

Mr Brian Pidgeon  
Chief Executive Officer  
Toowoomba Regional Council  
PO Box 3021  
TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350

**BY EMAIL ONLY:** [yoursay@tr.qld.gov.au](mailto:yoursay@tr.qld.gov.au)

Dear Brian

### **TOOWOOMBA REGION PARKING STRATEGY SUBMISSION**

---

As you are aware, the Central Business District Revitalisation Advisory Committee (CBD-RAC) is a Toowoomba Chamber initiative designed to facilitate and advocate for the transformation of the CBD of Toowoomba. The CBD-RAC was born out of concerns raised by small businesses and was identified as a priority by the Toowoomba Chamber in the 2020 Local Elections advocacy document.

The CBD RAC has been advocating for a range of improvements to CBD parking arrangements. More recently, this has focused on the application of a consistent approach to long-term parking arrangements, parking permits, extending parking time allocations, and signage. This is reflected in March 2024, Toowoomba Chamber Local Government Election Priorities document to advocate for small business at the local government elections (***refer attached***).

The work drew on our research from the Toowoomba Business Sentiment Index, Tax Advocacy Advice, Annual Surveys, CBD Economic Profile, and the like and our engagement with our members and other interest groups.

Toowoomba Chamber recommended CBD parking changes include:

- implementing 3 hours' free parking in the Bell Street Car Park (Bus Terminal) and Annand Street Car Park to bring consistency in parking offerings across the CBD;
- providing an annual parking permit option for business and building owners, including trade services to assist with planned and urgent works being conducted in the CBD during business hours;
- extending the one-hour parking arrangements to two hours in the CBD; and
- undertaking a complete signage audit and update for parking signage.

At our recent engagement with Toowoomba Regional Officers and their consultant on 26 November 2024, the following matters were also identified as needing addressing as part of the review:

- undertaking parking arrangements comparisons with other inland regional cities;
- technological improvements and simplifying parking arrangements;
- new parking infrastructure needs; and
- changes to the TRC Bus Terminal Car Park to align with free CBD street parking from 5pm weekdays and from 1130am Saturday noting that Sunday and Public holidays are currently free parking.

Furthermore, the Toowoomba Chamber is of the view, that the survey for the Central Traffic Area does not provide any questions which addresses the key car parking related matters in the CBD which is impacting on the business community. As such we recommend, it be redrafted in concert with the Toowoomba Chamber and recirculated to the business community for input.

We look forward to hearing from you on this matter and working with you to find solutions for the city

Yours sincerely



Todd Rohl  
Chief Executive Officer

### **About the Toowoomba Chamber**

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is an independent organisation that advocates on behalf of local businesses at local, state, and federal levels to ensure the business community has a voice.

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce journey commenced on 12 October 1899, stirred into action by the business community due to the *"special opportunities afforded by a digest of the ideas and experiences of an association of business"* and the need that *"a vigilant and united body can readily discuss anomalies and abuses which if left unchecked work to the detriment of the community"*. The Toowoomba Chamber of today continues to build on those foundations.

The Toowoomba Chamber plays a critical role in connecting our members across the local business community to establish and grow strong, lasting networks as well as explore opportunities to access supply chain networks and build business brands.

Our full program of events and dedication to outreach, which exceeded seven million people last year, provides the platform to strengthen existing networks, develop new contacts, connect with business leaders, and continue to improve and learn to maximise growth opportunities.

With over 600 members, the Toowoomba Chamber is one of the largest regional Chamber of Commerce organisations in Australia and Queensland largest regional Chamber of Commerce.

We are proud partners of the Darling Downs Regional Alliance which represents over 1000 businesses in the Toowoomba Regional Local Government area.



TOOWOOMBA  
CHAMBER

# Small Business is a **BIG** Deal

2024 Local Election  
Toowoomba Business Priorities



# Small Business is a **BIG** Deal

## 2024 Local Election Toowoomba Business Priorities

We are an entrepreneurial city, a small business city that is the backbone of the Toowoomba regional economy. We are crucial to the region's sustainability and growth.

