Our city centre is OPEN for business.

We OPEN the door to every enterprise, big and small, and encourage new ideas to GROW AND PROSPER.

Our buildings UNFOLD onto the streets and OPEN-AIR events IGNITE our city, day and night.

Our river and OUTDOOR SPACES provide BREATHING SPACE and embrace our wonderful climate.

Our city centre is OPEN to all people, from Brisbane, Australia and abroad.

In every sense we are an OPEN city.
Brisbane is experiencing an exciting period of transformation, delivering on the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014 vision: a city open for business with a lifestyle for all to enjoy. The goals of the Brisbane 2022 New World City Action Plan to position Brisbane as a top-10 global lifestyle city are realised through our commitment to world-class infrastructure and planning. I am proud of the initiatives delivered to date in conjunction with the community. Together we have produced an inspiring vision for the future of Brisbane.

This report documents many projects and initiatives we are delivering to transform our city centre. It outlines key plans and strategies for Brisbane’s CBD including everything from a green spine connecting Roma Street Parkland to the City Botanic Gardens, to an upgrade that will transform Edward Street into a world-class retail precinct. As the economic hub of Queensland and social heart of Brisbane, it is important that we harness opportunities to attract further investment and visitation.

This is demonstrated through a series of integrated initiatives including a streamlined planning framework with proactive technical support and incentives, business promotion and activation of multiple streets and spaces. These initiatives reinforce our city centre as one of Brisbane’s premier destinations for residents and visitors.

I thank the residents, industry experts and members of the business community who have provided valuable input and have contributed to the delivery of these visionary projects. Like you, I look forward to seeing future projects become a reality, ensuring our city centre’s continued growth as Brisbane’s energetic, subtropical heart for current and future generations.

Graham Quirk
Lord Mayor
WHAT ARE WE LOOKING TO ACHIEVE?

Brisbane’s city centre is already hugely successful and we need to continue to work together to maintain the success. In conjunction with Brisbane Marketing, the city centre business and residential communities and peak industry bodies, Brisbane City Council has a comprehensive program that ensures the continued success of our city. This multi-faceted program aims to:

• provide a clear vision about the future of the city centre to allow others to proceed with certainty
• keep the city centre vital and thriving
• save the development industry time and money
• encourage more businesses to think about choosing the Brisbane city centre as their national headquarters
• build upon the business, lifestyle and cultural opportunities provided in the city centre
• encourage re-use of existing building stock
• make it easier to do business and stay connected on the move.

This set of initiatives will be delivered within the following framework.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Brisbane CBD, an area of just 2.2 square kilometres, is responsible for approximately five per cent of Queensland’s economic activity. The estimated value of the Brisbane economy in 2014 was $146 billion. Estimates of economic value generation (based on jobs and business share) indicate that the Brisbane CBD contributes 18.5%, equivalent to $27 billion.

Brisbane City Council is dedicated to delivering a coordinated package of initiatives to maintain a vibrant and successful city centre. This report provides an overview of these initiatives, which cover the planning framework, business promotion, development incentives, activation of streets and spaces and transport delivery.

Cumulatively, the vision and actions are contributing to:
- promoting investment in the city centre
- adding value to property and the city centre’s economy
- encouraging the redevelopment of existing buildings or conversion into new uses
- increasing the city centre’s resident population
- enhancing the city centre’s day and night vibrancy.

City centre facts

People in Brisbane’s city centre daily

- 150,000 employees
- 20,000 night time visitors/workers
- 8,900 residents
- 9,000 tourists
- 7,500 day trippers
- 15,000 students
- 40,000 shoppers

Brisbane’s CBD produced $23.7 billion in 2011-12 with economic activity per working hour of $82.

(Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014)  (Gratton Institute 2014)
2
VISION AND
POSITIONING
2.1 CITY CENTRE MASTER PLAN

The Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014 established a new direction for our city centre and delivers on the vision for an open Brisbane – open for business, an open outdoor lifestyle and open for all people to enjoy, under five strategies:

- economic development - Brisbane is open to investment and geared for prosperity
- public realm - in Brisbane we enjoy the open air
- built form - in our city every building is beautiful
- social and cultural - discover our urban playground
- transport - our city centre is a special place where people move freely.

Our city centre is open for business. We open the door to every enterprise, big and small, and encourage new ideas to grow and prosper. Our buildings unfold onto the streets and open-air events ignite our city, day and night. Our river and outdoor spaces provide breathing space and embrace our wonderful climate. Our city centre is open to all people, from Brisbane, Australia and abroad. In every sense, we are an open city. (Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014)

To facilitate implementation, the master plan groups projects and initiatives into the ten city-making moves of a river lifestyle, city bridges, city boulevards, a green spine, grand arrivals, transit city, the inner-city-stitch, distinctive architecture, 24/7 event city and a creative economy. A series of transformative projects are progressing the implementation of these city-making moves.

