

Mount Isa City Council Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Kalkadoon People as the Traditional Custodians of Mount Isa and its surrounding land and waters. We honour their intrinsic connections and continuing relationships to Country and pay respect to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging.



Foreword from the Mayor

I am proud to announce the launch of the Mount Isa Economic Development Strategy, "Mount Isa, Moving Ahead".

This strategy is an important roadmap and blueprint for the future sustainability and economic growth of Mount Isa.

It provides a framework for us all to work together towards a common goal, and ensure that our city remains vibrant and prosperous for generations to come.

It is designed to help the city to grow its population, attract businesses and investment, encourage business expansion, support industry diversification, and promote local career opportunities.

Mining is the backbone of Mount Isa's economy and has been for almost 100 years, but it's also crucial to have a diverse economic base that will attract new industries, create exciting new opportunities, and ensure the city continues to thrive for decades to come.

The Mount Isa Economic Development Strategy sets out a clear vision for the city's future and identifies the key areas upon which efforts need to be focused.

It is the result of extensive consultation with local businesses, residents, and government agencies, and represents a shared vision for our city's future.

Her Worship Danielle Slade
Mayor of Mount Isa



Executive Summary

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead, is Mount Isa City Council's Economic Development Strategy for the next five years. A blueprint for enhancing economic growth and investment, it presents a series of initiatives to support the vibrancy, diversity, liveability and sustainability of Mount Isa as the regional capital of Queensland's North West.

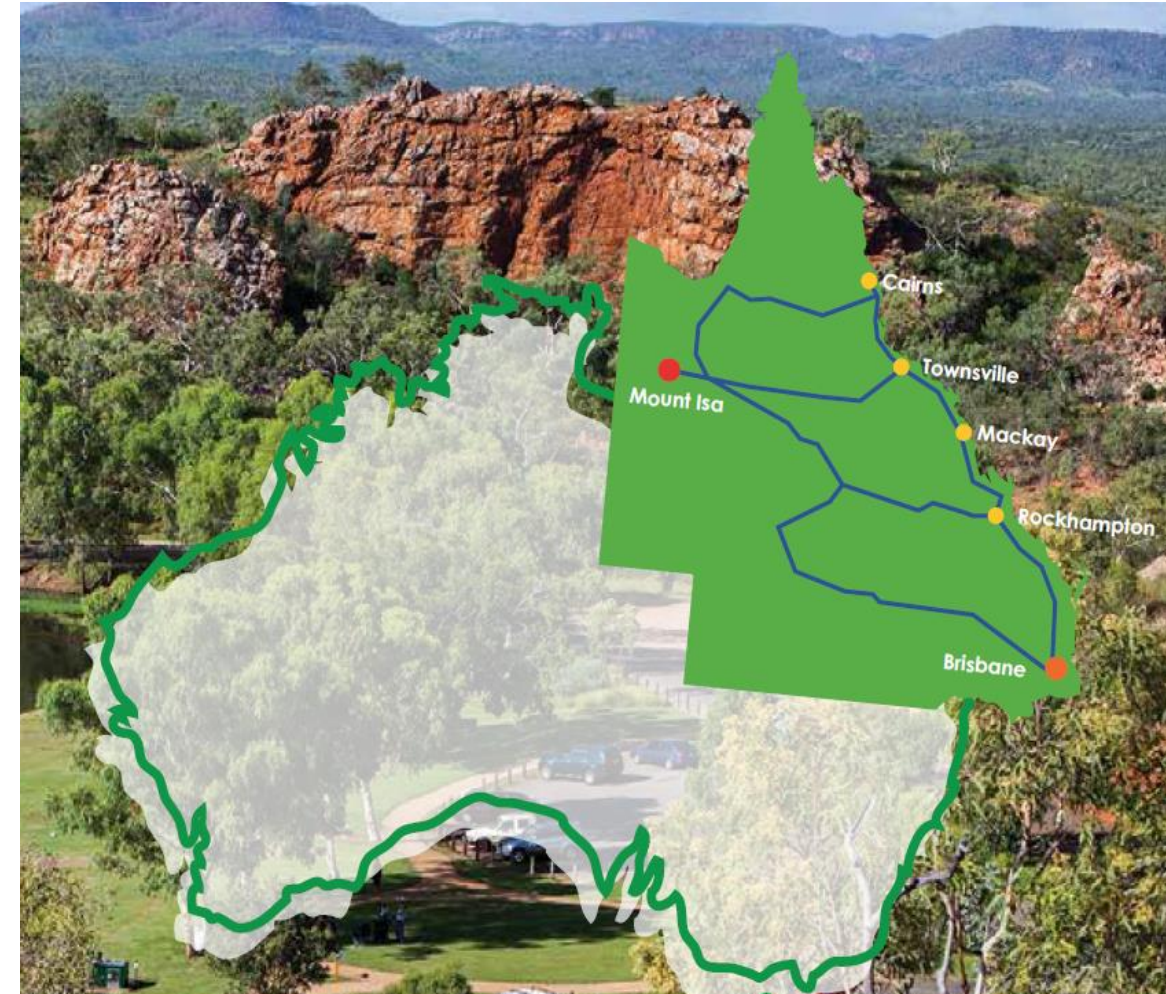
Defined by a well-considered plan of action, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* is designed to fulfil the City's vision for prosperity **making our good city great, through innovation, diversification and cultural enhancement** through the realisation of six key strategy objectives. These are:

- Competitive businesses and strong industries;
- Value through innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Strategic infrastructure to enable growth;
- A skilled workforce and jobs for locals;
- A city defined by its unique liveability advantage; and
- Equitable opportunities to prosper.

Strategy objectives will be realised through the prioritisation and implementation of a series of key initiatives presented across three key areas, focussed on **People and Place**; **Business and Industry**; and **Tourism and Investment**. Some of the recommended actions seek to build on or continue initiatives already in place, some are already resourced while others require additional resourcing.

Prepared in the context of Council's Corporate Plan and its broader program of work and strategic objectives, as well as key local and regional strategies, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* promotes a collaborative approach to economic development between the City and its partners in government, the non-government sector and industry.

Recognising the important role that Council and its economic development partners play in nurturing an enabling environment for both public and private sector investment, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* contains a number of actions dedicated to building the case for attracting increased and sustained levels of investment from industry and the other tiers of government.



1. Economic Development Strategy Purpose

A Blueprint for Economic Growth and Sustainability

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead, is a blueprint for enhancing economic growth and investment through initiatives designed to support the vibrancy, diversity, liveability and sustainability of Mount Isa as the regional capital of Queensland's North West.

Mount Isa is situated on the Traditional Lands of the Kalkadoon People. Located 1,829km from Brisbane, and 883km inland from Townsville, the closest major city, and with a population of around 20,000, Mount Isa is North West Queensland's administrative, commercial and industrial centre.

With firm roots in mining and a driver of the State economy, Mount Isa has grown to encompass industries including agriculture, health, education, tourism and manufacturing. While mining will continue to drive Mount Isa's economic development, in a transitioning global economic landscape underpinned by a new energy mix, a more diversified industrial base must be encouraged to help drive future economic activity.

Rather than posing a threat, economic transition can be embraced by leveraging Mount Isa's comparative and competitive advantages. These include its strategic location, natural assets, wealth of industrial land, well-established heavy industry and strong supply chains, its capabilities in health care and education, employment opportunities and an appealing outback lifestyle offer.

Mount Isa is on the cusp of an enormous uplift in economic activity, with opportunities for industrial diversification coupled with significant infrastructure investments set to transform economic capacity and business productivity, supply chain connectivity, market accessibility and the City's amenity.

Nevertheless, there are also key challenges that need to be addressed if Mount Isa is to realise its full economic potential. These include the high cost of transport, water and energy and their impacts on business productivity, labour and housing shortfalls and community infrastructure constraints impacting the City's liveability. Addressing both the challenges and opportunities for economic development in a strategic, informed and targeted manner is the focus of *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead*.

Mount Isa's Desired Economic Development Outcomes

The intent of *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* is to encapsulate the vision for the City's prosperity, ***making our good city great, through innovation, diversification and cultural enhancement***.

This reflects the City's approach to economic development as one which seeks to enhance levels of investment, income and employment underpinned by improvements in education, skills, health, culture, community wellbeing, a sense of place and the natural environment.

Defined by a well-considered plan of action, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* is designed to help:

- Retain and grow the City's population;
- Encourage business retention and expansion;
- Attract investment (both people and industry);
- Support industry diversification, growth and development; and
- Promote the development of a skilled workforce and the provision of local jobs.

Informed by research, targeted stakeholder consultation, an online survey of Mount Isa residents (refer to Appendix A) and data analysis, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* provides the framework for Mount Isa City Council (MICC) to influence the factors that facilitate local economic resilience, competitiveness and the capacity to grow the City sustainably. It does this by articulating economic development strategy objectives to guide Council in the application of its core economic development functions.

Strategy objectives will be realised through a suite of initiatives delivered across three key areas, focussed on ***People and Place; Business and Industry; and Tourism and Investment***.

2. Economic Development Strategy Objectives

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead: Economic Development Strategy Objectives

Through the implementation of *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead*, Council will work to help realise Mount Isa's desired economic development outcomes through the realisation of six key strategy objectives. These objectives align with Council's Corporate Plan and reflect the outcomes of the research, consultation and analysis undertaken to inform this strategy. They are:

- 1. Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries** - Mount Isa's existing and emerging industries will diversify and grow through initiatives designed to facilitate continual improvement in their productive capabilities and their capacity to drive value-added economic activities which target existing, new and emerging markets.
- 2. Value through Innovation and Entrepreneurship** - Mount Isa's economy will grow through the initiatives to support the continual development of synergies between research and development, education and training and business activities that foster innovation and entrepreneurship to grow economic value across local and regional supply chains.
- 3. Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth** - Mount Isa's public and private infrastructure will be planned in a holistic manner and delivered in a timely and cost-effective way to enable a diversity of opportunities for investment and economic development to be realised.
- 4. A Skilled Workforce and Jobs for Locals** - Mount Isa will leverage its business and industry capabilities and its education and training assets to develop a local workforce with the mix of skills required by business and industry to prosper in a transitioning, knowledge-intensive and globally-competitive economy.
- 5. A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage** - Through the delivery of cultural, recreational and community infrastructure and services which instills a strong sense of community, Mount Isa will establish its place as the capital of the North West - a regional city of choice where existing residents want to stay and where new residents choose to relocate.
- 6. Equitable Opportunities to Prosper** - Mount Isa City Council, as the custodian of this strategy, will endeavour to ensure that opportunities for economic development are distributed as equitably as possible, across all segments of the community.