We know this, as the research undertaken by McCrindle as part of the Toowoomba Business Performance Sentiment Index identified that over 98% of the region's businesses are small. Yes, small businesses dominate the Toowoomba business landscape.

Small businesses are critical for the city's wealth generation and success. They also play an enormous role in our region by giving back to our community by supporting numerous community and sporting organisations and not for profit companies. That means when small business hurts our whole community hurts too.

The Toowoomba Chamber wants to see a turbocharged region, so businesses can expand, and more money can flow directly into the local economy. A region where business and people talk about Toowoomba being THE place for business, throughout Queensland and around the nation.

Toowoomba Regional Council plays a critical role in small business success. How? By communicating and engaging with small business to enable growth. By creating enabling regulation to bring economic prosperity to a region. Rewarding small business. And much more.

The Toowoomba Chamber has engaged early and often with the business community to gain input into the key priorities that support business locally. With this input, the Toowoomba Chamber has identified key priorities and the commitment required from the next Toowoomba Regional Council Mayor and Councillors to enable small business.

We are the independent voice of business in our region. We will continue to advocate loudly to ensure the voice of business is heard.

**Myfanwy Rigby, Toowoomba Chamber President**





# Central Business District

## THE MATTER

The Toowoomba Central Business District (CBD) is the jewel of our region.

Understanding the CBD business make-up, employment characteristics, strengths, and gaps, along with its roles and impact within the city's urban boundaries, the broader Toowoomba local government area, the region, state, and nation is essential in developing good policy. Any heart needs constant focus and attention to understand the critical factors that keep it activated.

The CBD requires a collective effort and collaboration between business, government, and the community.

## CURRENT BUSINESS IMPACT

- Lack of effective investment is restricting long-term growth and sustainability.
- Local CBD Parking Policies have the biggest impact on the most common business types in the CBD, reducing customers, investment, growth, and client base.
- Local CBD Parking Policies are inequitable, financially disadvantaging small business operators.
- Business downturn.
- Businesses exiting the CBD.

## FACTS AND DATA

The CBD Economic Profile in 2023 established, the CBD:

- contributes 8.1% of GDP to the Toowoomba region;
- employs in the order of 8,521 people;
- has a direct and in direct economic impact across the whole Toowoomba local government area, Queensland and nationally;
- largest number of businesses by industry share are professional services, rental and real estate and retail trade;
- most common business types are cafés and restaurants, hairdressing and beauty services and accounting services; and
- when comparing the Toowoomba CBD against a control group of other CBDs consisting of Townsville, Ballarat, Bendigo, Albury-Wodonga; Mackay, Rockhampton, Bunbury, Bundaberg and Coffs Harbour, the control group performs better in key areas being tourism, accommodation, education and training and public administration.

Local government authorities in other cities like Williamstown have diverse parking strategies that offer a parking permit service for business owners, delivery vehicles, construction workers and the like to support local businesses day to day operations and development.

## Central Business District

### SMALL BUSINESS VOICES

*'The revised parking in the CBD has driven my business to the suburbs'.*

*'We noticed a downturn in our CBD business when new car parking arrangements were implemented. Our customers say there is no reason to come downtown anymore due to car parking arrangements and poor public amenities. We know businesses have moved from the CBD due to these reasons'.*

*'More needs to be done to facilitate housing in the CBD. It will bring people, support business growth, and make the area safer'.*

*'We need a community-based contribution in parks, streetscape enhancements and a conference facility delivered with the support of all levels of government and the business community to activate the CBD'.*

*"In 2020, Council advised they will consider developing a public guide for hosting events in the CBD including how to activate laneways for events. I have heard nothing since 2020. Has this occurred?"*

