Your guide to the
South East Queensland Regional Plan and
South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan
2005-2026

Building a better future for South East Queensland

Queensland the Smart State

Queensland Government
Office of Urban Management
Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation
South East Queensland (SEQ) covers 22,420 km² and incorporates 18 local government areas. It stretches 240 km from Noosa in the north to the Gold Coast in the south, and 140 km west to Toowoomba. Its landscape is a rich mix of bush and beach, peaks and paddocks, rivers and ranges. It is home to 2.5 million people of diverse backgrounds, ages, professions, skills and education levels.

Since the 1980s, SEQ has been the fastest-growing metropolitan region in Australia. Around 1000 people move here every week. This growth is set to continue and by 2026 we will have a population of almost four million people - that's the size of Sydney today.

This phenomenal growth presents major challenges for all of us. To protect and foster the characteristics that make our region an attractive place to live and visit, we need to address important planning issues now. We need get smarter about how we plan for our future.

The South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005-2026 (the Regional Plan) and the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2005-2026 (the Infrastructure Plan) together outline how we intend to achieve a better future.

This booklet is a summary of the Regional Plan, released on 30 June 2005 and the Infrastructure Plan, released on 27 April 2005.
It’s our future, our choice

Most of us have known it all along, and thousands more are finding out each year: South East Queensland is the best place to live in Australia.

So much so, that by 2026 around 3.7 million people will call this region home. To put this into context, more than one quarter of all population growth in Australia over the next 25 years is expected to occur right here in South East Queensland.

People move here because of the region’s unique qualities. It is these very qualities that would suffer from unmanaged growth – qualities such as our magnificent environment, our beautiful coastal regions and waterways, our strong economy, our love of open spaces and outdoor recreation, and our communities which have such a strong sense of identity.

While growth is great for Queensland, it also demands some tough decisions. It requires careful planning to ensure that all the aspects we love about our State and region are still here for our children and grandchildren.

The South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005-2026 confronts these challenges head on. It aims to shape the way in which SEQ grows over the next two decades - how it will look and work as a region, and how we will live in it. As our first legislated Regional Plan, it directs the future planning decisions of State and local governments.

We believe the release of this plan, combined with the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2005-2026 signifies an important step forward for South East Queensland.

The Honourable Peter Beattie MP
Premier and Minister for Trade

The Honourable Terry Mackenroth MP
Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Sport
Deciding our future

We must take steps today to maintain our quality of life

We can’t just do nothing about the impact of population growth. Doing nothing means we’ll have more urban sprawl, more traffic and more pollution as problems to pass on to our kids.

Creating a vision

What will life in SEQ be like in 2026?

Having a vision for the region gives us a sense of what the future can be like and what it will take to get there.

The regional vision for SEQ is:

A future for SEQ which is sustainable, affordable, prosperous and liveable; where:

■ communities are safe, healthy, accessible and inclusive;
■ there are diverse employment opportunities;
■ quality infrastructure and services are provided, including education and health;
■ urban and rural areas are mutually supportive and collaborative in creating wealth for the community;
■ development is sustainable, well-designed and the subtropical character of the region is recognised and reinforced;
■ ecological and culturally significant landscapes are valued, celebrated and protected; and
■ the community has access to a range of quality open space and recreational opportunities.

By 2026, SEQ is a region of inter-connected communities, with excellent accessibility and an extensive and efficient public transport system. At its heart is Brisbane, State capital and subtropical world city. Surrounding the capital, the region contains a number of large urban areas separated by open space and many small to medium-sized towns and villages, each with its own character and identity. It is a region characterised by choice and diversity, with mountain ranges and hinterlands, the Bay and islands, extensive beaches, parks, bush and farmlands.

SEQ is well managed with a sustainable quality of life, based on a unique landscape, quality built form and diverse cultures. It has a progressive and well-informed community and enjoys international recognition for leadership in fostering sustainable regional equality and prosperity.

The Regional Plan takes us on a new path, based on managing rather than responding to growth

In doing so, we will:

■ create a more sustainable future;
■ protect and support regional landscape and rural production values;
■ promote land use efficiency;
■ enhance the identity of regional communities;
■ facilitate growth in the Western Corridor;
■ support rural futures;
■ provide infrastructure and services; and
■ integrate land use, economic activity and transport.
Moving towards a sustainable future

What is sustainability?

