



LOCAL RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

NORTH AND FAR NORTH TROPICAL LOW,
29 JANUARY – 28 FEBRUARY 2025

Message from the Mayor

The flooding event experienced across the Hinchinbrook Shire during January and February 2025, resulting from the North and Far North Queensland Tropical Low, brought unprecedented rainfall, record breaking flooding and has been one of the most significant natural disasters to affect our region in recent history. The scale of the impact on individuals, families, infrastructure, services, and the local economy has been profound.

This Local Recovery Action Plan has been developed to provide a structured and coordinated framework to guide our recovery efforts. It outlines the strategic objectives, recovery milestones, and supporting activities required to restore our community and strengthen its resilience against future events. The plan is grounded in principles of local leadership, collaboration, sustainability, and inclusivity. Council acknowledges the outstanding efforts of our emergency services, support agencies, volunteers, and residents during the immediate response phase. Their commitment ensured the safety and welfare of many during an extremely challenging period.

As we transition into the recovery phase, it is essential that we work together across all levels of government, with local businesses, service providers, and the broader community to ensure that our recovery is comprehensive, effective, and future focused. This plan represents not only a pathway to recovery but also an opportunity to enhance the long-term resilience, wellbeing, and prosperity of the Hinchinbrook Shire.

I extend my sincere thanks to all involved in the development of this plan and reaffirm Council's commitment to leading and supporting our community throughout the recovery process.

Council has developed this Local Recovery Action Plan based on the outcomes of four recovery sub groups. Each sub group is responsible for a category namely: Economic, Human and Social, Infrastructure, and Environment. The strength of each sub group is the inclusion of community organisations and stakeholders side by side with the various government agency operatives responsible for relief and recovery for the purpose of identifying the needs and strategising the delivery of recovery effort. In this manner, the issues pertinent to our community are captured rather than the roll out of non-localised generic plans.

Council implemented its response and recovery rapidly following the initial flooding event seeking early disaster declaration status so as to ensure State and Federal Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements were engaged without delay. I must sincerely thank both the State and Federal Governments, the agencies involved and all their staff for the promptness of their response to Council's call. As you may recall, with such excellent cooperation afforded, a Community Recovery Hub, encompassing many different agencies, was established at the TAFE building to assist our community recovery.

The Community Recovery Hub has now transitioned to a Hinchinbrook Information and Referral Centre operating from offices at 73-81 Lannercost Street Ingham and remains available to assist with information, support and direction if required.

This Recovery Action Plan outlines our locally led roadmap to recovery. It sets clear milestones and priorities to guide our return to normalcy, whilst also taking important steps to ensure we are stronger, safer, and more resilient for future events. Recovery is not just about rebuilding structures; it's about restoring wellbeing, supporting our local economy, and enhancing the capacity of our community to adapt and thrive.

To every resident, volunteer, emergency responder, and organisation that stood up when it mattered most, thank you. Your courage and compassion have made all the difference. As we move forward together, this plan will serve as a foundation for coordination, accountability, and renewal.

We will recover. We will rebuild. And we will continue to look after one another.



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Introduction

About our Community

The Hinchinbrook Shire Council comprises of 2,810km² and has an estimated population of 11,118 people as at 30 June 2023 (Queensland Statisticians Office). Our Shire is located on a spectacular stretch of Queensland coastline, approximately one hour north of Townsville and three hours south of Cairns.

It is an extraordinary region where the savannah grasslands, coastal mangroves and tropical rainforests converge, creating a home for over 60% of Australia's bird, butterfly and fern species. It has many distinctive natural features, including Wallaman Falls, the highest waterfall drop in the southern hemisphere; Mount Fox, the youngest dormant volcano in Australia; National Parks and World Heritage areas.

National Parks and reserves include Girringun National Park for Wallaman Falls, Broadwater in the Abergowrie State Forest, Paluma State Forest for Crystal Creek and the adjoining coastline of the Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park, the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the Queensland State Marine Park

TYTO Wetlands, a 120 hectare rehabilitated wetland area, home to unique flora and fauna including over 240 species of birds (27.4% of Australia's bird species) and many Agile Wallabies. With extensive walking tracks, bird hides and viewing platforms, it is a haven for birdwatching enthusiasts.