These six key objectives will be met through the implementation of actions presented under the three strategic focus areas of this Economic Development Strategy.



3. Strategic Alignment and Key Partnerships

Mount Isa City Council's Role in Economic Development

Mount Isa City Council is committed to providing the foundations for prosperity by working within its remit as a local government authority to strike a balance between lifestyle and economic opportunity for the City's 20,000 residents.

Through the delivery of the actions presented in this strategy, MICC will foster sustainable economic development through the following functions:

- **Research, Strategic Planning and Direction Setting** - By establishing and articulating a shared vision for prosperity, Mount Isa City Council leads, organises, delivers, supports and promotes economic development in a strategic, informed and targeted manner.
- **Land Use Planning, Regulation and Place Management** - Council endeavours to maintain a regulatory and land use planning environment that is as supportive of community wellbeing/liveability and business investment as possible.
- **Infrastructure and Service Delivery** - Council collaborates with regional stakeholders to ensure that the fundamental enablers for investment and economic development are addressed by planning for and providing local and regionally significant infrastructure in an informed, planned and co-ordinated manner.
- **Local Business Concierge Services** - Council liaises with business and industry as well as representative organisations and peak industry bodies to understand local needs and priorities and addresses those priorities through planning, program and project delivery.
- **Marketing, Promotion and Investment Attraction** - Council facilitates investment by promoting what the City has to offer prospective investors in a strategic and targeted fashion.

Partnering for Growth and Prosperity

Mount Isa City Council's commitment to economic development does not occur in isolation, and key to the growth of the City's (and wider region's) economy is the development of connections across departments within the organisation and strong partnerships with business, State and Federal Government agencies, industry organisations and neighbouring councils.

Prepared in the context of Council's Corporate Plan and its broader program of work and strategic objectives, as well as key local and regional strategies, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* promotes a collaborative approach to economic development between the City and its partners in government, the non-government sector and industry.

This includes MITEZ (Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Zone), Commerce North West, Regional Development Australia Townsville and North West and State Government agencies including the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. It also includes other important contributors to economic development including Mount Isa Tourism Association, Mount Isa Airport, James Cook University, TAFE Queensland, key asset managers, major industry and local businesses.










Other key strategies which *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* responds to and aligns with include the Mount Isa Tourism Development Strategy 2020-2025, the Mount Isa CBD Master Plan, the Mount Isa City Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2018-2027, the Mount Isa Youth Strategy, the Townsville and North West Queensland Economic Recovery and Growth Strategy 2020-2030, the North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy and the MITEZ Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

Recognising the important role that Council and its economic development partners play in nurturing an enabling environment for both public and private sector investment, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* contains a number of actions dedicated to building the case for attracting increased and sustained levels of investment from industry and the other tiers of government.







4. Socio-Economic Snapshot of Mount Isa

Key Socio-Demographic and Economic Metrics

	Mount Isa has 19,226 residents (estimated resident population, 2021).
	Mount Isa has a median age of 31 years compared to 38 years for Queensland.
	Mount Isa has on average, 2.6 persons per household (the Queensland average is 2.5).
	In the year to date to January 2023, Mount Isa had residential building approvals of \$1.4 million and non-residential building approvals of \$10.3 million.
	Approximately one-third (34%) of Mount Isa residents live in rental accommodation compared to the Queensland average of 29%.
	Approximately 22% of Mount Isa residents identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander compared to the Queensland average of 5%.
	There are 11,749 jobs located in Mount Isa and 10,191 employed residents.
	Mount Isa has an unemployment rate of 7.2% (December 2022) compared to 3.6% for Regional Queensland and 4.1% for Queensland.
	Mount Isa recorded 4,647 criminal offences per 10,000 people in 2022 compared to the Queensland Northern Region average of 2,065 offences per 10,000 people.
	Mount Isa has 148 homeless persons per 10,000 persons compared to Queensland's 46 homeless persons per 10,000 persons.
	There are 900 businesses in Mount Isa, half of which are non-employing.
	Mount Isa receives around 154,000 domestic overnight visitors and 10,000 international visitors annually.

Sources: ABS, profile.id, Jobs and Skills Australia, Queensland Police Service and Tourism Research Australia

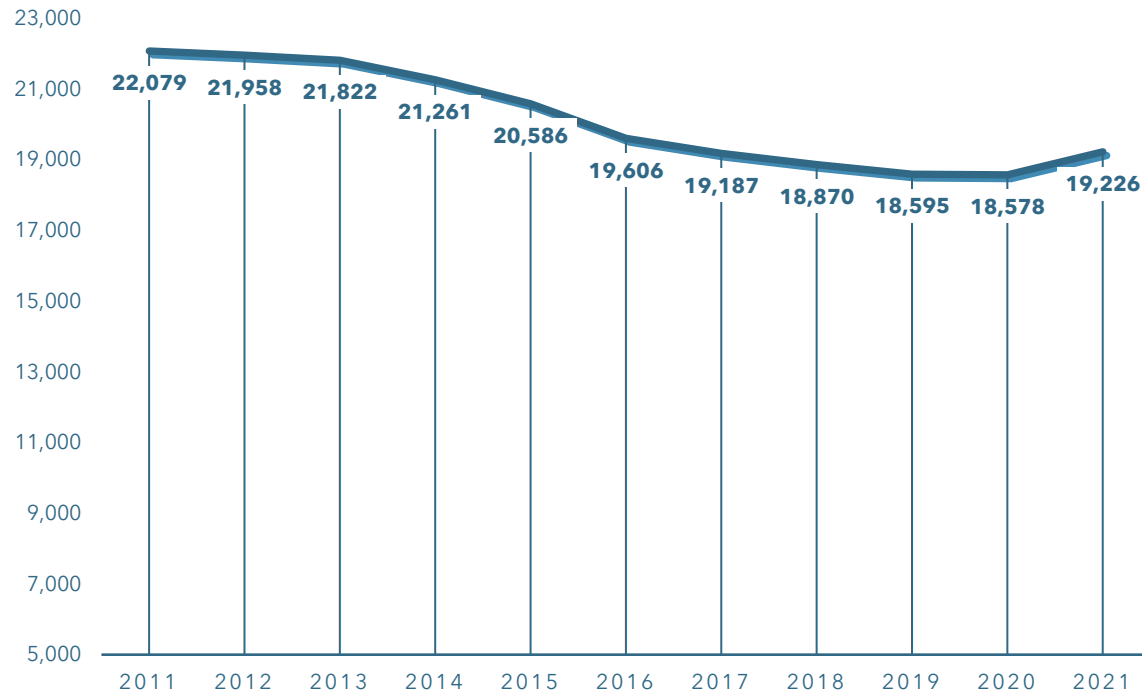
Broad Industry Metrics

	<p>Mount Isa's top five industries of employment (local jobs) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining (4,295 jobs) • Health Care and Social Assistance (1,092 jobs) • Education and Training (898 jobs) • Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services (835 jobs) • Retail Trade (729 jobs)
	<p>Mount Isa's Gross Regional Product (GRP) totals \$1.82 billion, which is 10% of the Townsville-North West Region's GRP. Mount Isa's GRP is equivalent to \$95 per capita, compared to \$72 per capita for the Townsville-North West Region and \$70 per capita for Queensland. Those industries which are the top five contributors to Mount Isa's economic activity as measured by industry value-added are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining (\$872.3 million or 53% of total industry value-added) • Health Care and Social Assistance (\$106.2 million or 6.5%) • Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services (\$87.3 million or 5.3%) • Education and Training (\$66 million or 4%) • Public Administration and Safety (\$64.2 million or 3.9%)
	<p>Mount Isa's key export earning industries include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining (\$1.2 billion or 74% of all inter-regional and international exports) • Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (\$113 million or 7.2% of all exports) • Manufacturing (\$75.4 million or 4.8%) • Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services (\$50.9 million or 3.2%)
	<p>The occupational profile of Mount Isa's resident workforce shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technicians and Trade Workers account for 21% of the workforce compared to 14% for Queensland. • Machinery Operators and Drivers account for 15% of Mount Isa's resident workforce compared to the State average of 7%. • Professionals account for 17% of the workforce compared to the Queensland average of 21%.

Sources: ABS Census, REMPLAN and economy.id

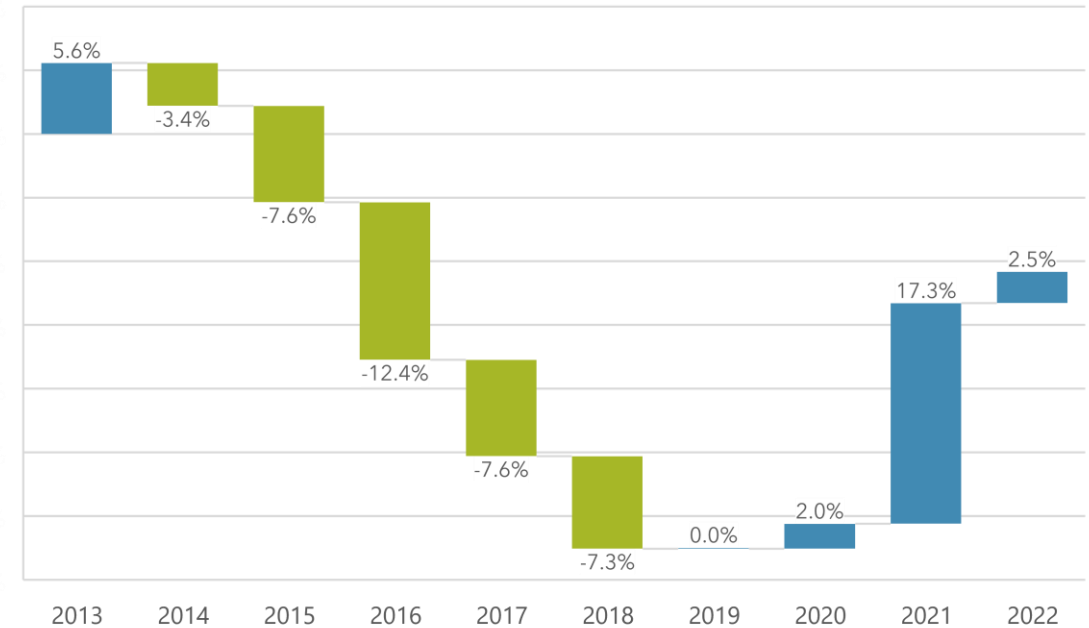
Socio-Economic Snapshot

Population, Mount Isa City, 2011-2021



Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Year-to-Year Median House Price Movements, Mount Isa, 2013 to 2022*