Sustainability means different things to different people. The 1987 report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, defined sustainable development as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. Put simply, sustainability means thinking about and protecting the things that matter most – a healthy natural environment, clean air and water, safe food, good health, personal security, adequate shelter, quality education and available employment.

Seeking sustainability in SEQ

Some of our current way of living here in SEQ is not sustainable in the long term. We need to use less water and energy, decrease our use of private cars, and develop land on a more sustainable basis.

The Regional Plan will help achieve a more sustainable future for SEQ by managing growth and change in a way that balances our environmental, social and economic needs

Indicators for our future

There’s a saying that what gets measured gets done. The Regional Plan takes this same approach. By including a series of indicators, the Regional Plan will measure how successful we all are at becoming more sustainable. Assessed on a five-year basis, these sustainability indicators will be collated into a record called the *State of the Region Report*.

Caring for the place we call home

How?

- Protecting our forests, coastline and waterways
- Improving water management
- Safeguarding areas of high scenic amenity
- Protecting our farmlands
- Monitoring air and water quality
- Maintaining biodiversity and our natural ecosystems
- Retaining open spaces for fun and recreation.

Keeping our farmlands

SEQ accounts for 14 per cent of Queensland’s farm production and is the hub of the State’s agricultural processing industries. As the population grows, rural land is being placed under increasing threat by development. The Regional Plan identifies and protects the regional landscape and rural production areas to prevent our farmlands being broken up into unviable lots. The Regional Plan also proposes that we develop strategies to help ensure a more sustainable future for our rural industries.

Being water wise

To ensure we’ll have enough water to meet our future needs, we must better manage the way we use it. The Regional Plan introduces measures to reduce water consumption, improve the way we manage stormwater, and improve our wastewater treatment and recycling. It also supports better allocation of water for its various uses and the early identification of future sources of water.

By 2026, we will have reduced our water usage by around 25 per cent per person per day.
Creating more compact cities and towns

How?

- Establishing an Urban Footprint
- Setting infill targets for local government areas
- Developing the Western Corridor
- Maintaining open spaces – called inter-urban breaks – between our towns and cities
- Consolidating and supporting rural areas
- Using subtropical design principles to build houses that better match our climate
- Setting aside land for future growth.

What is an Urban Footprint?

Imagine a map of SEQ with the urban areas outlined – this is what’s called the Urban Footprint. In the Regional Plan, the Urban Footprint identifies enough land to accommodate population growth over the next 20 years. Not all land inside the Urban Footprint is appropriate for development. Establishing the Urban Footprint, however, ensures that new development does not encroach on our precious open spaces and farmlands.

Maps showing the Urban Footprint can be viewed on the Office of Urban Management’s website (www.oum.qld.gov.au), at their office or at your local council.

Growth in the Western Corridor

The Regional Plan identifies land around the Greater Ipswich area for future urban growth. This area has relatively few environmental constraints, good employment prospects and will be provided with quality infrastructure to help lead development.

Future growth

To help create future certainty, the Regional Plan maps out a series of Investigation Area sites. These sites will be examined for their potential to accommodate longer-term development.

Inter-urban breaks – more than just a pretty space

Having open space between urban areas is important on many levels. It provides a visual break between the built-up areas, helps sustain our natural environment and wildlife, gives us some places to get out and about, and importantly, helps define each community. When we have no inter-urban breaks, the danger is that our cities and towns start to merge and we lose our sense of individuality.

By 2026, we will have more than half a million new dwellings.

Building communities, not just houses

How?

- Creating and maintaining a sense of identity and place
- Ensuring our regional centres are more than just transit stops
- Protecting cultural and heritage sites
- Supporting arts and culture
- Encouraging better health and safety in our communities
- Promoting affordable housing
- Addressing disadvantage.

Communities with character

Where we live helps define us and gives us a sense of who we are and of belonging. An important aim of the Regional Plan is to help communities retain their sense of individuality and local identity through a number of strategies, including good urban design, strengthening community activities, providing safe streets and ensuring a wide range of housing options.