The fertile river flats support various types of primary production including sugar, grazing, various small crop and boutique agriculture industries. Agriculture and associated industries in the Hinchinbrook Shire Council area, are the predominate provider of employment, with a tourism industry that is very nature and environment focused, also continuing to develop.

Ingham is the main urban centre of our Shire and home to more than one third of our residents. Other smaller centres are Allingham (Forrest Beach), Lucinda, Halifax, Taylors Beach, Macknade and Trebonne.

The Herbert River catchment is located on Queensland's north tropical coast to the north of Ingham. The Herbert River has its headwaters in a high rainfall area of the Dividing Range near Herberton and flows through a gorge to the coastal plain near Ingham. The river continues to its mouth near Lucinda where the catchment area is approximately 9,000km². The flood producing rainfalls, up to 600mm over a few days, usually occur in the lower part of the catchment. In less frequent events, the highest rainfalls occur in the upper catchment above Gleneagle.

The Herbert River responds quickly to heavy rainfall and river rises can be rapid and velocities very high. The area around Ingham is very flat and the town itself is located on the floodplain of the river. Several natural watercourses distribute floodwaters through the town during major flooding with virtually the whole town being at risk from flooding.



Demographic

- Hinchinbrook has a current population of 11,118 people;
- 5.5% speak non-English language including:
 - 3% Italian;
 - 0.4% Southeast Asian Austronesian Languages;
 - 0.3% Australian Indigenous Languages;
 - 0.3% Chinese Languages; and
 - 0.1% German.
- There are 2,981 families;
- 4,426 private dwellings;
- The median age is 52 years;
- Sugar cane growing and manufacturing accounts for 15.6% of the population’s employment; and
- 756 residents identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Aim

The Hinchinbrook Shire Council Local Recovery Action Plan (the Recovery Plan) has been developed following the impacts of the flooding in the region associated with North and Far North Tropical Low, 29 January – 28 February 2025. The Recovery Plan aims to provide the structure for a locally led recovery approach that will assist disaster-impacted members of the community to recover quickly, effectively and remain sustainable.

It also aims to incorporate development strategies within this recovery to enhance the resilience of all sectors of the community for subsequent disaster events. This Recovery Plan establishes the context for recovery within the Hinchinbrook Shire related to the flooding events of January and February 2025.

The Recovery Plan establishes important recovery milestones and estimated completion dates of associated projects. It also documents strategies and activities that will be undertaken to better prepare for, and reduce the impacts of future disaster events while enhancing Hinchinbrook’s resilience, sustainability and prosperity.

The Recovery Plan supports Council’s mission, “to provide leadership in making locally responsive and informed decisions, delivering quality services and facilities to the Hinchinbrook community” (Hinchinbrook Shire Council Corporate Plan, 2021-2025). It also supports the vision detailed in the Hinchinbrook Shire Council Corporate Plan, 2021-2025 “to strengthen our vibrant regional lifestyle and prosperous economy by growing the population and opportunities for the Hinchinbrook Shire”.

Background

About the Disaster Event

From late January to early February 2025, Ingham was severely impacted by record-breaking flooding from localised extreme heavy rainfall in both Ingham and its surrounding area, and in the catchment area across the Tablelands and the Herbert River.

The flooding was part of a larger event, the North and Far North Tropical Monsoon Low, that affected towns across northern Queensland from Cairns to Mackay.



Flood Impact

The Herbert River rose to 14.89 meters, close to the record level of 15.2 meters set in 1967. The town was cut off by floodwaters in every direction, including to local communities. Roads were closed, making travel west from Charters Towers, north from Townsville and south from Cairns impossible on the Bruce Highway.