*"In my communication with many local businesses I've been made aware of red tape that has lost local businesses money and time opened. The handling of parking in the cbd has made it difficult for many businesses to get customers through the door and for staff to find a reasonable solution for their vehicles during work and has led some staff to change to jobs outside of the cbd. Leaving some cbd businesses struggling to find staff unless they have a private park for their team members - which is rare'.*

### CONNECTION WITH GOVERNMENT

In 2021, Explore and Clarify CBD Priorities collaboration identified several matters as priorities for Toowoomba Regional Council, including:

- a public guide about hosting events in Toowoomba, including information about activating laneways in the city.;
- repurposing the laneway spaces, they own, and where this fits into existing strategies and budgets.;
- the outcomes of the workshop to inform the development of this strategic document which will inform the City Centre Action Plan 2022-32.



## Central Business District

<b>THE REQUEST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A consistent, clear, and equitable approach to CBD parking.</li><li>• Invest in an urban park, improved long-term parking, conference facilities, and more accommodation choice in the CBD.</li><li>• Develop holistic incentives that facilitate increased tourism, accommodation, education and training and public administration uses in the CBD.</li><li>• Events in the CBD and across the city should be coordinated in one place.</li></ul>
<b>HOW IT CAN BE DONE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement 3 hours' free parking in the Bell Street Car Park and Annand Street Car Parks, bringing consistency in parking offerings across the CBD.</li><li>• Provide an annual parking permit option for business &amp; building owners, including trade services to assist with planned and urgent works being conducted in the CBD during business hours.</li><li>• Extend the one hour parking arrangements to two hours in the CBD.</li><li>• Complete signage audit and update for parking signage.</li><li>• Complete a business case for investment in an urban park that includes green space, improved long term parking, a conference facility, and more accommodation choice.</li><li>• Create an incentive package that facilitates increased tourism, accommodation, education, training and public administration uses in the CBD.</li><li>• All events needing Toowoomba Regional Council approvals are coordinated in one Department.</li></ul>
<b>THE BUSINESS BENEFIT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An activated CBD, with increased foot traffic and local spend.</li><li>• A fairer approach to CBD parking for all Toowoomba ratepayers.</li><li>• A safer CBD.</li><li>• Flourishing businesses that attract and retain employment opportunities.</li></ul>

# Rural Areas and Townships

## THE MATTER

The Toowoomba region has a rich resource base driven by agriculture and resource management. The rural areas are abundant with resources, with Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is the region's number 1 industry by business count.

The region's unique townships like Oakey, Pittsworth, Millmerran, Highfields, Crows Nest, Clifton, Greenmount, Goombungee, Cambooya, Clifton, Yarraman and other smaller townships, not only support and service the surrounding resources, but are themselves a major tourist attractors and core to the area's history.

The region's rural areas and townships need constant attention, support, and care.

## CURRENT BUSINESS IMPACT

- Poor connectivity in rural areas and towns (eg roads and services) is restricting long-term growth and sustainability.
- Economic deficient and reduced quality of life from poor quality infrastructure.
- Reduction in tourist opportunities.

## FACTS AND DATA

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries are the region's number 1 industry by business count. In 2023, there were more than 3,500 businesses from this sector located in our region.
- In 20/21, Toowoomba 'economy id' identified the total value of agricultural output in Toowoomba was \$1,091m.
- The Toowoomba region is agriculture and resource rich.
- Rural areas, their resources and townships are significant contributors to the region's character and economic prosperity.
- Tourism in the areas townships and rural areas can play a significant part in an area's vitality and opportunity.
- Rural areas are not adequately represented at the local political level.