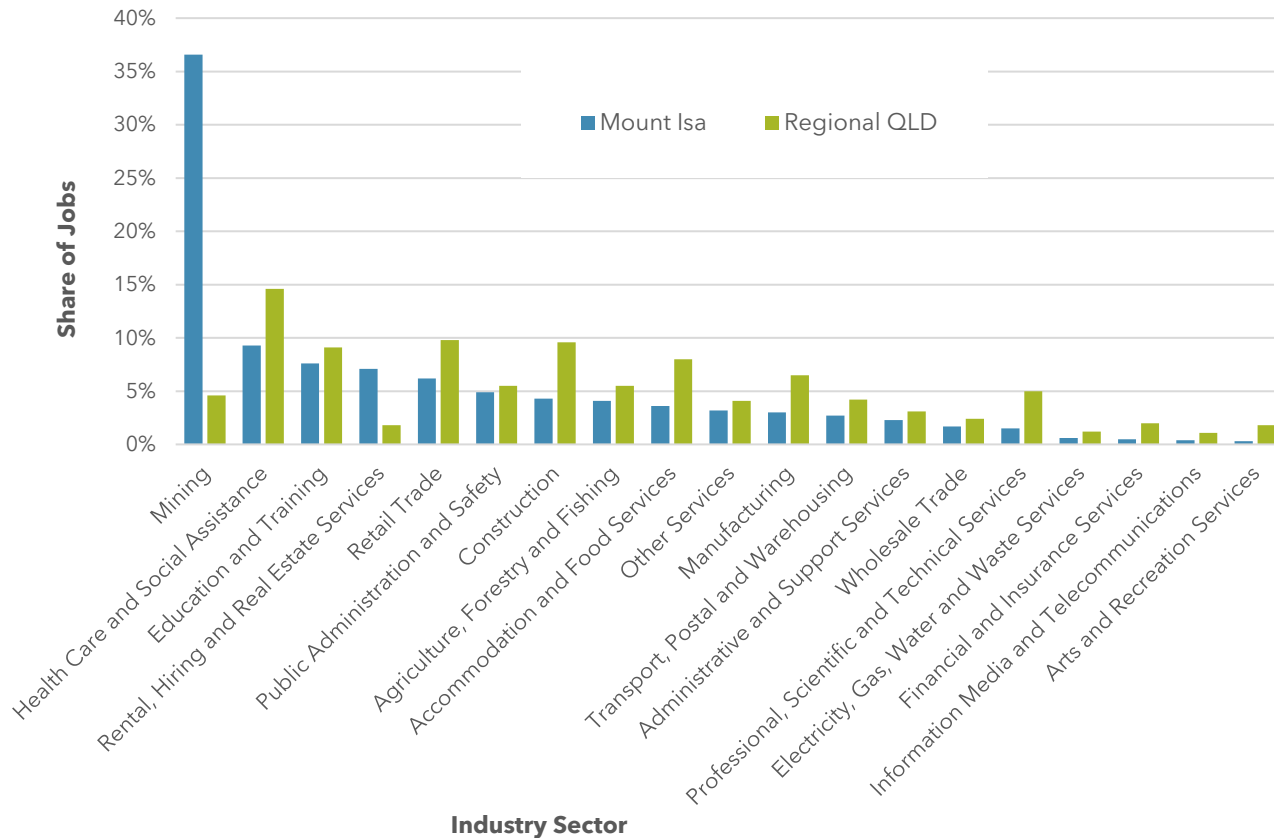


* Refers to the suburb of Mount Isa

Source: CoreLogic

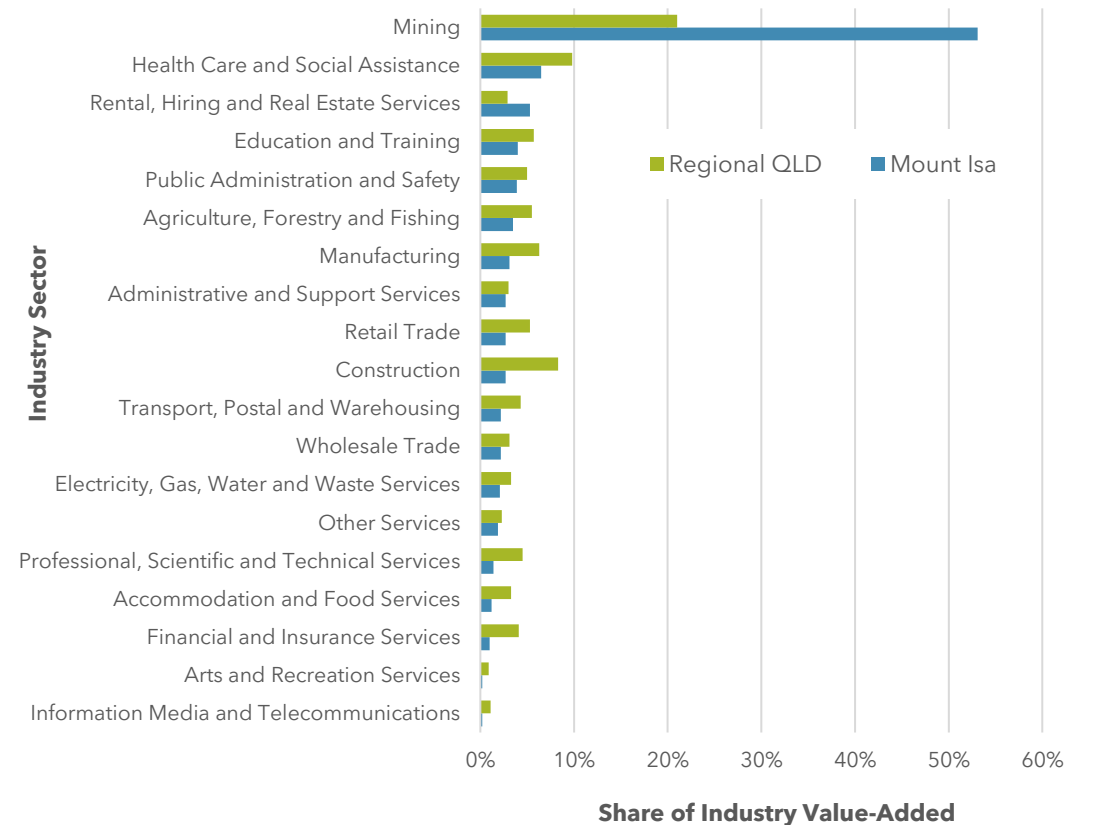
Socio-Economic Snapshot

Employment by Industry (%), Mount Isa City and Regional Queensland, 2020/21



Source: economy.id

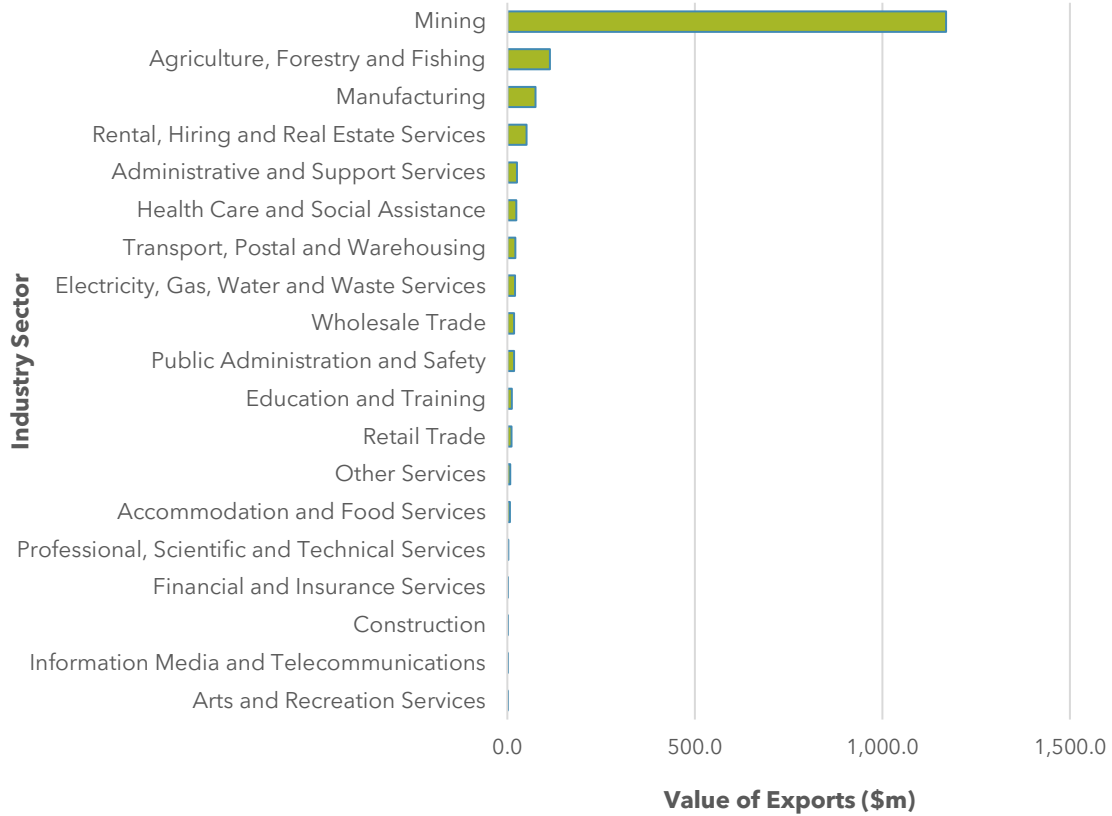
Share of Total Industry Value-Added, Mount Isa City and Regional Queensland, 2020/21