A critical failure occurred of the Ollera Creek Bridge on the Bruce Highway, 66 kilometres north of Townsville, severely impacting transport and supply routes to the north. Transport was only possible via helicopter or boat. The Australian Defence Force built a temporary bridge for use during daylight hours while the Department of Transport and Main Roads repaired the damage and rebuilt the bridge sub-structure and floor at night.

Two residents tragically lost their lives in the flood, causing even more distress to the community. There was a significant impact to local homes, businesses and infrastructure in the area.

Ergon Energy de-energised the Ingham substation to prevent critical failure on 2 February 2025 affecting the entire community. Some Hinchinbrook locations were without power for five days, and some for up to two weeks before power was restored. Due to the lack of power, communication networks also failed, as back up batteries ran out and generators were not pre-deployed to most locations.

Food, fuel and medical supplies to all communities became critical with some receiving one resupply and others two or three resupplies. Medical evacuations by helicopter to Ingham and Townsville hospitals were essential for critical care patients and emerging medical conditions.

A place of refuge was opened on 1 February 2025 for residents and travellers. Swift water rescue commenced evacuating residents at 12.00am 1 February 2025, with 28 evacuations overnight, mostly to family and friends. On 2 February 2025, access roads leading to the place of refuge were beginning to flood and the evacuees were relocated to the Ingham Cyclone Shelter. Whilst the Cyclone Shelter was stood up as a place of refuge, it later transitioned to an Evacuation Centre, accommodating approximately 198 evacuees at the height of the event.

Flood Aftermath

In the wake of the tragic floods, many are confronting the heart wrenching task of putting their lives, homes and businesses back together, amid concerns of health risks such as the spread of mould and serious infections like melioidosis. Sadly, there have been additional lives lost due to melioidosis infections following the disaster.

Key Dates

- 30 January 2025 – Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) Lean Forward;
- 31 January 2025 – LDMG to Stand Up;
- 10 February 2025 – Recovery to Stand Up;
- 20 February 2025 – LDMG to Alert; and
- 6 March 2025 – LDMG Stood Down.

Summary of Key Impacts

- Tragically, two residents lost their lives during the floods, having a traumatic impact on families and locals;
- 1,564 Rapid Damage Assessments were completed;
- 812 homes and businesses were rated as moderate or minor damage;
- 192 homes and businesses were rated as severe damage;
- Power outage to approximately 11,000 residents and businesses;
- Communication outages to approximately 11,000 residents;
- 198 people were accommodated in the Evacuation Centre, including the first ever pet friendly Evacuation Centre;



- Approximately 790 residents were door knocked for community outreach;
- The Bruce Highway was washed away at Ollera Creek Bridge to the south and was closed at Gairloch Washaway and Seymour River to the north;
- Numerous local road closures and landslips resulting in some areas being isolated for up to two or more weeks;
- Economic impacts including businesses interruption, stock and asset loss and closures, some to never re-open;
- Economic impacts to cane farmers with a loss of 1 – 1.5 million tonnes of cane production, impacting farmer livelihoods. Subsequent community economic impacts will only become apparent when cane crushing season commences later in 2025;
- Closure of all private, state and independent schools cross the local government area, as well as closures of childcare centres subsequently impacting the workforce;
- Economic loss and property damage to tourism providers including private accommodation providers;
- Impacts to numerous Council buildings and assets including JL Kelly Theatre, Hinchinbrook Shire Library, TYTO Regional Art Gallery and the Hinchinbrook Visitor Information Centre, all of which remain closed;
- Economic loss due to cancellation and/or postponement of community events/shows;
- Impact to Council’s water and sewerage infrastructure;
- Impacts to Council’s stormwater infrastructure;
- Impacts to Council’s open spaces and parks;
- Social impacts including mental, emotional, and physical concerns resulting from the flooding event;
- Lack of basic needs, physical displacement, psychosocial issues, financial stress, and health risks;
- Damage to social infrastructure (hard and soft) and open spaces causing family and community disruption, decline in physical and mental health, decline in community capacity and social capital, threat to community cohesion, connectivity, and confidence;
- Flooding caused water quality issues from debris/pollution across local waterways including natural wetlands and creek systems;
- Environmental impacts to aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, including fish, threat of spread of pest animals and invasive plant species, impacts to endangered and threatened species;
- Coastal and riverbank ecosystems were severely impacted with changes in morphology resulting from erosion and loss of instream/riparian vegetation, sand deposition in lower river sections, significant coastal erosion, deposition on beaches (both organic and inorganic), marine and estuary ecosystem damage and contamination, and urban wetland function damage; and
- Flooding impacts caused by a variety of drainage issues have been identified across the entire Hinchinbrook Shire, including the Lower Herbert area.