## SMALL BUSINESS VOICES

- *'The surfacing and repairing of rural roads should be a key priority'.*
- *'Beautification of roadsides entering and existing local rural towns needs improvement'.*
- *"Most elected officials live in Toowoomba, and we feel no one cares about the rural areas and regional towns'.*
- *"Attract more tourists and get Toowoomba people to visit their local towns. Make the whole area be seen, not just Toowoomba city gardens'.*



## Rural Areas and Townships

<b>CONNECTION WITH GOVERNMENT</b>	<p>The Toowoomba region's rich history is built on the back of surrounding high quality agricultural areas and abundant resources. These areas are supported by regional centres of Oakey, Pittsworth, Millmerran, Highfields, Crows Nest, Clifton, Greenmount, Goombungee, Clifton, Yarraman and other smaller townships.</p> <p>The maintenance of infrastructure needed to support this fundamental part of the region's identity, lifestyle and growth must continue to be valued for their important role in our region's economic wealth.</p>
<b>THE REQUEST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heightened priority for Rural areas and Toowoomba Townships.</li><li>• Create or support an event which celebrates regional areas and agricultural sector.</li><li>• Secure our food by protecting our largest business sector.</li><li>• Fund more township and rural infrastructure.</li></ul>
<b>HOW IT CAN BE DONE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give greater priority to road, residential, tourism, and other rural and township infrastructure needs.</li><li>• Investment in rural areas to secure our food future.</li><li>• Work with local event organisers and businesses to enable events in the region.</li><li>• Implement town beautification and to activate main streets of each township with the local community and suppliers.</li><li>• Implement a Councillor led, Rural and Toowoomba Townships portfolio within the Toowoomba Regional Council Governance Structure.</li><li>• Create an local electoral system which provides greater opportunity for the rural areas to have a voice.</li></ul>
<b>THE BUSINESS BENEFIT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved oversight and reporting will ensure attention is paid to rural areas and townships and the impacts in decision making is understood.</li><li>• Wealth generator for business.</li><li>• A strong and diverse economy.</li><li>• Employment creator.</li><li>• Enhanced investment in the region.</li><li>• Decentralisation of the Region's population by increasing the livability of regional centres.</li></ul>

# Efficient Regulatory Environment

<b>THE MATTER</b>	<p>A regulatory environment that is excessive and unnecessarily complex, restricts business confidence and where inefficiently implemented, inconsistently enforced and with poor response times and lengthy delays, is a cost burden on business and increases costs of delivery services and products to the ratepayer.</p>
<b>CURRENT BUSINESS IMPACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased costs mean job losses.</li><li>• Inefficiently implemented, inconsistently enforced regulation, with poor response times and lengthy delays from government, results in the cost burden on business increasing.</li><li>• Regulation developed in a vacuum and poorly communicated creates confusion and increased costs on business which is passed onto the local ratepayers.</li><li>• Investment looks elsewhere.</li></ul>
<b>FACTS AND DATA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 82% of businesses say that red tape costs have increased since 2021 and the financial administration compliance burden has increased 100% from \$25,000 to \$50,000 in the same period.</li><li>• 43% of businesses have confirmed they spend six or more hours a week on regulatory compliance.</li><li>• The Toowoomba Performance Sentiment Index Findings and Toowoomba Annual Survey of businesses in 2022 and 2023 demonstrate that 'red tape and administrative burden' remains the number one issue of concern for local businesses.</li></ul>
<b>SMALL BUSINESS VOICES</b>	<p><i>'Toowoomba Regional Council should work harder at streamlining the processes for attaining Council permits for businesses to operate. Currently applying for permits is slow and clunky and costly to small businesses'.</i></p> <p><i>'In January 2023, we wrote to Toowoomba Regional Council about a 'red tape' issue and even included a possible solution. 12 months later, we wait for a formal response'.</i></p> <p><i>"Council is a barrier and never an enabler. Why aren't they more like Lockyer Regional Council who have open arms in helping small business succeed'.</i></p> <p><i>"Every time my wife runs an event the amount of paperwork she has to fill in would make your eyes water. Quite sad really what it has done to events here. Way over the top!</i></p>



