

Mackay Isaac Region cements 5-year tourism destination plan FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mackay Isaac Tourism will implement a new Mackay Isaac Destination Tourism Plan (DTP) to provide the framework and strategic direction for the industry to achieve its targets and goals over the next five years.

With the tourism industry still rebuilding from the pandemic, the Mackay Isaac region has the ability to showcase and educate Australian's on the type of experience that can be had when visiting by leveraging the natural assets which the DTP has a focus on.

Mackay Regional Council Mayor Greg Williamson said the DTP would ensure Mackay Isaac Tourism, and the industry, continued to meet its targets and be prosperous in the future.

"We want this region to be the best region for liveability and livelihood. We want people to choose our region to be their home," Mayor Williamson said

"At Mackay Regional Council we are working to develop and attract new tourism experiences, such as the Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail, that will become a major drawcard for both locals and visitors.

"With Mackay's tropical beaches, lush rainforests and fishing, and Isaac's rugged inland adventures and historic towns, the two regions complement each other to provide the full tourism experience," he said.

The 5-year vision for the Mackay Isaac region is "to be a must visit destination by showcasing memorable, authentic and unique nature-based and heritage experiences and events to the world."

Isaac Regional Council Mayor Anne Baker said a shift in business focus within Mackay Isaac Tourism will help attract investment in new products and focus on business resilience, adaptability, and authentic experience delivery.

"Our region is home to one of Australia's best tourism experiences – St Lawrence Wetlands Weekend – and in order to preserve the intent and collaboration with our First Nations people, it's important that we plan for continued success and also to provide a benchmark for other opportunities within region," Mayor Baker said.

"It's so important continue the vision for the Mackay and Isaac regions to be a must visit destination known for its memorable, authentic and unique nature-based and heritage experiences.

"There will be a continued focus on experience and product development, destination marketing, events and advocacy across all levels of government."

To deliver on this vision, the Mackay Isaac region will collaborate and work closely together with both Mackay and Isaac regional councils, stakeholders and partners to deliver on the following

pillars: Experience and product development, service and innovation, destination marketing, advocacy and events.

Mackay Isaac Tourism Interim Chief Executive Officer Tash Wheeler said the DTP will provide a holistic approach to tourism.

“In the next five years, our focus would be working closely with our partners, stakeholders, industry and the community to ensure the opportunities are maximised to benefit the region as a whole,” Tash Wheeler said.

“The DTP really cements tourism into every facet of the Mackay and Isaac communities.”

Through consultation with industry and key stakeholders, nine goals were determined, which include:

- Foster community pride in the region to build and strengthen the consistency of image.
- Encourage the development and introduction of new tourism products, experiences and events by working with existing and attracting new tourism products and experiences to the region. This includes supporting Traditional Owners to deliver authentic cultural experiences.
- Develop home-grown events and attract significant events to the region that play a key role in driving visitation in non-peak tourism periods.
- Build community awareness and pride in the importance of tourism throughout the entire region to activate the VFR market.
- Attract and retain a skilled (local) workforce.
- Improve the skills and knowledge of the local tourism workforce to deliver sustainable, transformational experiences that exceed consumer expectations.
- Build on the regional approach to destination branding and awareness, focusing on both the coastal and inland attributes of the entire region to promote the unspoilt natural attractions.
- Alignment to State led tourism programs.
- Increase the number of international and domestic trade ready tourism experiences in the region.

Targets were also developed to measure and gauge the success for the goals set out including:

- Increase in community sentiment of tourism in region from 66% (2021) to 75%.
- Increase in full-time tourism employment opportunities to 4,285 (baseline 3,897 2018/19).
- Providing skilled local workforce through the provision of 8 training workshop opportunities annually.
- Extend average length of stay of business travel from 4.64 to 4.93.

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