Recovery

Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders were lead state government agencies and community groups, Australian Red Cross, Lifeline, Department Local Government, Water and Volunteers, Department of Housing and Public Works, Queensland Fire Department, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, Queensland Police Service, Rural Fire Service Queensland, State Emergency Services, Queensland Reconstruction Authority, GIVIT, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Ambulance Service, Department of Education, Department of Health, Samaritan’s Purse, NBN, Telstra, Optus and Ergon Energy.

Hinchinbrook Local Recovery Groups

Master Recovery Group

The Master Recovery Group is effectively the Local Recovery Group and is chaired by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Mary Brown, in her capacity as the Local Recovery Coordinator, with Councillor Pat Lynch as Deputy Local Recovery Coordinator.

Role: To coordinate the whole-of-government and community recovery from flood damages.

Master Recovery Group	
Responsibilities	Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the impacts of flood damages; Identify and prioritise major areas of recovery; Develop and implement effective strategies for community participation and partnership in the recovery process; Develop medium and long term recovery policies and strategies; Implement and coordinate the Recovery Priority Action Plan; Identify and obtain required resources; Provide effective onsite leadership, to focus all necessary resources, and to achieve the most efficient and effective recovery of affected communities; Monitor recovery activities; Provide advice and regular reports to the Local Disaster Management Group, the State Recovery Coordinator (when appointed), the QRA, as well as regular community and media information on recovery progress; and Develop a final report at the conclusion of recovery operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hinchinbrook Shire Council; QLD State Disaster Recovery Coordinator; Queensland Police Services; and Queensland Reconstruction Authority.



Human Social Recovery Sub Group

Human social recovery will be coordinated through the Human-Social Recovery Sub Group and is chaired by Councillor Donna Marbelli.

Role: To coordinate planning and implementation of recovery and disaster preparedness in the areas of safety and well-being, physical and psychological health, and social aspects.

Human Social Recovery Sub Group	
Responsibilities	Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the impact of cyclone and flood damages on human and social aspects; Manage financial and welfare support; Support the coordination of information provision and personal support; Support the coordination of psychological and counselling services; Support the coordination of ongoing medical and health services; Support the coordination of public health advice warnings and directions to combatants and the community; Support the coordination of temporary accommodation; Support the coordination of short term accommodation and repairs to dwellings; Provide specialist and outreach services; Support the coordination of case management, community development, support and referral to assist affected people, families and groups; Support the coordination of one stop shops/Recovery Centres; and Work with local government and community leadership groups to enable learning from their cyclone and flood experiences in order to better prepare for the future adverse events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hinchinbrook Shire Council; ADA Australia; ATSI Townsville; Australian Red Cross; Canegrowers; Townsville Catholic Education; Department of Education; Department of Housing and Public Works; Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (Community Recovery); GIVIT; Hinchinbrook Community Support Centre; Lifeline Community Care; Lifelong Support; Lives Lived Well; NDIS Supports; North Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN); Optimise Health and Wellness; QCar; Queensland Health; Queensland Police Service; Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA); Red Cross; Salvation Army; Selectability; Services Australia; and TAIHS Townsville.