Source: economy.id and NIEIR

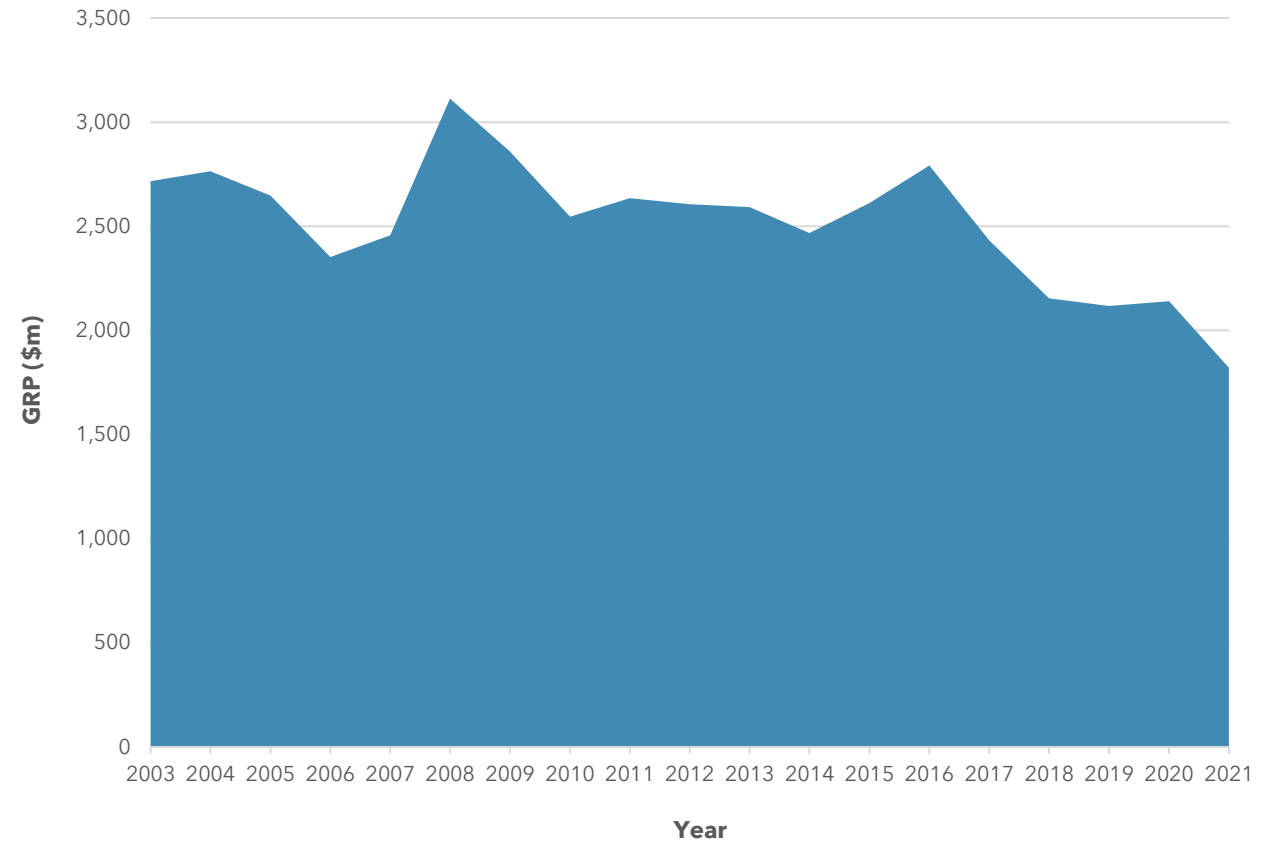
Socio-Economic Snapshot

Value of Exports By Industry (\$m), Mount Isa City, 2020/21



Source: economy.id and NIEIR

Gross Regional Product (\$m), Mount Isa City, 2003 to 2021



Source: economy.id and NIEIR

5. Broader Context: Global Considerations

Regional in Focus with a Global Frame of Reference

By virtue of its industrial structure and dynamics, with an economy driven by mining, and its role as a regional service centre supported by the growth of key sectors in health care, education, retail and hospitality and construction, Mount Isa has strong connections to regional, national and world markets.

Emerging global changes will have a direct and lasting impact on the way the City of Mount Isa and the wider North West Region 'does business'. Rather than posing a threat, economic transition in the context of a changing global energy mix, can be embraced by leveraging and capitalising on the area's comparative and competitive advantages.

These advantages include Mount Isa's strategic location, its natural mineral resources, its wealth of industrial expertise, its resource industry know-how and a capacity to innovate, a mature transport and logistics sector, strong industry supply chains, construction capacity, its workforce, its natural attributes and attractions and its appealing (and perhaps under-appreciated) outback lifestyle offer.

Recognising Mount Isa's place in a changing national and global economic landscape, *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* arms Mount Isa City Council with a strategic framework to pro-actively address a raft of challenges and opportunities including (but not limited to):

- New innovations and market opportunities in mining and minerals production;
- New innovations and market opportunities in agricultural production;
- Investments in new and emerging industries such as renewable energy, zero-emission clean energy and battery technologies;
- New and emerging developments and opportunities in mining (e.g. precious metals and rare earth minerals) and modern manufacturing;
- The revival of travel and tourism following the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- Recent trends (particularly in light of the impacts of COVID-19) for people to seek out new work and lifestyle opportunities in Australia's regions.





6. Mount Isa's Competitiveness Profile

To progress economic development, Mount Isa will capitalise on its comparative and competitive advantages, including the City's location, the natural environment, its population and resources. There are also key challenges that need to be addressed if Mount Isa is to realise its full economic potential. Mount Isa's competitiveness profile is defined by:

People and Place

Strengths and Attributes

- Strategic location (regional capital of the North West) with strong links to Darwin, Townsville and Brisbane.
- Appealing outback lifestyle offer.
- Strong sense of community and sense of place.
- Multicultural diversity (over 50 nationalities); Mount Isa has 100 years of multicultural acceptance and harmony.
- Strong Kalkadoon First Nations culture.
- Natural features and landscape.
- Unique flora and fauna (e.g. rare birds).
- Unique history and heritage.
- Abundant opportunities for employment.

Challenges and Constraints

- Labour and skills shortages (e.g. tradespersons (including apprentices), professionals, doctors, health care workers).
- High unemployment and underemployment.
- Acute shortage of a diversity of quality, affordable housing.
- High cost of rental accommodation, high density per capita of social housing and high levels of homelessness.
- Social issues/crime/safety and security concerns.
- Urban amenity (including derelict housing)/lack of CBD vitality/town centre appearance.
- Potential health impacts of lead.
- Limited retail trading hours.
- Limited franchise shopping and food retail opportunities.
- Pedestrian connections and comfort (street trees, shading).
- Disenfranchised youth; declining sports participation; Limited play spaces for kids.
- Impacts of FIFO (seven day roster) on community wellbeing.

Enabling Infrastructure and Services

Strengths and Attributes

- Established modern airport with existing scope for international trade destinations.
- Home to Royal Flying Doctor Service and School of the Air.
- Direct rail access to Port of Townsville.
- Direct road access to Australia's national highway system.
- Water reserves in Lake Moondara and Lake Julius.
- Quality pre-schools, primary and secondary schools.
- Tertiary training through various RTOs, TAFE Queensland, Mount Isa Country Universities Centre and JCU's Centre for Rural and Remote Health.
- Regional health care, government service, retail, and transport and logistics hub.
- Sports precinct (Sports Parade) with scope for improvement.
- Untapped/under-developed residential and industrial land.

Challenges and Constraints

- Prohibitive cost of flights.
- Road and rail transport infrastructure capacity constraints.
- High rail freight transport costs.
- Communications infrastructure/services shortfalls.
- Power supply constraints (not connected to the national grid) and high energy costs.
- Water infrastructure capacity constraints and costs.
- Housing construction/development costs.
- Land tenure complexities (Native Title).
- Tourism infrastructure (e.g. accommodation, signage) and visitor servicing shortfalls.
- Recreational and sporting facilities standards shortfalls.
- Community services shortfalls (e.g. child care).
- Access to university courses.
- Underutilised tertiary training facilities (TAFE).
- Specialist health care skills and services shortfalls.

Business and Industry

Strengths and Attributes

- A wealth of mining exploration, innovation and production expertise.
- Proximity to a variety of high-grade natural resource deposits including zinc, lead, phosphate and copper as well as uranium.
- Strong prospects for precious metals and rare earth minerals.
- Prospects for non-conventional petroleum and gas.
- Strong engineering, manufacturing and mining services capabilities.
- Renewable energy attributes.
- Agricultural capabilities and potential (e.g. spinifex processing).
- Construction industry capabilities.
- Innovative and capable small businesses.
- Access to regional, national and international markets.
- High-profile events-based tourist attractions.
- A strong mix of natural and built tourism assets (e.g. Riversleigh Fossil Discovery Centre, Hard Times Mine Underground Tour, Underground Hospital and Museum, Lake Moondara, 4WD tours, birdwatching).
- Gateway to the World Heritage listed Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park and Riversleigh Fossil Site.

Challenges and Constraints

- Mining industry/copper smelter dependency.
- Mining and minerals processing uncertainty.
- Capturing emerging minerals extraction opportunities (e.g. uranium).
- Materials production costs.
- Transport and logistics costs and capacity constraints.
- Access to serviced industrial land and commercial floorspace.
- Local industry supply chain gaps.
- Reducing red tape to ensure major mining and other project investments are dealt with seamlessly.
- Lack of agricultural diversity
- Limited retail offer and trading hours/night-time economy.
- Shared understanding of Mount Isa's tourism product.
- Limited tourism product and length of stay.

7. Opportunities to Build Mount Isa's Competitiveness

Lifestyle Capital of Queensland's North West

Mount Isa is a regional hub for mining, health, education, sport, transport, justice, shopping, State and Federal government departments and culture. In the midst of a prosperous period for mining, commerce, mineral exploration and the development of large-scale regional projects, Mount Isa is also approaching an exciting 100-year milestone.

Mount Isa's population is its most important resource and population change will underpin the City's economic and social viability. An increase in population will support local service delivery, attract government funding, serve to retain existing businesses and attract new investment as confidence in the City grows. New investment will generate more opportunities for employment, creating a multiplier effect of more people, more investment and more jobs to fill over 1,500 job vacancies that Mount Isa has had for several years.

People (and investment) will be attracted to a City where the lifestyle offer is appealing. Mount Isa City Council recognises the important role it has to play through its planning, regulatory, place-making and management functions to enhance the City's lifestyle appeal and it encourages business and industry to play its part through re-investment back into the local community. Council is committed to maintaining a standard of infrastructure and services that supports and enhances the City's liveability. This includes recreation, leisure and entertainment facilities, cultural facilities, the quality of its streetscapes and community services and facilities.