Revitalising regional centres

Rural and regional communities around Australia have faced huge social and economic upheaval in the last few decades. SEQ is no different. However, the Regional Plan helps to outline the ways in which our regional centres can best capitalise on their natural attributes to help strengthen their economies. Viable existing industries will be supported and new industry nurtured. Employment opportunities will be decentralised. Importantly, the Regional Plan will also help regional towns maintain their identity, character and heritage.

By 2026, almost four million people will call SEQ home.
Supporting a robust economy

How?

- Developing and supporting new industries
- Strengthening the viability of rural industries
- Designating and protecting suitable sites for future economic activity
- Integrating land use and transport, particularly for freight transport
- Ensuring new developments have local jobs
- Encouraging training and skills development
- Supporting the export industry.

Smart State – a good place to do business

The SEQ region is the main economic driver for the whole of Queensland and its economy has been growing faster than the Australian average. The type of industry and jobs we attract will have a huge impact on the way the region grows. In order to sustain our present growth rate, we must not only strengthen the economy – we must also diversify. The economic development initiatives reflected in the Regional Plan are underpinned by the Queensland Government’s *Smart Queensland: Smart State Strategy 2005-2015*.

Local jobs with less travel

Recent research has shown that many people don't live near their jobs. About 82 per cent of us travel by car to get to work and at the present rate of growth, we’re going to be spending much more time getting there. An important part of the Regional Plan is to ensure new housing is located where there are jobs and new industry, that jobs are located close to where people can live, and that access to public transport is improved.

*By 2026, we will have around half a million new jobs.*
Planning infrastructure and services

How?

■ Planning and prioritising infrastructure to support the Regional Plan
■ Ensuring infrastructure is a key consideration in new development
■ Managing demand for key infrastructure and services such as water and electricity
■ Protecting key sites and corridors
■ Making better use of existing infrastructure and services
■ Ensuring infrastructure meets demands.

Infrastructure supports our everyday lives

Infrastructure is the term used for the networks, facilities, services and structures that support our way of life. It includes transport, power, water supply, wastewater treatment, sewerage, telecommunications, schools, hospitals and community services.

Infrastructure leading development

In some instances, new infrastructure will be used to lead the preferred pattern of development in SEQ. This will provide clear benefits to some landowners and sections of the development industry. In these instances, it is reasonable for those who benefit to bear some of the costs.

By 2026, we will have more roads, public transport, schools, hospitals, parks, sewerage systems and many other services.

Developing better transport links

How?

■ Planning and prioritising transport to better support urban development
■ Protecting key transport sites and corridors
■ Integrating land use and transport
■ Improving public transport
■ Encouraging development to be centred around transport
■ Promoting public transport, cycling and walking
■ Developing an efficient freight transport network – linked to the Port of Brisbane, major industrial areas, regional Queensland and New South Wales.

Travel smarter, cheaper and cleaner

Our dependence on the car is growing faster than ever. We’re driving more frequently, travelling longer distances and spending more time on the road. This means heavier traffic flows, longer travel times and more pollution. The Regional Plan provides a better range of public transport options and makes it easier to access. It encourages development and employment to be centred around public transport and creates interchanges where commuters can move from one transport mode to another.

Roads are not just for cars

As pressure on our transport network increases, we cannot keep building more and bigger roads – this is simply not sustainable. The Regional Plan encourages us to increase our use of public transport and car-pooling, as well as alternative forms of transport, including cycling and walking. After all, 60 per cent of all trips we make are under five kilometres.

By 2026, the number of people using public transport will have doubled.
Taking infrastructure further

The *South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2005-2026* was released on 27 April 2005. It is a significant achievement for Queensland. For the first time in history, the Queensland Government made a 10-year commitment to fund the necessary key infrastructure that supports growth in SEQ. Infrastructure requirements for the following 10-year period (2016-2026) have also been identified. No government in Australia has ever done this.

All major infrastructure projects have been detailed, including all the planning, design, construction and proposed investigations necessary in order to implement the Regional Plan. There are approximately 230 separate projects identified.