Snapshot of Reported Damage and Impacts

- × Tragically, two residents lost their lives during the floods, having a traumatic impact on families and locals;
- × 192 properties were assessed as severely inundated;
- × 812 properties were assessed as moderate or minor damage;
- × Power and communications were lost to the entire Shire;



- × All education facilities, early childhood education and care services, including home based childcare providers across the Shire closed. Some still remain closed;
- × Sporting clubs have been affected and/or closed, limiting the places for youth to socialize and be active;
- × Longer term psychosocial impacts to the community will be monitored;
- × Interrupted access to Ingham Hospital due to flood water. Transport assistance provided by SES, emergency services and aviation assets enabled operational continuity;
- × Significant percentage of community members isolated for more than ten days; and
- × Approximately six households required temporary accommodation.

Economic Recovery Sub Group

Economic recovery will be coordinated through the Economic Recovery Sub Group and is chaired by Councillor Mark Spina.

Role: To coordinate planning and implementation of economic and financial recovery in the Hinchinbrook Shire.

Economic Recovery Sub Group	
Responsibilities	Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the insurance sector to ensure adequacy and a speedy process of insurance cover payments; • Assess impact on key economic assets; • Assess employment issues and capacity of local businesses to operate; • Facilitate business, industry and regional economic recovery and renewal; • Develop industry and business recovery plan and implementation strategies in conjunction with local government, relevant State Government agencies, regional economic development organisations and industry bodies; • Facilitate financial assistance, access to funds and loans with employer subsidies; • Monitor the impacts of cyclone and flood damages on the Shire’s economic viability and develop strategies to minimise the effects on individuals and businesses; • Where required facilitate linkages with job providers and employment agencies to source labour, to re-establish supply chains and joint marketing activities; • Develop a strategy to maximize use of local resources during reconstruction activities; • Support small to medium enterprise (e.g. referral, business assistance); • Coordinate support to farmers and rural landholders; • Assist with contract arrangements where required; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinchinbrook Shire Council; • AgForce; • Canegrowers; • Chamber of Commerce; • Country Universities Centre; • Department of Customer Services, Open Data and Small and Family Business; • Department of Primary Industries; • Department of State Development Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; • Department of Trade, Employment and Training; • GIVIT; • GrowCom; • HCPSL; • Insurance Council of Australia; • Local Government Authority Queensland; • QCar; • QRIDA; • Queensland Fruit and Vegetable Growers; • Queensland Polices Services; • Queensland Reconstruction Authority; • Queensland Seafood Industry Association; • Queensland State Disaster Recovery Coordinator; • Queensland Treasury; • Services Australia; • Townsville Enterprise Limited; and



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure involvement of local business and industry representatives in decision making; and • Ensure that the recovery plan informs broader planning and decision making activities across government and non-government agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilmar.
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Snapshot of Reported Damage and Impacts

- × Approximately 75% of cane farm and other agriculture land was inundated;
- × Assessment of cane crop production and other agriculture losses is estimated at 1 – 1.5 million tonnes;
- × Tourism businesses reporting very high percentage of lost bookings;
- × Approximately 90% all businesses were negatively impacted by inundation;
- × Significant loss of momentum in business attraction and confidence – several businesses identifying consideration of closing; and
- × Businesses reporting extended closures and an estimated \$1.5M lost trade.

Infrastructure Recovery Sub Group

Infrastructure recovery will be coordinated through the Infrastructure Recovery Sub Group and is chaired by Councillor Andrew Carr.

Role: To coordinate planning and implementation of housing, commercial and industrial buildings and structures, physical infrastructure (including power, water, telecommunications, transport) recovery in the district / region.