The delivery of more efficient and cost-effective enabling infrastructure (such as water and telecommunications), extended retail trading hours, greater retail diversity, CBD vitality and improved town centre appearance, are challenges that need to be addressed to elevate Mount Isa's appeal to both existing and prospective new residents and businesses. The Mount Isa CBD Master Plan proposes a suite of priorities which can be pursued to encourage economic activity and investment opportunities for the CBD so that it can thrive as an attractive and vibrant centre.



The successful delivery of sport and recreation services is also key to supporting Mount Isa's liveability. There is an opportunity to explore new sport and recreational facilities for Mount Isa's youth and the population at large. This includes multi-purpose sporting facilities to accommodate a diversity of club-based and casual sporting activities as articulated in the Mount Isa City Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2018-2027, the proposed multi-use Northwest Motorsport Complex which has been the subject of a feasibility study, as well as other ideas including sport and recreational activities (for locals and visitors) at Lake Moondara.

Despite its many attributes as a regional city, Mount Isa faces a multitude of challenges with perhaps the greatest challenge being its acute shortage of quality, affordable housing. Council, through its Local Housing Action Plan, supports the Queensland Government's current focus on addressing the State's housing challenge in line with the Queensland Housing Strategy. Council has a key role to play as a lead and in support of other agents of change to collaboratively address the City's housing shortage, including the investigation of alternative models of housing delivery or the use of Council-owned land and housing to increase supply. The current market presents difficulties for people coming to Mount Isa for work to secure rental accommodation of a reasonable standard or to purchase a home, compromising Mount Isa's capacity to secure much-needed labour.

Together with a choice of quality, affordable housing, community infrastructure is a vital enabler of economic development. One area where community services are constrained in Mount Isa is in the delivery of child care. This is particularly pressing in a City with a relatively young working population and a higher than average number of children per household. Although Mount Isa is the regional service centre for the North West, there is scope to improve the level of health and tertiary education services to enhance this role and to attract and retain the population, particularly younger people with the capacity to develop the skills required by the region's new minerals economy. Council, with the support of the Federal Government, is investing in the establishment of a Country Universities Centre in Mount Isa, to deliver tailored access to university courses.

A critical matter compromising Mount Isa's economic potential concerns the multitude of social issues associated with an increasing rate and high levels of youth crime (as evidenced in the latest Queensland Government crime statistics) and associated safety and security concerns. Working with government agencies and community service providers, Mount Isa City Council is committed to a comprehensive approach to addressing concerns relating to crime, vulnerable persons and community safety, to create a safer, more liveable and prosperous City. This includes strategies for crime prevention through environmental design through to investigations into support infrastructure such as a youth detention and rehabilitation facility.

Opportunities to Build Mount Isa's Competitiveness

New Minerals, Agricultural and Clean Energy-Driven Economic Growth

Mount Isa's economy is driven by mining and is a top-ten producer of some of the world's most in-demand minerals. Indications from mining exploration activities in the North West Minerals Province, and known resources suggests that, with the necessary enablers of economic activity in place, the future is bright. Commodity prices for copper, zinc, phosphate, silver, lead and other critical minerals including uranium, have more than doubled in recent years, and prices are expected to remain strong on the back of global demand and renewable energy targets.

Agriculture is a relatively small component of Mount Isa's economy and is largely focused on cattle. The North West has vast tracts of land, currently used mainly for grazing, where minimal cropping activity occurs. With global demand for food increasing, there is scope to explore opportunities for new agricultural activities which can take advantage of this resource. Other opportunities include transitioning from mining into agricultural machinery equipment maintenance and repair and in servicing a growing market for agricultural exports to Asia by utilising same day freight service capabilities through Mount Isa Airport.

While mining will continue to drive the economy of Mount Isa, sunrise industries including renewable energy production and modern manufacturing, which can capitalise on the City's resources, its location, its industrial capabilities and access to the National Electricity Market, are poised to diversify and add value to the local economy. There is over \$3 billion worth of investment planned over the next 5 years in the solar and wind sectors, as well as the development of battery technology. Large deposits of high-grade uranium just 15km to 80km north-east of Mount Isa also presents potential for future development. Realising these project opportunities has the potential to transition Mount Isa's economic focus, underpinned by investments in new infrastructure and technology.

New mining and related construction projects are coming online monthly, and several energy projects in the pipeline will, according to figures sourced from the State Government, directly and indirectly generate in the order of 4,000 construction jobs and another 3,050 operational jobs, with the City's population expected to grow by at least 3,000 over 5 years. For example, Copperstring 2.0, a \$2.4 billion electricity generation scheme, will open Queensland's vast North West Region to new minerals and renewable energy developments.

A 1,000km high-voltage network line and fibre optic cabling that will connect the people, businesses and communities of Mount Isa, Cloncurry and the North West Minerals Province to the National Electricity Grid, Copperstring 2.0 will provide the crucial transmission link for renewable energy projects and enable the development of critical rare earth minerals like vanadium. It will also open up opportunities for the development of new Queensland industries downstream of the critical minerals extraction process, such as the production of batteries that are vital to Queensland's transition towards a cleaner energy future.

Other renewable energy projects include Vast Solar's plans to develop a 50-megawatt power plant and APA Group's plans for stage two of the Mica Creek Solar Farm in Mount Isa. Embracing the region's green energy future presents other opportunities at a local level, which Council can play a direct and leading role in. For example, Mount Isa's former abattoir site is a contaminated industrial land parcel which could be re-purposed as a green energy recycled water industrial development site. Other alternative energy opportunities, including nuclear energy as well as the safe storage of nuclear waste, could also be explored.

Project Iron Boomerang, a nation-building rail infrastructure project proposal designed to underpin investment by global steel making in Northern Australia, also presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Mount Isa and the North West Minerals Province to leverage its strategic location and its mining and minerals processing capabilities.

Mount Isa's economic future will also be underpinned by critical links between its natural resource base and food production. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization lists phosphate as the most critical mineral for global food security. North West Phosphate has secured reserves for the development of phosphate resources to be used in agribusiness products (fertilizer and feed products), including to address the increasing global demand for food production and development, particularly in Australia and South East Asia. Its Paradise South mine, located 130km north west of Mount Isa, will include a processing plant onsite to produce the phosphate concentrate product ready for domestic and international agricultural markets.

There are opportunities to develop value-added products which will generate and retain more wealth in Mount Isa. This includes, for example, pyrite as an alternative source of sulphuric acid for mineral processing, food grade phosphoric acid for use in cattle feed for growers in the North West and beyond and phosphate for use in mine rehabilitation to advance pasture and forestry activities that can attract carbon credits. There is also potential to produce phosphoric acid for use in electric vehicle batteries. To ensure these opportunities are secured long-term requires competitively priced water, energy and transport as well as a collaborative approach to advocacy which ensures phosphate and other critical minerals are national economic priorities.

Mount Isa City Council has a key role to play in helping to determine and articulate what the North West Region's economic transition and its long-term economic future might look like, and how it can best be facilitated. By being pro-active, Mount Isa and the North West will be well-placed to lead Queensland's transition from a carbon-based economy to a knowledge-driven, low-carbon world leader.

Opportunities to Build Mount Isa's Competitiveness

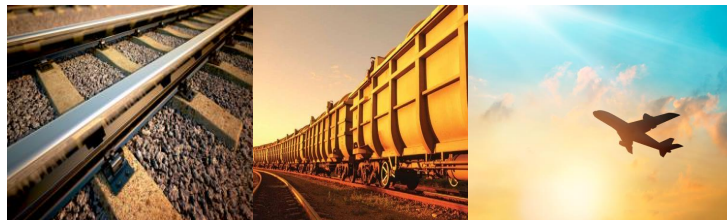
A Regional Rail Transport Hub

Over the decades, the wealth generated from Mount Isa has funded infrastructure and services across Queensland and Australia. Income from mining has provided financial security to both the State and Federal governments, as well as supporting the development of State-significant infrastructure.

Mining in Mount Isa and the North West Region has contributed to the development of complex freight and transport networks that service domestic and foreign markets. Major resource companies are heavy users of the rail line between Mount Isa and Townsville, which provides a critical link from the North West Minerals Province to the Port of Townsville and international export markets. However, many smaller mining operators still rely exclusively on road transport. There is an opportunity for smaller mining companies and other industries including agriculture, to have access to the same efficiencies as the large miners through rail freight transport that improves regional supply chain movements cost-effectively. Taking more freight off the region's roads and onto the Mount Isa Line rail corridor would boost the productivity of existing rail assets while reducing road maintenance costs and the incidence of accidents.

Significant mineral wealth and agricultural opportunity exists to the north and west of Mount Isa, and opportunities to access the Northern Territory rail and port facilities via Tennant Creek will continue to be explored. With a renewed national focus on Darwin as a strategic military and naval base, it is expected new port facilities will be built in the next 3-5 years.

Council, working with the State Government and other key stakeholders including MITEZ and RDA Townsville and North West Queensland, will continue to advocate for and progress initiatives to encourage more freight from road to rail and improved freight handling efficiency and cost-effectiveness on the Mount Isa line. This includes continued work on the development of options for a transport and logistics facility, as put forward in the Mount Isa Logistics and Transport Hub Business Case, to enable development and ongoing use by the resources sector and other industries. Council will also continue to advocate for inclusion of rail connections to Mount Isa and the North West Minerals Province in assessing the feasibility of nationally-significant project proposals, such as Project Iron Boomerang, a nation-building rail infrastructure project proposal designed to underpin investment by global steel making in Northern Australia.



A Nationally Competitive Air Transport Hub

Mount Isa, through the wealth generated by its mining industry, makes a considerable contribution to the economic wellbeing, not only of the North-West region, but the State of Queensland as a whole. With uncompetitive air fares, Mount Isa's capacity to grow a sustainable economy and community is hamstrung.

Acknowledging that it is industry which drives prosperity, the role of government, at all levels, is to ensure there is an 'enabling environment' for economic activity, as defined by the services, infrastructure and support mechanisms needed to facilitate economic activity and exchange. This includes air services for the efficient movement of people and produce. Mount Isa has an established modern airport with existing scope for international trade destinations, presenting an opportunity to tap into new and emerging export markets including, for example, agricultural exports to Asia.

