the Shire seeks to deliver. It is important that this balance is reflected in Council's policies and the proposed State strategy. While there are new forms of information available to visitors to the area, for example through mobile telephone software applications for GPS mapping and language interpretation of signage, limited mobile telephone coverage in many parts of the Shire restrict these software applications. In many instances local directional signage is important to ensuring the safety and assurance for visitors that they are "on the right track" in pursuing tourism sites and activities. Council officers are currently reviewing the directional signage policy.

Council maintains local parks and public areas for the benefit of the local community and domestic and international visitors.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

No further resourcing is required at this point in time. A transport network hierarchy is a standard inclusion in the draft Planning Scheme and consideration of State infrastructure (roads) is undertaken as part of the State interest check.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

No identified risk management implications if Council chooses not to provide comment on the discussion paper. The State government advises that a Draft Strategy will be released for consultation in the end of February 2016 with opportunity for Council to provide a submission by the middle of April 2016.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: Given the reliance of the Shire on tourism, with access to the Shire being dominated by state-controlled roads, it is important that Council review and provide comment when the Draft Strategy is released.

Environmental: The development of state-controlled roads for access for tourism related goals needs to be balanced with the need to protect and enhance the natural areas adjacent to the State-controlled roads.

Social: None identified

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2014-2019 Initiatives:

Theme 4 - Engage, Plan, Partner
4.2.3 - Work with regional, state, national and international stakeholders to promote beneficial partnerships to support strong, resilient and sustainable communities.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

Regulator	Meeting the responsibilities associated with regulating activities through legislation or local law.

CONSULTATION

Internal: Development and Environment Planning Team
Manager Infrastructure