Infrastructure Recovery Sub Group	
Responsibilities	Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the insurance sector to ensure adequacy and speedy process of insurance cover; • Assess damage to housing stock, commercial and industrial buildings and structures, rural structures, and infrastructure facilities; • Coordinate building safety inspection services and secure damaged buildings and structures; • Coordinate demolition of unsafe buildings and structures; • Coordinate repair and rebuilding matters of housing stock; • Develop options for temporary accommodation; • Ensure coordinated approach to the housing related strategies in partnership with relevant organisations; • Coordinate disposal of hazardous material, debris etc; • Coordinate recovery of infrastructure, which is normally undertaken by infrastructure owners and operators (e.g. Telstra, Ergon); • Coordinate restoration of sporting facilities and public playgrounds; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinchinbrook Shire Council; • AgForce; • Canegrowers; • Catchment Coordination Group; • Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation; • Department of Housing; • Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development; • Department of Primary Industries; • Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water; • Department of Transport and Main Roads; • Ergon Energy; • Herbert River Improvement Trust; • HSCPL; • Lower Herbert Water Management Authority; • NBN; • Port of Townsville;



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise repair and reconstruction activities where appropriate; • Ensure relevant owners/operators are involved in the decision making process; • Ensure community consultation and involvement in the decision making process; and • Ensure cyclone and flood risk reduction is considered in planning of rebuilding and reconstruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugar Research Australia; • Telstra; • Terrain NRM; • QBuild; • QCAR; • Queensland Police Service; • Queensland Rail; • Queensland Reconstruction Authority; • Queensland Treasury; • Wet Tropics Management Authority; and • Wilmar.
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Snapshot of Reported Damage and Impacts

- × Bruce Highway closed on numerous occasions north to Cardwell and South to Townsville, significantly impacting the business community;
- × Critical failure of Ollera Creek Bridge, closing the National Highway to vehicle movements for an extended period;
- × Rail services ceased between Townsville and Cairns;
- × Wilmar cane rail and bridge network significantly impacted – over \$1.6M repair cost;
- × Numerous local roads closed for extended periods on numerous occasions;
- × Roads damaged by floodwaters, impacting on community connectivity;
- × Landslips and road and bridge damage closed Wallaman Falls Road, Broadwater, and Paluma. Mount Fox sustained substantial damage;
- × Power and communication outage caused phone and internet disruption to the Shire;
- × Numerous locally owned private roads damaged;
- × Significant damage to unsealed roads (in excess of \$10M in estimated damage) – loss of formation and gravel down to subgrade in multiple locations; and
- × Damage to Council water and sewerage, and stormwater infrastructure.



Environment Recovery Sub Group

Environment recovery will be coordinated through the Environment Recovery Sub Group and is chaired by Councillor Kate Milton.

Role: To coordinate recovery of the natural environment.

Environment Recovery Sub Group	
Responsibilities	Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate assessment of floods on natural environment (e.g. water quality, ecological impact and pollution); • Provide advice on potential environmental issues (e.g. water quality); • Coordinate rehabilitation of natural environment including parks, waterways and wildlife; • Coordinate preservation of community assets (e.g. reserves and parks); • Consider mitigation strategies to reduce future impacts on natural environment where appropriate; • Monitor issues of pollution; • Coordinate waste management and disposals; • Ensure there is effective consultation and communication with the community and relevant stakeholders; • Ensure environmental bodies and interest groups are involved in the decision making process; • Monitor and assess the environmental consequences of cleanup operations; and • Monitor and assess animal welfare issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinchinbrook Shire Council; • Canegrowers; • Catchment Coordination Group; • Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation; • Department of Primary Industries; • Department of Resources; • Herbert River Improvement Trust; • Lower Herbert Water Management Authority; • QCAR; • Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service; • Queensland Reconstruction Authority; • Terrain; • Tropical Vets; and • Wet Tropics Management Authority.

Snapshot of Reported Damage and Impacts

- × Soil erosion and loss of farmland on riverbanks;
- × Sediment build up in the Herbert River continuing to cause increased flooding impacts particularly in the Lower Herbert communities and agricultural areas;
- × Debris build up in streams and rivers exacerbating flooding in surrounding properties;
- × 261.5 tonnes of green and hard waste generated;
- × Coastal and riverbank ecosystems sustained significant damage and erosion;
- × Loss of livestock and further ongoing livestock health issues; and
- × Water quality impacts from debris and pollutions across waterways.



Recovery and Resilience Objectives and Measures of Success

In Hinchinbrook, our recovery will focus on a locally led approach which involves individuals, families, community groups, businesses and all levels of government to identify and match our recovery efforts to the needs of our impacted community.