# Efficient Regulatory Environment

<b>CONNECTION WITH GOVERNMENT</b>	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to being a small business friendly Council, which we expect them to implement. This signed commitment says, amongst other things, Toowoomba Regional Council will limit unnecessary administration and implement business improvement processes and regularly review administration and regulatory requirements policies, procedures, and red tape.</p>
<b>THE REQUEST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interrogate and remove excessive, unnecessarily complex regulation to build business confidence and our region's competitiveness locally, in Queensland and nationally.</li><li>• Develop an inclusive and collaborative approach to drafting and reviewing regulation that is open and transparent.</li><li>• Improve accountability around implementation, regulatory response times and understanding the financial impact of new regulation on business and the community in general.</li></ul>
<b>HOW IT CAN BE DONE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a 'Red Tape Taskforce' between the business community and Toowoomba Regional Council to interrogate regulation.</li><li>• Involve the business community in the drafting of new regulations, upfront, in the development of policy.</li><li>• The creation of a Business Liaison Program, similar to the model used by the Reserve Bank of Australia.</li><li>• Create a responsibility for an elected official to be the lead in creating Better Regulation and Reducing Red Tape through oversight and regular reporting.</li><li>• A full report to be included in the Annual Report outlining the ways red tape has been addressed.</li></ul>
<b>THE BUSINESS BENEFIT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Efficient regulator protects Toowoomba jobs.</li><li>• Efficiently implemented, consistently enforced regulation, with agreed turnaround times reduces the cost burden on the business and the ratepayer.</li><li>• Regulation developed together in an open and transparent way develops rapport and understanding by all parties, creating the right 'fit for purpose' regulation.</li><li>• Better Regulation and Red Tape oversight and reporting will ensure constant attention is paid to regulatory and business impacts in decision making.</li><li>• Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.</li></ul>

# Small Business Friendly Council

## THE MATTER

On 16 March 2020, Toowoomba Regional Council signed a Small Business Charter, committing to being a Small Business Friendly Council.

The small business friendly council initiative outlines the commitment between local councils, its partners and small business to support a prosperous and sustainable small business sector in communities across Queensland.

Toowoomba Regional Council has fallen short of being a Small Business Friendly Council.

## CURRENT BUSINESS IMPACT

- Stifles innovation.
- Increase costs to do business.
- Brand awareness for business and the region is limited.
- Investment is inhibited.

## FACTS AND DATA

- In 2021 and 2022, the Toowoomba Chamber undertook a survey with the business community to determine if Toowoomba Regional Council was meeting its commitment to the business community.
- In 2021, the outcome was clear. Toowoomba Regional Council was not a small business friendly council.
- In 2022, with strong advocacy and steadfast accountability, the business community saw improvement, but noted that significant improvements are still required when it comes to Toowoomba Regional Council meeting its signed commitments to the small business community.
- The findings from the business community survey are that Toowoomba Regional Council has:
  - significantly improved in communication and engagement with small business;
  - slightly improved in raising the profile and capability of small business;
  - marginally enhanced its support for small business resilience and recovery;
  - made limited inroads to simplify administration and regulation red tape burden;
  - had good improvement in ensuring fair procurement and prompt payment terms; and
  - shown no advancement in promoting or showcasing small business.

# Small Business Friendly Council

## SMALL BUSINESS VOICES

*'The dealings I have had with the council has shown that like many organisations the bureaucracy of their departments hampers meaningful and helpful information. They do not actively seek to use local businesses for their major projects or events like the Carnival of Flowers. They do not actively support new ideas or events'.*

*'I don't believe dealing with council is ever 'simple'. Often bureaucracy gets in the way of them being helpful'.*

*I can only reference the administration and regulation of food licensing by the Council. The information is inconsistent, the 'catch you out and fine you' approach is antagonistic, attending large events and disrupting custom of small businesses is stressful'.*

*'Council is a barrier and never an enabler. Why aren't they more like Lockyer Regional Council who have open arms in helping small business succeed'.*

*'Council officers and committees should consult transport providers in a more efficient manner as this has been lacking in recent years'.*

*"Implement a procurement strategy that proactively priorities social enterprises in local government contracts and tenders'.*

## CONNECTION WITH GOVERNMENT

The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to being a small business friendly Council.