Connectivity is a critical enabler of economic development. With a compromised air service defined by uncompetitive high air fares, the welfare of Mount Isa's businesses and residents will continue to be adversely impacted to the point where the City's current role as a regional service centre offering an attractive location in which to live, work and invest will be compromised.

Investment in essential enabling infrastructure and related services - including affordable and reliable air transport services - will generate more opportunities for employment, creating a multiplier effect of more people, more investment and more (skilled) jobs, along with wages growth and an increase in consumer spending, leading to further economic growth and development, for the benefit of Mount Isa's businesses, visitors and residents.

Mount Isa City Council will continue to engage with Mount Isa Airport/Queensland Airports Limited, airlines (Qantas and Virgin) and other interest groups in advocating for more competitive air transport services. It will also continue to pro-actively engage with prospective new air transport service providers such as Bonza through its investment promotion and facilitation functions.

Opportunities to Build Mount Isa's Competitiveness

Economic Development through Small Business Growth and Innovation

Complementing its large industrial base, Mount Isa has a diversity of small to medium sized enterprises. According to ABS Data, of the City's 900 businesses, approximately half are non-employing businesses and another 44% having between 1 and 19 employees, reflecting the City's large number of micro-businesses and SMEs.

While business and industry drives economic activity and employment creation, Mount Isa City Council has a vital role to play in the leadership, organisation, delivery and promotion of economic development through initiatives to support investment, entrepreneurship and innovation. Council's approach to investment attraction addresses the important relationship between key industry sectors, priority projects for investment and Mount Isa's economic development potential, highlighting critical infrastructure needs and associated opportunities for investment.

As an information-broker, Council is well-positioned to facilitate new business investment with readily-available information on the status of the regional economy, industry trends and prospects, the availability of government grant funding support programs and locations for investment, including the availability of commercial floorspace and industrial land to assist with the crucial decision of site selection.

Council has a role to play in supporting and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship through the development of industry connections with education and training institutions, as well as business capacity and capability building in new and emerging industries. Mount Isa's location and its natural attributes present opportunities to explore new industries, to help diversify the economic base, including for example, aerospace (building on the new drone testing facility in Cloncurry) and on-location shoots for film and television productions, to name just a few.



Capacity-building through Workforce Planning and Development

Key to the development of competitive businesses and strong industries in Mount Isa is a sustainable workforce that is equipped with the skills, knowledge and capabilities required to adapt to new opportunities and to thrive in an evolving economic environment. This includes opportunities in the region's new minerals economy, renewable energy and mining equipment, technology and services (METS) as well as in other key industries including agriculture, health and education and tourism.

While Mount Isa offers a wealth of employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers, a shortage of labour is constraining the City's and region's economic development. Developing an appropriately skilled and capable workforce requires a multi-faceted approach to planning and development, including workforce attraction and retention, and it requires input from a range of key stakeholders.

Access to skilled labour is influenced by the availability of education and training, levels of workforce participation and the mobility and flexibility of labour. Mount Isa's youth needs access to education and training services and facilities with the programs and the infrastructure in place to support their employment aspirations and the requirements of business and industry.

Mount Isa City Council is pro-active in its commitment to promoting local jobs for locals. It will continue to liaise with business and industry, representative organisations, peak industry bodies and education and training providers to network ideas and articulate workforce planning priorities that need to be addressed.

Workforce planning and capacity-building has both economic development and broader community wellbeing outcomes. Mount Isa has always had a proud multicultural history and *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead* presents a means to investigate, amongst other things, socio-cultural and economic opportunities for new Australians, including pathways to success for receiving migrants and refugees.

Opportunities to Build Mount Isa's Competitiveness

Growing a Sustainable Outback Visitor Economy

Mount Isa City Council recognises the potential tourism has to help diversify and grow the City's economy, through the development of the Mount Isa Tourism Development Strategy 2020-2025. Tourism is an important contributor to Mount Isa's economy, accounting for 9% of total industry value-added compared to the State average of 4.9%, and provides for 8.5% of all jobs, which is on a par with the Queensland average of 8.6% (source: economy.id). According to Tourism Research Australia, Australia's tourism regions are performing well in the wake of the national recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, with domestic overnight trips and visitor spending now up on pre-pandemic levels.

Mount Isa is part of the Outback Queensland Tourism Region with self-drive caravan and camping tourism an important contributor to the local economy. Mount Isa's tourism reputation and positioning is largely focused on the City's mining heritage and the Mount Isa Rodeo, which bring an estimated 39,000 visitors to the region for the four-day event, with total spend in the local economy of \$11million. Despite Mount Isa being the largest outback city in North West Queensland, distance, competition from other outback destinations, road/air access and price, scope for improved information dissemination (including signage), customer service and articulation of the City's tourism offer present challenges to capitalising on domestic tourism growth.

Mount Isa City Council oversees the operation of the City's tourism infrastructure via a contracted management organisation which operates the Visitor Information Centre at Outback at Isa, incorporating the Hard Times Mine and Fossil Centre; Buchanan Park and Events Centre and the Civic Centre. Other attractions include the Underground Hospital and Museum and the Mount Isa Regional Art Gallery. Council is invested in the success of tourism and as the custodians of key infrastructure, it is well positioned to work with other stakeholders to drive, enable and promote a sustainable visitor economy.



There is a need to ensure that supporting activities, services and experiences keep pace with visitor expectations and a competitive environment, to encourage visitors, especially drive tourists including families, grey nomads and others, to extend their length of stay by developing more tourism product and experiences.

Plans for built assets such as the proposed Northwest Motorsport Complex will serve to help diversify events-based tourism and grow visitation, while opportunities to capitalise on local natural assets to attract and retain visitors include development of the Lake Moondara experience, formalising opportunities for birdwatching and other nature-based experiences and developing First Nations cultural tourism attractions such as the planned Outback at Isa Bush Tucker Experience, which will add to the broader visitor experience at Outback at Isa.

There is also potential to leverage and link into the wider Outback drive tourism experience in the City's branding and promotion including the Savannah Way drive tourism experience to the north and the Outback Queensland Dinosaur Trail. In 2023 Mount Isa celebrates 100 Years of history, culture and progress, presenting immediate opportunities to boost visitation to the City and region through a series of well-planned and coordinated festivals and events.





8. Strategic Focus Areas and Initiatives

Economic Development Strategy Delivery Framework

While business and industry will continue to drive future prosperity, Mount Isa City Council has a vital role to play in the leadership, organisation, delivery and promotion of economic development. Aspirations, attributes, challenges and opportunities for economic development inform Council's approach to implementing a range of initiatives to provide the conditions for a prosperous City.

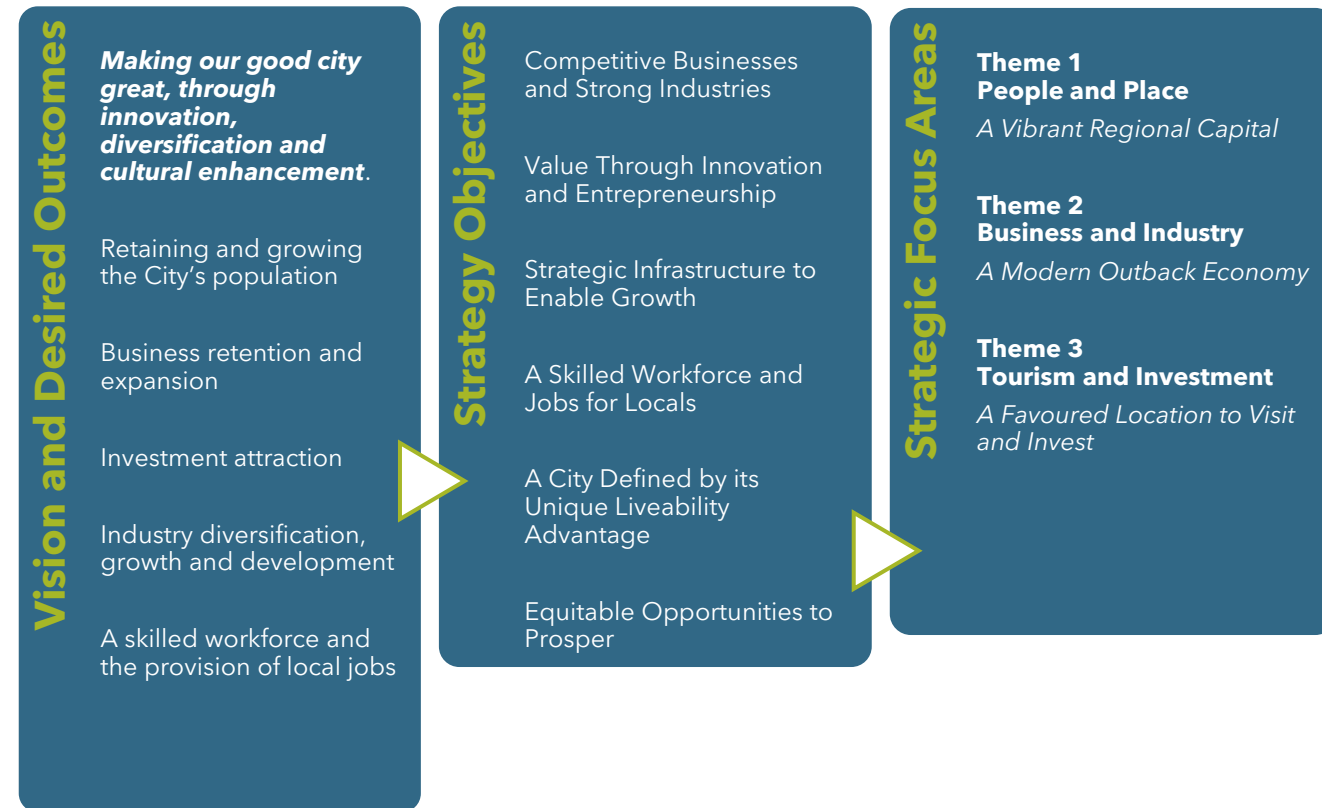
Mount Isa, Moving Ahead contains 55 individual actions across three Strategic Focus Areas. Informed by the vision and desired outcomes, and framed to address the City's Economic Development Strategy objectives, the initiatives are designed to deliver prosperity for:

- 1. People and Place - A Vibrant Regional Capital**
- 2. Business and Industry - A Modern Outback Economy**
- 3. Tourism and Investment - A Favoured Location to Visit and Invest**

The actions are categorised according to whether they are focussed on:

- **Planning** a course of initiatives to realise desired outcomes.
- **Enabling** economic activity through infrastructure and service provision.
- **Supporting** prosperity through engagement with local business and industry.
- **Promoting and Advocating** prosperity through investment attraction, promotion and lobbying/advocacy.