The Recovery and Resilience Objective and Measures of Success have been developed by the Local Recovery Sub Groups (Human Social, Economic, Environment and Infrastructure), using available impact and needs assessments. These plans detail recovery objectives and actions that will be undertaken to effect recovery and build our resilience across all sectors of the community.

**Actions are also listed within the Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP) for possible future funding opportunities.*

Proposed timeframes for the following objectives are:

- Short term: 0 – 3 months;
- Medium term: 4 – 12 months; and
- Long term: 12+ months.

Task No	Task	Time Frame	Actions
Human Social			
1	Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Support	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Department of Housing to ensure displaced residents are provided with safe and immediate temporary shelter. • Investigate options and demand for establishing temporary accommodation camps utilised for displaced residents or contractors conducting repair works. • Long term housing recovery plans are implemented for permanent relocation or home repairs. • Update and implement internal policy and procedures for the Cyclone Shelter and Evacuation Centre operations for future events.*
2	Mental Health and Wellbeing	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively provide mental health services including counselling and trauma support. • Ensure community support centres are reaching out to their networks to educate on services available. • Work with the agricultural sector to implement specific support for farmers and rural residents. • Assist sport and recreation clubs with re-opening. • Parks, gardens and public areas to be repaired and re-opened.



3	Clean Up Assistance	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to facilitate bulk waste pick up for residents and businesses. • Liase with support agencies who provided assistance with domestic cleans to assist residents with clean up tasks.
4	Donations	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate and coordinate immediate physical donations to the region including storage, transporting, delivery and management. • Arrange for GIVIT to facilitate donations and distribution of monetary and physical goods.
5	Communication	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a disaster and recovery communication plan.*
6	Immediate Recovery Support	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for full time Community Recovery Officer through Government funding.*
7	Ongoing Recovery Support	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for full time Business and Agriculture Recovery Officer through Government funding.*
8	Local School and Childcare Facilities	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools and childcare facilities to be checked, repaired and re-opened.
9	Community Recognition	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with agencies to organise a post disaster community recovery event. • Acknowledge local heroes.
10	Community Outreach	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate community meetings to foster a sense of connection and mutual support. • Repair and re-open community centres, libraries, and local gathering spaces that are important to the cultural fabric of Hinchinbrook. • Create programs and resources focused on disaster preparedness, community leadership, and building local capacity to handle future emergencies.
Economic			
11	Economic Damage Assessment	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete thorough assessments of farm and business damage.
12	Business Continuity Planning	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist farmers and businesses with financial counseling and recovery planning, focusing on immediate needs and continuity of operations. • Set up a Business Hub for continued support of local farming and business management. • Promote disaster preparedness and business continuity workshops. • Register available office spaces for temporary use.



13	Financial Assistance	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist residents, not for profits, farmers and business owners with financial assistance applications and government funding grants. • Advocate for further government funding opportunities and/or review of eligibility criteria to correctly reflect and capture causation of damage sustained by small business.*
14	Insurance	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure an insurance presence is available for the community. • Advocate for a change of policy for loss of power related claims. • Prioritise local tradespeople for insurance repairs.
15	Tourism	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch tourism campaign to promote Hinchinbrook 'back in business'. • Tourist locations and hotspots restoration. • Support local accommodation and tour providers to re-open. • Repair and re-open Hinchinbrook Visitor Information Centre. • Investigate options to increase sewerage treatment capacity at Lucinda treatment facility to enhance accommodation availability.*
Infrastructure			
16	Infrastructure Damage Assessment*	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use rapid damage assessments to prioritise buildings in need of immediate repair. • Prioritise emergency repairs to public infrastructure (e.g. roads, schools, irrigation, fencing, bridges and hospitals) to ensure critical services can resume. • Vegetation and debris to be removed and cleaned from infrastructure and assets. • Capturing, documenting, and analysing damage assessments and sharing throughout a range of different stakeholders for funding advocacy.