But the Infrastructure Plan is not just a new planning document.

It also marks the beginning of a new process to ensure state agencies align their infrastructure and service priorities with the Regional Plan. To do this, the Infrastructure Plan itself will be reviewed and updated as part of the annual budget process to ensure it remains relevant.

This commitment to infrastructure is vital in providing certainty to the Australian Government, state agencies, local government, the private sector and the general community about the priorities and timing for major infrastructure investment in SEQ. This level of certainty will ensure infrastructure in the region is better planned and coordinated to achieve the maximum impact for the least cost.

The Infrastructure Plan is not a stand-alone piece of work. It’s a key component of the regional planning process in SEQ and is integral to ensuring the Regional Plan delivers its outcomes.

Investing in our future

The Infrastructure Plan outlines investments of up to $55 billion over 20 years.

This includes $24.5 billion in transport, $861 million in water, $3.4 billion in energy (over the next five years), $3.4 billion in social and community infrastructure, and $72.5 million in transport investigations - totalling $32.3 billion. Additional investments include a possible $11 billion worth of road and public transport projects and $10 billion in expected outlays on energy networks beyond the first five years.

An estimated $25.7 billion of additional state investment in SEQ will be spent over the next 20 years. This includes an increase over the current budget commitments of approximately $2 billion over the next four years.
Transport – $24.5 billion investment

Western Corridor – $4.8 billion
Key projects include improving road and passenger rail links to service growing population centres at Springfield and Ripley; dealing with traffic on the Ipswich Motorway; and improving passenger rail services on the Ipswich line. Key investigations will include the Ipswich Motorway alternative northern corridor and the Southern Infrastructure Corridor.

Greater Brisbane area – $8.6 billion
Key projects include extending public transport infrastructure; improving freight transport links to the Australia TradeCoast; supporting active transport choices; and improving road infrastructure. Key investigations will include the Western Brisbane Transport Investigation, the Gateway extension south of Browns Plains; the Salisbury to Flagstone/Greenbank passenger rail; further TransApex investigations; and increased rail capacity in inner Brisbane.

Gold Coast – $5.3 billion
Key projects include constructing a local public transport spine; increasing trips on the south coast rail line; upgrading the Pacific Motorway; and improving the east-west road and public transport links within the Gold Coast.

Sunshine Coast – $6 billion
Key projects include providing a quality bus system between Caloundra and Maroochydore; initiating a rail service between Beerwah and Maroochydore; improving the north coast rail line; upgrading the Bruce Highway between Brisbane and Gympie; and upgrading the Sunshine Motorway. Key investigations include a bus and high occupancy vehicle network study; CAMCOS extension studies; and Sunshine Motorway extension and Bells Creek connection.

Freight
Key rail freight initiatives include expanding capacity of the Acacia Ridge rail terminal; increasing rail capacity through the metropolitan network to the Port of Brisbane; increasing capacity on the northern line by duplicating the rail line north of Caboolture; and increasing capacity on the western line by an upgrade from Gowrie to Grandchester.

Key road freight initiatives include upgrading the Ipswich Motorway and Cunningham Highway; improving the connection between the Cunningham and Warrego Highways; trialling free truck travel at night on the Logan Motorway; selective upgrading of the Brisbane Urban Corridor; and the second Toowoomba range crossing. The importance of managing the impact of freight traffic in urban areas, particularly along the Brisbane Urban Corridor, is also recognised.

Water – $861 million investment

Our investment in water will primarily focus on increasing supply and ensuring more efficient use. Key to this investment is the SEQ Regional Water Supply Strategy which will be finalised by December 2006. This strategy will, amongst other things, identify how much water will be required through to 2026 and how best to provide it. Once complete, this strategy will outline further potential investment.

Where’s the water?
New weirs will be built on the Logan and Mary Rivers, a new dam built at Wyaralong and local government will receive state subsidies to upgrade several council-run dams. The estimated Queensland Government investment in dams and weirs will amount to around $266 million.

We will invest around $4 million in investigating alternative water supplies, including rainwater tanks, stormwater, recycled water and groundwater resources.