To find out more, visit the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan Plan 2014.
The following diagram illustrates how the vision and action plans focused on revitalising the city centre cascade from the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014.
2.2 BRISBANE 2022 NEW WORLD CITY ACTION PLAN

The Brisbane 2022 New World City Action Plan, developed by the Lord Mayor’s Economic Development Steering Committee outlines seven economic priorities and identifies eight growth sectors with the potential to accelerate productivity and generate new employment. The sectors identified include knowledge-based services, education, creative and digital, accommodation, energy and resources, agribusiness, advanced manufacturing and property.

In line with the City Centre Master Plan 2014 the plan focuses on maintaining the distinctive positioning of the city centre and places a strong emphasis on creating more student accommodation in Brisbane as part of the broader initiative to attract and retain students to Brisbane.

LEAD, ACTIVATE and PROMOTE the development and syndication of a branding strategy for key areas in Brisbane’s inner five kilometres, including precincts, streets, civic spaces and gardens.

Initiate the development of a city centre activation strategy for CBD destinations articulating identity, differentiators and cross-precinct opportunities with South Bank and/or Fortitude Valley.

LEAD the development of a student accommodation investment strategy for Brisbane that increases high quality, purpose-built student accommodation options for students in Brisbane. Develop existing sites or the adaptive re-use of commercial buildings in appropriately zoned areas within the city and its fringe.
2.3 BRISBANE METRO SUBWAY SYSTEM

Brisbane Metro Subway System is one of Brisbane’s most significant public transport projects, with construction expected to start in 2019.

With much of the inner-city bus network already at capacity, and demand on bus trips to the CBD expected to double by 2031, Brisbane Metro Subway System will deliver a high-frequency subway system that will cut travel times and reduce CBD congestion. Brisbane Metro Subway System will use and upgrade existing busway infrastructure as well as dedicated roads and tunnels through the CBD. Bus passengers will connect and transfer to the metro subway terminus stations at Woolloongabba and Herston, rather than continuing to the city. Metro style vehicles will carry passengers into inner-city stations at two minute intervals.

Brisbane Metro Subway System will deliver seven kilometres of uninterrupted travel with upgrades to existing busway stations, a new underground station at the Cultural Centre and new terminus stations at Woolloongabba and Herston. A new underground portal at Adelaide Street will link with the King George Square busway and a new underground portal at South Bank’s Cultural Centre will link to Victoria Bridge, which will be dedicated to Brisbane Metro Subway System, other bus services, pedestrians and cyclists.

Benefits of Brisbane Metro Subway System for the city centre include fast and reliable services to the city and improved amenity through a reduction in buses on the streets. Brisbane Metro Subway System will enhance commuter, shopper and visitor access to the city centre with services every two minutes, carrying up to 30,000 passengers per hour, meeting the forecasts of 108,000 new jobs in the CBD.
2.4 EDWARD STREET VISION

Brisbane City Council has prepared a vision for the entire length of Edward Street from Turbot to Alice streets as the key city retail boulevard. Along with the vision for the entire street, Council has allocated $11.467 million over three years for the physical upgrade of the Edward Street streetscape between Queen and Charlotte streets. This upgrade will transform Edward Street into a world-class retail environment with broad footpaths, tree-lined streets and beautiful buildings. The vision includes opportunities to partner with property and trader groups and Brisbane Marketing to curate and activate the street and manage a small temporary public space between Charlotte and Mary streets.

Find out more about the Edward Street Vision.
2.5 ALBERT STREET VISION

The Albert Street Vision provides a framework for the transformation of Albert Street into a green spine, connecting Roma Street Parkland and the City Botanic Gardens. The vision document also provides options on how to get the balance right for sharing the space between businesses, pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

Achieving the vision for Albert Street involves both short-term ideas to drive change and longer-term initiatives that deliver on the economic and public realm potential of the street. These will include ongoing activation, private reinvestment and future streetscape upgrades. Works are commencing on phase one of the vision via the Albert Street Temporary Event Space project.
2.6 QUEEN STREET MALL VISIONING PLAN

As Australia’s most successful retail precinct, Queen Street Mall accommodates 70,000 pedestrian movements each day, plays host to more than 26 million local, national and international visitors each year and delivers significant economic and social value to our city. Council’s visioning plan for Queen Street Mall contains a range of key strategies and actions to ensure the mall continues to be a world-class venue for businesses and visitors and to continue the mall’s success well into the future. The Queen Street Mall visioning plan is to create a mall for all; an economic hub that is unique to Brisbane. This vision captures the outcomes from consultation sessions with traders, industry groups, property owners and members of the public.