17	Power and Communication Restoration	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all essential services (electricity, water, gas, and communications) are restored to critical infrastructure and key service areas (hospitals, emergency services, food distribution centres). • Advocate for ongoing infrastructure maintenance schedules to be implemented for telecommunication, energy supply and internet connections, including planned management program and identified responsible persons for upkeep during an event.* • Advocate for more resilient and effective back up power supplies to critical transmission infrastructure and site throughout the district and network.*
18	Property Resilience	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate agencies to engage with property owners and businesses to assist with rebuilding efforts and resilience works and promote applicable grant opportunities. • Provide documentation on local laws and local development schemes to assist with resilience planning. • Prioritise building applications for impacted residents. • Investigate ability to facilitate a shared flood resilient shed for sporting clubs and equipment. • Update Lower Herbert flood study.* • Implement correlation of BoM data with Council's GIS System to assist residents in identifying water inundation risk to properties at certain river heights.
19	Water and Sewerage	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair and replace damaged water and sewage infrastructure. • Restore public internet access to river height/GIS spatial data alliance to enable better understanding of potential flood heights in urban areas.
20	Infrastructure Repairs	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs on damaged roads. • Repairs on damaged bridges. • Repairs on damaged fences, rail and other infrastructure. • Repair and re-open the JL Kelly Theatre. • Repair and re-open the TYTO Regional Art Gallery • Repair and re-open the Hinchinbrook Library.



21	Drainage	Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an integrated Hinchinbrook Shire drainage taskforce. • Advocate for policy changes to allow for more effective drainage and waterways maintenance within the marine interface.* • Rectify Lucinda drainage issues that continue to cause localised flooding.*
22	Infrastructure Resilience	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement upgrades to critical services to improve resilience to future disasters such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modify kerb crossover at Ingham Ambulance to accommodate ambulance vehicles to traverse without entering flood water. ○ Enable access from Dutton Street to the Ingham Hospital due to flood inundation of existing McIlwraith Street entrance and exits. ○ Seek funding for Lower Herbert disaster coordination centre at Halifax Community Hall, to incorporate separate space for Local Disaster Coordination Centre, SES equipment storage and base, helipad and evacuation centre.* • Apply for Disaster Recovery Funding for portable communication units for outlying communities and generators for Council owned community halls, to be established as hubs during an event.*
23	Urban Planning*	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress funding opportunities to develop and implement long-term urban planning strategies that consider disaster resilience, including flood mitigation measures, green spaces, and improved infrastructure. • Progress funding opportunities to plan and install shower and toilet facilities at Rotary Park to provide amenity for flood bound highway travellers.



24	Infrastructure Advocacy*	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for replacement of the Anabranche Bridge to enable better connectivity/reduction of isolation time for the Lower Herbert community. • Advocate for resilient works at Seymour. • Raising the Halifax Washaway. • Explore funding options to raise Taylors Beach causeway adjacent to Lancini's to minimise isolation time of Taylors Beach community. • Explore funding options to restore Heritage listed Gairloch Bridge as a tourism attraction for economic stimulus. • Source funding to construct Dungeness Rockwall and undertake approved dredging. • Advocate for a heavy vehicle wash down area.
Environment			
25	Waste	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional waste collection services for affected residents to facilitate post flood clean up. • Facilitate beach clean up events. • Research funding sources and agencies to lead flood debris clean up across the Shire's waterways.*
26	Biosecurity	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate community outreach programs to raise awareness about the importance of ecosystem restoration. • Educate the community on invasive plants and animals following weather events. • Facilitate chemical collection depots.
27	Livestock	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address immediate needs of displaced or stranded livestock. • Coordinate emergency fodder. • Distribute information on carcass removal procedures. • Monitor ongoing health and address any issues contributing to livestock losses.
28	Pets	Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement plan for future events relating to evacuated pets and animal welfare.

Adopted at Council General Meeting Tuesday 27 May 2025.



Australian Government Queensland Government

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