This signed commitment says, Toowoomba Regional Council will communicate and engage with small business, raise the profile and capability of small business, support small business resilience and recovery, limit unnecessary administration, and implement business improvement processes and regularly review administration and regulatory requirements policies, procedures, and red tape, ensure fair procurement and prompt payment terms for small business, and promote and showcase small business

## THE REQUEST

- Publicly report on the achievement of the commitments in the Small Business Friendly Council. Charter.
- Commit to a Small Business Friendly Council in the Corporate Plan.
- Include performance against KPI's in the Council's Annual Report.
- Financial investment in all the Small Business Friendly Charter Commitments.



# Small Business Friendly Council

## HOW IT CAN BE DONE

- Proactively collaborate with the Darling Downs Regional Alliance to seek quarterly feedback from small business to help drive business improvement.
- Publicly release quarterly reports to the business community on achievement or otherwise of the Small Business Friendly Council commitments.
- Publish in the Toowoomba Regional Council Annual Report, Council's performance against the Small Business Friendly Council.

## THE BUSINESS BENEFIT

- Increased engagement with the business community.
- Support in raising business profiles and capabilities.
- Support business resilience and recovery.
- Simply the regulation burden so that compliance with what really matters is achieved
- Promote programs for small business.
- Promote and showcase local business.
- Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.

# Shovel Ready Infrastructure Pipeline

<b>THE MATTER</b>	<p>Infrastructure spending will future proof the region. New catalytic infrastructure grows the economy, and an identified pipeline of projects ensures the continued flow of employment in the region.</p> <p>Toowoomba Regional Council can create confidence in the business community by committing to and working hard to secure major projects, plan for the future, and have shovel ready projects ready to go that will benefit the region.</p>
<b>CURRENT BUSINESS IMPACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of business confidence.</li> <li>• Lack of long-term vision inhibits investment.</li> <li>• Makes the region uncompetitive.</li> <li>• Drives investors to other regions.</li> </ul>
<b>FACTS AND DATA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure refers to roads, transportation, power and water supplies, phone towers, internet, buildings such as hospitals, police stations, fire stations, art galleries, parks, and the like. These types of infrastructure are vital systems that play an important role in economic development and business growth.</li> <li>• An investment in infrastructure enables business to grow, cities and regions to flourish and improves collective wealth. It enables greater productivity and growth in the delivery of goods and services.</li> <li>• The right infrastructure facilitates business growth, provides jobs, and reduces economic disruption helping to maintain an equilibrium.</li> <li>• Infrastructure investment stimulates the economy as seen by the Toowoomba Bypass which provided an estimated \$2.4 billion dollar boost to the region.</li> </ul>
<b>SMALL BUSINESS VOICES</b>	<p><i>'As a CBD business owner for over a decade, the need for a legacy project like this that delivers for the community and business sector has been long awaited'.</i></p> <p><i>'As Toowoomba has grown, events have drawn larger crowds while infrastructure lags behind'.</i></p> <p><i>'Ratepayers are developing anxiety symptoms over inaction on transitioning to green technology and infrastructure'.</i></p> <p><i>'If we don't get the framework for future infrastructure development right now the cost of fixing it later will be greater'.</i></p> <p><i>'Plan transport corridors and future water infrastructure'.</i></p> <p><i>'Council needs a solid direction. Where are we headed?'</i></p>