The Infrastructure Plan also invests around $400 million as subsidies to local government for treatment and distribution of water, and additional pipelines to convey water from water sources to areas of high growth. SEQ councils intend to invest around $2 billion in water and sewerage and water recycling over the next five years.

Reduce-Reuse-Recycle
We cannot simply find more water; we also need to better manage how we use it. The current average residential water use across the region is 300 litres per person per day. Over time, we are looking for a gradual reduction in this usage, down to 230 litres per person per day by 2020.

We will also look to improve the efficiency of water use and potentially increase the use of recycled water for rural agriculture. The Queensland Government itself will lead by example in this area by introducing water conservation initiatives into our own buildings and facilities. Overall, the Infrastructure Plan invests $79 million in water efficiency measures.

There also is a strong emphasis on water recycling, with more than $107 million in subsidies allocated to local government for water recycling projects.

Quality, not just quantity
We must also consider the quality of our water and its relationship with the natural environment. After all, it would be pointless to source water if we then don’t look after it. As such, the Infrastructure Plan allocates approximately $6 million to improve and enhance the quality of our waterways and Moreton Bay.
Energy – $3.4 billion investment

To accommodate projected expansion, urban infill and proposed higher densities, around $3.4 billion will be spent over the next five years in distribution and transmission upgrades. Easements for future high voltage lines are identified in the Infrastructure Plan now, so they are protected for future needs.

Going green

Not all our future power will come from electricity generation. An increasing amount of energy generated is from renewable sources, with the Queensland Government currently purchasing around six per cent of its total needs from ‘green’ sources.

Use of gas is also increasing. Queensland’s gas demand is increasing by 4.3 per cent per year, compared to the national average growth rate of 3.8 per cent.

Here in SEQ however, we have the lowest level of residential customer use of all Australian states with gas distribution networks, due in part to the limited demand for heating in Queensland homes. The Queensland Government is currently investigating the potential for all new residential developments to use gas appliances as an alternative to electricity.

Decreasing demand

The Infrastructure Plan also aims to reduce the effect of peak electricity demand on the network by shifting large consumption electricity loads, such as sewage treatment and water storage pumps and domestic hot water systems from peak to off-peak periods. The net effect of such shifts is less demand for power. After all, if we can make better use of the energy capacity we have, this is more sensible than simply generating more power.

Social and community infrastructure – $3.4 billion investment

Social and community infrastructure is vitally important to maintain and enhance our quality of life. After all, our overall wellbeing as a community is supported by a range of services and facilities, including education, health, policing and justice, housing, and community support. However, investment detailed in the Infrastructure Plan does not represent all investment in this area of service provision. It only represents the cost of the infrastructure itself. The cost of service provision is outside the scope of this plan, and sits with the state agencies responsible for their delivery.

A healthy future

Key health projects include seven health hubs in high growth areas such as the Western Corridor, Browns Plains, Robina, Sunshine Coast, Northlakes and Caboolture. These health hubs will be where government and private services, such as health clinics and general practitioners are encouraged to locate in close proximity, together with other service providers such as community services.

Upgrades and redevelopments to the Ipswich, Prince Charles and Caloundra hospitals are included, as is the provision of new hospitals at the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. The total cost of these health infrastructure projects is around $1.5 billion.

Securing schools

A total of 63 new schools will be constructed over the next 20 years at a total estimated cost of around $1.8 billion. Exactly where these schools will be located will be determined using population projections. New school sites will be prioritised based on reviews of demographic trends as part of ongoing development of the Regional Plan.

Supporting centres

The Queensland Government has allocated $45 million towards creating transit oriented communities – developments centred around high-capacity transit nodes, and for the renewal of key activity centres across the south-east region.
Creating the future we want

Together, the Regional Plan and the Infrastructure Plan are an excellent blueprint to help maintain and enhance the lifestyles we love here in the great south-east.

They will help ensure a future we are proud to hand to our children and grandchildren.

They are about building a better future for South East Queensland.

Finding out more

To find out more about the Regional Plan or Infrastructure Plan, contact the Office of Urban Management:

**Website**
www.oum.qld.gov.au

**Freecall**
1800 021 818

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enquiries@oum.qld.gov.au

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