Find out more about the Queen Street Mall Visioning Plan.
2.7 CITY BOTANIC GARDENS MASTER PLAN

The City Botanic Gardens Master Plan identifies ways to showcase the gardens’ heritage values and protect them for future generations. The plan envisions world-class gardens that contribute to Brisbane’s emerging global reputation as Australia’s New World City and it provides a forum to champion partnerships that increase our global reputation. The master plan also considers ways to improve access to the river’s edge, includes strategies to better connect the gardens to other open spaces in the city and balances the need for activity and tranquility, with extended opportunities for recreation, reflection, entertainment and learning.
2.8 VIBRANT LANEWAYS PROGRAM

The Vibrant Laneways program identifies and rejuvenates forgotten spaces, reintroducing them to our community in a way that is imaginative, fun and engaging. The program provides laneway upgrades (see 6.1 Streetscape and laneway upgrades initiative), public art displays (see Section 6.2 (d) Vibrant Laneways Outdoor Gallery) as well as activation events and promotion.

2.9 RIVER’S EDGE STRATEGY

The River’s Edge Strategy establishes the vision for the inner-city reaches of the Brisbane River as a distinguishing feature of our city’s identity and a major focus for business, tourism and leisure. The strategy envisions the river’s edge as a space for economic growth where it is possible to realise ideas, large and small. A key outcome of the strategy is to promote the river as an economic driver for the city.

The strategy proposes a range of potential projects to achieve the key outcomes to deliver that vision. For example, investigating a RiverHub, a new consolidated public marina and tourist boat terminal in the inner-city that could cater for a range of small and large recreational vessels and tourist/charter boats. Possible locations could include North Quay, Howard Smith Wharves and the CBD bank of the Town Reach.

Riverfront spaces draw people in because of their diverse range of recreational, entertainment and tourism opportunities. Redevelopment of riverfront sites provides new opportunities to engage with the river and ensures that the river and its edges remain at the heart of Brisbane’s economy.
PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT
3.1 CITY CENTRE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The draft City Centre Neighbourhood Plan (CCNP) was prepared to enable implementation of the City Centre Master Plan and its built form strategy. Key objectives from the built form strategy that have been translated into the draft CCNP include:

- accommodating growth and economic development
- responding to urban context and the subtropical climate
- activating the ground level of buildings.

The city centre is projected to grow significantly over the next 20 years, with demand for 800,000 square metres of floor space likely to translate into around 50 new towers. This significant increase in workers, residents, shoppers and visitors will drive an 80% increase in public transport journeys and a doubling of pedestrian trips in the city centre. The draft CCNP increases the development potential in the city centre to respond to market forces and help accommodate this increasing demand.

The plan seeks to be simpler and more streamlined, and provide greater flexibility and development potential. The main changes to the neighbourhood plan include:

- gross floor area limits and height limits removed for most sites
- a framework and support is provided for specific projects including William Street/Queens Wharf and Howard Smith Wharves
- heritage issues will be dealt with primarily through overlays
- the precincts are reduced and simplified
- emphasis on street buildings to better activate streets
- laneways, arcades and small-scale spaces are a key focus to increase public space and pedestrian access.

Council is also exploring opportunities to support the repurposing of secondary commercial building stock for retirement living and aged care accommodation.
To compete in a competitive global market, cities need to take advantage of distinctive attributes and establish a unique identity. Brisbane’s subtropical climate offers an enviable lifestyle that can attract international investment and a highly skilled workforce. The draft New World City Design Guide has been prepared to provide a shared vision for subtropical building design in Brisbane’s vibrant city centre. This will complement the City Centre Neighbourhood Plan (CCNP) by providing an inspirational benchmark for architects, planners, developers, property professionals and the broader community.

By showcasing the highest standards of design and construction, new developments will contribute to an enviable urban environment that attracts investment and tourism, celebrates our lifestyle and stimulates economic activity.
3.3 CBD AIRSPACE REVIEW

Brisbane Airport’s prescribed airspace restricts the height of buildings in the CBD to 274m AHD. Based on Council calculations of the economic value of office space per square metre ($7200-$9200), assuming just five office buildings could build an extra 10 storeys in the Brisbane CBD, the annual benefit to Brisbane could be between $540m and $690m annually. Council research indicates that there may be 10-15 sites in the Brisbane CBD where demand may arise for buildings of 300m+ AHD.

With the consent of the Queensland Government, Commonwealth Government, Airservices Australia, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Brisbane Airport, Council has commenced a review of prescribed airspace over the CBD. This review will determine the potential feasibility of modifying operational procedures and therefore airspace limitations.

The objectives of this current review of Brisbane airspace operations is to:

- maintain the safety, regularity and efficiency of Brisbane Airport
- maintain the value of Brisbane Airport’s investment in the new parallel runway and master plan
- maximise the economic potential of the CBD with its potential workforce catchment
- maximise the return from investment in CBD infrastructure
- take a CBD-wide review to resolve the continuing market demand that is resulting in ad-hoc proposals that seek to extend prescribed airspace.
3.4 DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT

Brisbane City Council has some of the most efficient development assessment processes of any capital city local government in Australia.