# Shovel Ready Infrastructure Pipeline

<b>CONNECTION WITH GOVERNMENT</b>	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to plan, build, manage, and maintain infrastructure to support the region's lifestyle and growth.</p>
<b>THE REQUEST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocate with community and all stakeholders for the delivery inland rail and the fast rail between Toowoomba and Brisbane.</li><li>• Advocate with the community and all stakeholders for water security for Toowoomba and the region.</li><li>• Work with all community and all stakeholders to deliver a 15,000 to 20,000 seat permanent sports stadium with allied services and programs to develop the sporting opportunities in our region through a centre for sporting excellence.</li><li>• Work with the community and all stakeholders to deliver an improved public transport system to move people within Toowoomba and surrounding townships.</li><li>• Create shovel ready projects for major tourist attractors Quarry Gardens, The Jondaryan Woolshed, a convention centre, and regional arts gallery (which includes the completing relevant business cases).</li></ul>
<b>HOW IT CAN BE DONE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate and engage with the community early and often.</li><li>• Providing quarterly public updates on progress of major infrastructure investments.</li><li>• Have Quarry Gardens, Jondaryan Woolshed, a convention centre, and regional arts gallery shovel ready.</li><li>• Complete business case for a covention centre in the CBD and a regional arts gallery.</li><li>• Where opportunities to partner with other levels of government arise, prioritise the project management planning and approvals to allow progress to occur.</li><li>• Fund the revitalisation of national icon, the Jondaryan Woolshed in conjunction with a strategic business plan to ensure its financial sustainability.</li></ul>
<b>THE BUSINESS BENEFIT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Economic investment and diversity in the region.</li><li>• Jobs growth.</li><li>• Build business confidence.</li><li>• The region is a destination of choice and showcased globally.</li><li>• Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.</li></ul>



# Housing

<b>THE MATTER</b>	Many sectors of the business community understand the impact of a lack of housing is a deterrent to business attraction, is a disincentive to attracting a workforce, impacts on the ability of businesses to deliver their service, affects the image of the city, and inhibits business growth and success.
<b>CURRENT BUSINESS IMPACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inability to attract a workforce.</li><li>• City image.</li><li>• Homelessness and affordability.</li><li>• Business attraction and employment.</li><li>• Stifles investment.</li></ul>
<b>FACTS AND DATA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In 2021, Toowoomba Regional Council did not have sufficient supply of residential land.</li><li>• In 2021, Toowoomba Regional Council used constrained land, like Koala Habitat, to boost the residential land supply figures.</li><li>• In 2021, the Toowoomba business community compiled a range of solutions to address the business impacts from lack of housing.</li><li>• In 2022, Toowoomba was identified as having the highest amount of rental stress in the country.</li><li>• In 2022, an affordable housing supply in Toowoomba was questioned as housing prices soared in part due to lack of supply.</li><li>• In 2023, physical homelessness on the streets of Toowoomba has visibly increased.</li></ul>
<b>SMALL BUSINESS VOICES</b>	<p><i>'We need workers who don't have to commute'.</i></p> <p><i>'Open up accommodation and infrastructure to support the same as soon as possible'.</i></p> <p><i>'Long term vision and planning to make our region strong into the future'.</i></p> <p><i>'Homelessness is visible on our streets and in our parks. Action is required as a matter of urgency'.</i></p> <p><i>'Council is a constant blocker, never a supported'.</i></p>
<b>CONNECTION WITH GOVERNMENT</b>	The Toowoomba Regional Council has a responsibility to create land supply for residential development and facilitate shelter for all.
<b>THE REQUEST</b>	Facilitate the delivery of more housing choice.



# Housing

## HOW IT CAN BE DONE

- Collaboratively work with all stakeholders to deliver more housing and housing choice.
- Incentive accommodation in the CBD.
- Work with the business community to create housing efficient regulation.
- Increase local land supply.
- Release unused and undertutilised Council owned land for residential development.
- Delivering a new Planning Scheme for the region in 2024.

## THE BUSINESS BENEFIT

- Economic investment in the region.
- Jobs growth.
- Housing for all.
- Build business confidence.
- Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.