For each action, implementation partners are identified, and the strategy objectives being addressed are highlighted. Each action is also assigned a level of **priority / timing** according to whether it is a high (short-term) measure (1-2 years), a medium-term initiative (2-3 years) or a longer-term initiative (4+ years). In some cases, work on the action / initiative concerned will be ongoing.





Theme 1: People and Place

A Vibrant Regional Capital

Action		MICC's Role	Timing	Partners	Objectives Addressed
1.1	Continue to advocate for competitive airfares on the Townsville-Mount Isa and Brisbane-Mount Isa routes, in support of economic and community sustainability.	Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	Mount Isa Airport; State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.2	Curate a <i>Welcome to Mount Isa</i> information pack and utilise Council's web site and social media channels to deliver information to new residents and businesses.	Enable; Support	Short and ongoing	Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
1.3	Progress initiatives to feature sanctioned First Nations artwork throughout Mount Isa's CBD and commercial centres, promoting urban vitality through cultural expression.	Enable	Short and ongoing	Kalkadoon Elders, Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
1.4	Engage with CBD retailers to support investment in retail frontages and street design to encourage passive surveillance and limit opportunities for vandalism.	Enable	Short and ongoing	Local Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.5	Continue to advocate for seven-day trading being introduced in Mount Isa and the benefits it will deliver to Mount Isa's residents, industries and their workforces.	Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	Local Businesses; State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.6	Continue to engage with Glencore to inform a strategic and targeted approach to the delivery of available community and economic development funding programs.	Support	Short and ongoing	Glencore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
1.7	Continue to collaborate with government, industry partners and the education and training sector to promote the new Country Universities Centre in Mount Isa.	Plan; Enable; Promote & Advocate	Short	State and Federal Governments; Education and Training Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.8	Prioritise and seek funding support to conduct feasibility studies of selected projects outlined in the Mount Isa CBD Master Plan, to advance the master planning process and encourage new economic activity and investment opportunities for the CBD.	Plan	Short	State and Federal Government Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
1.9	Prepare a Mount Isa Safe City Strategy and Action Plan to address issues concerning youth crime, anti-social behaviour, community safety and homelessness, including a focus on crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).	Plan	Short	Community Groups; Community Service Providers; Qld Police; Other Government Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
1.10	Progress the Mount Isa Youth Strategy with a focus on sport, education and employment pathways for Mount Isa's Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth.	Plan; Enable	Short	State Government; various service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
1.11	Prioritise and fund updates/installations of the CBD CCTV network and the system of street/pedestrian walkway lighting to enhance a sense of security and amenity.	Enable	Short	State Government Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Equitable Opportunities to Prosper

People and Place

Action		MICC's Role	Timing	Partners	Objectives Addressed
1.12	Prepare a Mount Isa Housing Development Strategy based on an assessment of current and projected future housing needs and a review of policies on existing housing capacity, zoning, land release and development controls.	Plan	Short	State and Federal Government Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.13	Recognising that local infrastructure costs are a barrier to residential land release, target Federal Government support for infrastructure to enable housing development in Mount Isa to get land 'development ready'.	Plan; Promote & Advocate	Medium	Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.14	Promote and facilitate access to the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation's Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee, to support eligible regional first home buyers to purchase a home in a regional area.	Support	Medium	Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.15	To address issues of housing quality, investigate housing improvement models including programs to fund upgrades of existing housing stock.	Plan; Enable	Medium	State and Federal Government; private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth
1.16	Investigate Council-owned land suitable for disposition as housing, and subdivision of Council-owned land to enable sale for residential housing lots (including acreage living).	Plan; Enable	Medium	State and Federal Government Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.17	Following the Mount Isa City Council Sport and Recreation Strategy recommendations, progress the Sports Parade Feasibility Study and Master Plan.	Enable	Medium	State and Federal Governments; sporting clubs and associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
1.18	Investigate the business case for a youth detention and rehabilitation facility in/near Mount Isa, including site location options.	Plan; Enable	Medium	State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.19	Undertake a childcare needs, opportunities and site options analysis and use this information to inform calls for expressions of interest from childcare providers.	Plan; Enable	Medium	State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.20	Plan for and prioritise investments in the City's urban water infrastructure including trunk mains, pump stations, distribution systems and water metring technologies.	Plan; Enable	Medium	Mount Isa Water Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
1.21	Investigate alternative governance arrangements for the management and allocation of water for urban use, to ensure greater cost efficiencies for Mount Isa residents.	Plan; Enable	Long	Mount Isa Water Board; Glencore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage



Theme 2: Business and Industry

A Modern Outback Economy

Action	MICC's Role	Timing	Partners	Objectives Addressed	
2.1	Work with MITEZ and North West Minerals Province industry stakeholders in advocating for the critical enabling infrastructure and other support needed to secure the future of the North West Region's new minerals economy.	Support; Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	MITEZ; resource sector companies; infrastructure project proponents; State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A Skilled Workforce and Jobs for Locals
2.2	To encourage business investment in support of the North West Region's new minerals economy, continue to plan and advocate for the Mount Isa to Tennant Creek Railway Project as well as investment in improved freight handling efficiency and cost effectiveness on the Mount Isa Rail Line corridor.	Plan; Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	MITEZ; RDA Townsville and North West Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
2.3	Continue to advocate for inclusion of rail connections to Mount Isa and the North West Minerals Province in assessing the feasibility of Project Iron Boomerang, a nation-building rail infrastructure project proposal designed to underpin investment by global steel making in Northern Australia.	Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	MITEZ; resource sector companies; infrastructure project proponents; State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
2.4	Regularly review Mount Isa City Council's online information portal to ensure the most up-to-date information on the local economy, mining industry investment and other catalyst projects, business regulations and government grant opportunities and support services is readily available.	Enable; Support	Short and ongoing	State and Federal Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
2.5	Make available to businesses and not-for-profits, information on business development and mentoring services that are available via State and Federal Government grant funding and other support programs.	Enable; Support	Short and ongoing	Commerce North West; MITEZ, RDA Townsville and North West Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
2.6	Continue to engage with government and industry stakeholders to progress agricultural opportunities including aquaculture, irrigated cropping and dryland cropping in the North West Region.	Support; Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	MITEZ; State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
2.7	Prepare and regularly update a 'State of State and National Roads in Mount Isa' report and lobby for priority improvements.	Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	State and Federal Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
2.8	Working in collaboration with local community organisations, identify and prioritise projects (such as construction or upgrades to community or recreational facilities) which qualify for the <i>Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW)</i> Program, to develop local work-readiness skills for Mount Isa's youth and unemployed.	Plan; Support	Short and ongoing	State Government; resource sector companies; major project proponents; TAFE Queensland; RTOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Skilled Workforce and Jobs for Locals Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries Equitable Opportunities to Prosper

Business and Industry

Action		MICC's Role	Timing	Partners	Objectives Addressed
2.9	Support Mount Isa's retail sector through measures including facilitating retail pop-ups, façade improvement incentives and by encouraging participation in the Queensland Government's <i>Go Local, Grow Local</i> program.	Support; Enable	Short and ongoing	Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
2.10	Investigate the business case for a Mount Isa Business Start-up Program and Workspace to support prospective and establishing local entrepreneurs to establish and grow their businesses.	Plan; Enable; Support	Medium	Commerce North West; AusIndustry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
2.11	Engage with Mount Isa's resource sector companies, proponents of new minerals development (such as rare earth minerals and uranium), renewable energy project proponents, mining equipment, technology and services (METS) providers and the education and training sector to map current and anticipated workforce needs and priorities to support local jobs for locals.	Plan; Support	Medium	State Government; resource sector companies; major project proponents; TAFE Queensland; James Cook University; RTOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Skilled Workforce and Jobs for Locals Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
2.12	In collaboration with key government agencies, training providers and industry stakeholders, investigate the concept of an Apprenticeship Hub in Mount Isa to provide the region's youth with opportunities for learning and on-the-job training which leads into sustainable career pathways.	Plan; Support	Medium	State Government; resource sector companies; major project proponents; TAFE Queensland; RTOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Skilled Workforce and Jobs for Locals Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
2.13	To fill local jobs with locals, work with the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training and industry stakeholders to design and implement a <i>Grow Your Own in Mount Isa</i> employment program, to match local trainees, apprentices and graduates with the needs of local businesses.	Plan; Support	Medium	State Government; resource sector companies; major project proponents; TAFE Queensland; RTOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Skilled Workforce and Jobs for Locals Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries Equitable Opportunities to Prosper
2.14	Engage with RDA Townsville and North West Queensland to explore opportunities to address local skills gaps and build workforce capacity through a Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA).	Plan; Support	Medium	RDA Townsville and North West Queensland; TAFE Queensland; RTOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Skilled Workforce and Jobs for Locals
2.15	Investigate the business case for re-purposing the former Mount Isa abattoir site as a green energy recycled water industrial development site.	Plan; Enable	Long	Mount Isa Water Board; State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
2.16	To support local businesses through activation of the Mount Isa CBD at night, investigate the business case for a CBD night market with a focus on the City's multicultural heritage and associated food offerings.	Plan; Enable; Support	Long	Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage



Theme 3: Tourism and Investment

A Favoured Location to Visit and Invest

Action		MICC's Role	Timing	Partners	Objectives Addressed
3.1	Engage with Trade and Investment Queensland and other key agencies to ensure Mount Isa's industry growth and investment priorities are clearly articulated and communicated to prospective investors from interstate and overseas.	Plan; Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	State Government; Trade & Investment Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.2	Collaborate with business associations, economic development organisations and government agencies to establish an investment enquiry protocol for Mount Isa so that business investment enquiries are dealt with seamlessly and efficiently.	Enable; Promote & Advocate	Short and ongoing	State Government; RDA Townsville and North West Queensland; MITEZ; Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.3	Investigate, plan for, release and promote regularly updated information on the availability of quality, serviced industrial land in Mount Isa to meet the anticipated requirements of existing and emerging new industries.	Plan; Enable	Short and ongoing	State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.4	Prepare an investment opportunities and attraction strategy focused on prospects to attract retail franchises focused on quality food, clothing and personal wear, to Mount Isa, to add depth and diversity to the City's retail mix.	Plan; Promote & Advocate	Short	Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
3.5	Research, design and coordinate a campaign to promote Mount Isa's outback city lifestyle to prospective skilled workers/professionals, health care workers, tradespersons (and their families), through a <i>Mount Isa Now Hiring</i> program.	Promote & Advocate	Short	Commerce North West; North West Hospital and Health Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
3.6	Investigate the business case for regional airline operational cost reduction initiatives to attract new regional carriers to service Mount Isa routes.	Plan; Enable	Short	Mount Isa Airport/Queensland Airports Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
3.7	Prioritise and progress studies required to further inform the concept design for the proposed Northwest Motorsport Complex as detailed in the Project Feasibility Study. This includes traffic, infrastructure, ecological and cultural site assessments.	Plan; Enable	Short	Northwest Motorsport Advisory Committee; State and Federal Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
3.8	In consultation with Traditional Owners, explore new opportunities for Indigenous cultural tourism (e.g. bush tucker cooking classes at Outback at Isa; a First Nations artists' studio/hub) to complement and add value to existing tourism assets and attractions.	Plan; Enable	Short	Kalkadoon Elders; Outback at Isa; Mount Isa Tourism Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.9	Capitalise on Mount Isa's 100 year celebrations and profile as the Rodeo Capital of Australia by identifying opportunities for new, iconic attractions and events, and co-ordinating promotion as part of a wider regional calendar of events.	Plan; Promote & Advocate	Short	Mount Isa Tourism Association; Outback at Isa; Outback Queensland Tourism; TEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage

Tourism and Investment

Action		MICC's Role	Timing	Partners	Objectives Addressed
3.10	Prepare a coordinated (entry statement, wayfinding and interpretive) signage strategy, with consistent, branded signage as espoused in the Mount Isa Tourism Development Strategy 2020-2025.	Enable	Medium	Mount Isa Tourism Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.11	Strategically plan for and develop tourism product opportunities focused on immersive nature-based recreational and tourism experiences at Lake Moondara (e.g. fishing, birdwatching, kayaking, etc.).	Plan; Enable	Medium	Mount Isa Water Board; Lake Moondara Advisory Committee; Mount Isa Tourism Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
3.12	Investigate the business case for a regional fossil drive tourism trail linking the Riversleigh Fossil Discovery Centre in Mount Isa with the Eromanga Natural History Museum and the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum in Winton.	Plan	Medium	Mount Isa Tourism Association; Outback at Isa; NWQROC; SWQROC; RAPAD; Outback Queensland Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth
3.13	Engage with Outback Queensland Tourism to explore opportunities to link Mount Isa into Savannah Way drive tourism marketing and itinerary planning.	Promote & Advocate	Medium	Mount Isa Tourism Association; Outback Queensland Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.14	As key input to the Sports Parade Feasibility Study and Master Plan, establish the business case for Mount Isa as a location for State and national sporting events.	Plan; Promote & Advocate	Medium	State and Federal Governments; Mount Isa Tourism; Mount Isa sporting clubs and associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth A City Defined by its Unique Liveability Advantage
3.15	Develop a strategic approach to events planning which leverages Mount Isa's role as the capital of the North West (such as the Developing Northern Australia Conference), opportunities presented by the 2032 Olympic Games and others.	Plan; Promote & Advocate	Medium	Mount Isa Tourism Association; Outback Queensland Tourism; TEQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.16	Explore interest in and the feasibility of a City co-sponsored approach to the delivery of customer service training (such as Aussie Host) for Mount Isa businesses operating in the tourism space.	Support; Enable	Long	Mount Isa Tourism Association; Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.17	Develop a 'brand toolkit' and engage with Mount Isa businesses operating in the tourism space to use Mount Isa tourism branding in their own marketing and communications.	Support; Enable	Long	Mount Isa Tourism Association; Commerce North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Businesses and Strong Industries
3.18	Identify opportunities to facilitate the development of new and diverse visitor accommodation (including glamping facilities) in appropriate locations. Inform this activity with an audit of Mount Isa's existing visitor accommodation.	Plan; Enable	Long	Mount Isa Tourism Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Infrastructure to Enable Growth



9. Strategy Implementation and Resourcing

A Practical and Achievable Plan of Action

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead has been prepared in the context of the role of economic development promotion and facilitation in Mount Isa City Council's broader program of work and strategic objectives. The strategy will be implemented in line with determined priorities as well as the availability of resources and the capacity of Council, in partnership with others, to progress the initiatives identified.

The initiatives presented in this document represent an achievable plan of action to help support the development of an innovative, diverse, resilient and competitive economy, underscoring Mount Isa's role as the economic hub of North West Queensland. It contains a combination of:

- **Catalyst project planning and development initiatives** which require action combined with a well-planned course of project implementation for the desired outcomes to be realised over time; and
- Initiatives focussed on **strategic program implementation** that can be addressed as part of Mount Isa City Council's day-to-day economic development planning, promotion, business support and advocacy functions in a strategic and targeted manner.

Some of the recommended actions seek to build on or continue initiatives already in place. Some are already resourced while others require additional resourcing (depending on implementation priorities).

The majority of actions will be 'Mount Isa City Council-led' in that they involve specific tasks and an allocation of human, physical and financial resources. Other initiatives refer to 'Mount Isa City Council-supported' activities and these are advocacy or support initiatives where implementation is to be led by other agencies.

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead will be used to assess and prioritise funding needs and to inform key advocacy and partnership initiatives to secure funding support from all levels of government.



10. Informing Priorities for Action

Reviewing and Assessing Priorities

In implementing *Mount Isa, Moving Ahead*, Council is cognisant of available resources and its capabilities to progress the initiatives identified. To allow for effective implementation, the actions presented in this strategy have been prioritised according to two broad sets of assessment criteria - **benefits realisation** and the **capacity to implement**.

Each broad criteria is explained as follows.

Benefits Realisation:

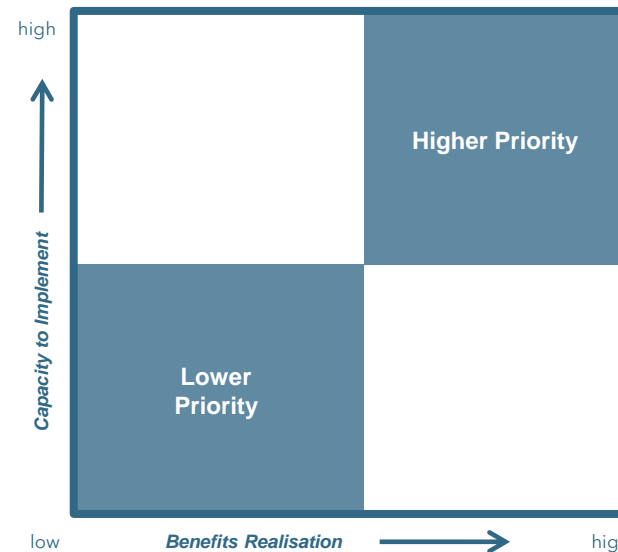
- What benefits will the opportunity deliver to Mount Isa's residents and businesses if realised?
- Will it bring more business investment to Mount Isa and is it the sort of investment the community wants?
- Does it build on Mount Isa's existing industry profile, capabilities and competitive advantages?
- Will it help to create more jobs in key and emerging industry sectors such as new minerals, renewable energy, transport and logistics, manufacturing, health and education, agriculture and tourism?
- Will it help to reduce leakages and retain and re-circulate more income in Mount Isa?
- What are the other potential impacts (social, environmental, cultural) to consider?

Capacity to Implement:

- What is MICC's capacity to implement the project or activity?
- Is it consistent with the community's vision and values?
- Is it consistent with MICC's land use planning and policy objectives?
- Is the necessary support infrastructure available or can it be realistically built/accessed?

- Does MICC have the organisational capacity to implement the project?
- Does MICC have the financial resources and the human resources to pursue the opportunity?
- Implementation - who is best placed to drive the opportunity? Is it MICC as the lead, as a partner or is it the responsibility of other organisations with support from Council?

The application of these broad set of assessment criteria has been used to determine whether the initiatives are short, medium or longer-term priorities, as articulated in the preceding plan of action.



As strategy implementation is monitored and reviewed over time, and recognising that circumstances will continue to evolve, these criteria will continue to be used to inform implementation priorities moving forward.

11. Strategy Targets, Monitoring and Evaluation

Measuring and Monitoring Strategy Outcomes

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead contains a range of initiatives, which are designed to promote Mount Isa's economic development by providing support for:

- The continuing development of the City's competitive businesses and strong industries;
- Added value through innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Strategic infrastructure that enables economic growth;
- A skilled workforce and the availability of jobs for local residents;
- Measures to enhance the City's liveability; and
- Equitable opportunities for all businesses and residents to prosper.

Mount Isa City Council will monitor the strategy's implementation progress with a view to realising these objectives in line with the vision for the City's prosperity, **making our good city great, through innovation, diversification and cultural enhancement**.

Means of monitoring and evaluating implementation progress will include the use of both '**output measures**' related directly to the recommended actions and their implementation as well as some broader '**outcome targets (metrics)**'.

Mount Isa, Moving Ahead will be reviewed annually with an update anticipated in five years.

Key Performance Measures

Strategic planning **outcome targets** include the following:

- A sustainable population (as measured by population growth rates).
- Employment creation (an increase in local jobs).
- Reduced crime (as measured by published crime statistics).
- An increase in employment self-sufficiency (a balanced ratio of local jobs to (for) resident workers).
- New businesses (as measured by net change in business registrations).
- Construction activity (as measured by building approvals data).
- Greater economic diversity (as measured by industry diversity indices).
- Economic activity and growth (as measured by GRP value).
- Increased tourism activity (and value) (as measured by visitor expenditure and yield).

These desired outcomes will be monitored and measured using data sourced from profile.id, economy.id, NIEIR, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Tourism Research Australia.

Economic Development Strategy **output measures** that will be used to track progress on set tasks include:

- Simple tracking progress of prioritised actions - implementation rates (ongoing).
- New business investor feedback captured through targeted engagement and discussion (ongoing).
- Success in retaining and assisting local businesses as well as supporting business start-ups, captured through targeted business and industry engagement (ongoing).
- Regular business confidence and community satisfaction surveys on Mount Isa City Council's approach to promoting and supporting economic development in line with this strategy and identified priorities.



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