(a) Streamlined assessment process and approval timeframes

Development assessment processes for applications in the city centre have been streamlined under the draft CCNP. The removal of maximum building heights from most sites in the city centre enables more development to remain code assessable. Simplified maximum tower site cover provisions provide greater certainty about the applicable level of assessment. Assessment and approval timeframes are streamlined through Council’s RiskSMART and AssessSMART systems.

RiskSMART - Within the city centre, applications for centre activities involving extensions to existing premises that comply with the acceptable outcomes of relevant codes and neighbourhood plans may be considered under RiskSMART. RiskSMART applications are determined within five business days. RiskSMART also applies to alterations to the facades of buildings fronting the Queen Street Mall that comply with the acceptable outcomes of the CCNP.

AssessSMART - AssessSMART is the assessment of low risk development applications across the whole of the city. While the same assessment process is followed as any other application, no formal information request is made nor any extension of time periods given. The applications are generally determined within 20 business days.

(b) Pre-lodgement advice

Council has a well-established pre-lodgement advice service to discuss complex proposals or help identify potential issues associated with a development proposal. The intent of this service is to provide a case management approach for key projects, and ensure the resolution of any issues prior to lodgement, resulting in a speedier assessment process. Depending on the complexity of the issues involved, pre-lodgement advice may be given as a written response or as part of a pre-lodgement meeting.

As an example, the Shayher Group’s project to redevelop the former law courts site at 320 George Street, a complex three-tower mixed-use development that includes a five-star hotel with 305 rooms, included extensive pre-lodgement and case management. Subsequently the application for code assessable development achieved approval in 34 business days. Few regulatory environments at local, state or federal government levels could emulate such a timeframe for a complex development.

While the Council pre-lodgement process is not mandatory, the process is widely promoted by Council and the majority of applicants in the CBD do take advantage of the process given its obvious benefits to all involved.

Council also provides pre-design strategic transport and traffic advice on specific strategic transport and traffic issues identified by the applicant and any likely major issues relevant to a conceptual development proposal in the Principal centre (City Centre) zone.
We regularly submit development applications in Brisbane and find we get clear advice and direction from Council’s formal pre-lodgment meetings. These meetings allow us to have a robust discussion with planners and engineers relevant to the issues of the project.

The pre-lodgment process is refined, efficient and invaluable when setting a project up, particularly when it comes to knowing what can and cannot be done. It also helps greatly with project timing and momentum.

Toby Lewis, Managing Director, Marquette Properties

Council is supportive of well-considered development in the CBD and provides a proactive approach in the development approvals phase. Council’s pre-lodgement process provided an avenue to exchange ideas and obtain Council’s feedback on all aspects of our 500 George Street project.

Peter Green, General Manager - Development, Nielson Properties

We have worked on a number of high-profile, complex developments in Brisbane, including projects with heritage obligations. Council’s Development Assessment team encouraged us to engage in pre-lodgement meetings to discuss our objectives and work through suitable solutions.

The ability, and opportunity, to interact with the development assessment team is not only instrumental to achieving positive outcomes, but critical to developers having confidence in the process and the people involved. Our projects are testimony that this process works.

Bill Deane, Bill Deane Projects

Over the past five years ISPT has found Council’s development assessment process positive, well considered and timely. Key to this is the sophisticated pre-lodgement process that ensures coordination across key internal stakeholders and administrators. Brisbane has a unified and well-resourced Council that is a role model for how regional government in Australia should be composed and run.

Chris McCluskey, General Manager, Development Services, ISPT
3.5 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

(a) Howard Smith Wharves
Council has facilitated the revitalisation of Howard Smith Wharves with HSW Nominees selected as the preferred candidate to develop the site into a new riverside parkland and commercial development. The proposed design includes:

- a dining, retail and tourism centre utilising the existing heritage listed buildings
- new public open spaces that may be used for markets and festivals
- 164 rooms in a five star boutique hotel
- underground car park for 350 vehicles
- parkland and public open spaces including lifts linking the site to the top of the cliffs
- a 1500 square metre exhibition space.

(b) Queens Wharf and William Street precinct
The William Street precinct, a strategic renewal opportunity in the heart of the city, will be developed in conjunction with Queens Wharf and is a priority transformative project of the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014. This rediscovered slice of waterfront history will double the length of accessible waterfront in the city centre. Refurbished heritage buildings, temporary events and new recreation opportunities will provide an ever-changing experience, bringing new life to this part of the city. This project is an initiative of the Queensland Government.

Find out more about the Queens Wharf and William Street precinct.