

Pilot Project Proposal

Proposed Partnership Between: Livingstone Shire Council (LSC), Multicultural Development Association (MDA), Greening Australia (GA), Central Queensland University (CQU)

Vision

To apply for funding through the **Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative** with the purpose of redeveloping and renovating the decommissioned railway bridges at Bondoola and Mackays Road rail crossing into a shared recreational, environmental, historical, tourism and educational corridor as part of the redevelopment of the Pineapple Rail Trail. The proposed project would be in partnership with Local Government, Community Groups, Indigenous Organisations and Business and Industry.

Overall Purpose

To develop a recreational corridor that provides opportunities for the local community, and tourists, to engage in both active and passive recreation

To establish valuable connections with pocket communities including Bondoola, The Oakes, Cawarral, Mt Chalmers and Nerimbera and Mt Archer Reserve in The Rockhampton Regional Council to activate tourism and economic development opportunities.

To deliver a nationally recognised Rail Trail that attracts tourists & tourism opportunities to the Livingstone Shire and Rockhampton Regional Council's.

To include and acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the Dharumbal People, by encouraging their input into the development of the 'Rail Trail' as well as the Cultural and Historical significance of 'Country' particularly physical geography and geology, flora, and fauna and historical sites such as Gawula.

Indigenous and Culturally Diverse Workforce Development Project – Bondoola Bridges

On-Site Construction Training Environment | Conservation & Land Management Practices

The 4.5 km Stage 1 of the Rail Trail was completed in 2014 at a cost of approximately \$1.5 Million. This section offers the community a safe environment to commute between the town centre and the newly developed Pines Estate ensuring locals obtain the much needed health benefits of the great outdoors.

Consultation has occurred between members of the Capricorn Coast Bicycle User Group (BUG) in Yeppoon, a TAFE Qld representative and a representative from Livingstone Shire Council. Sections of the proposed Stage 2 and accessible areas of the Rail Trail, particularly, the decommissioned rail bridges at Bondoola (x2) and Mackays Road (x1) toward Cawarral have been visited and inspected and the intention of these observations was to investigate the possibility of conducting practical training using the Rail Trail and the Bondoola and Mackay's Road bridges as an onsite practical training environment.

The following observations have been made:

- From the Pines to Cawarral the existing trail is accessible by mountain or a hybrid type pushbike, foot and/or horseback. Four Wheel drives and motor cycles can also access the trail, however, these vehicles would be prohibited at a 'point in time' when the trail is open for recreational use
- The trail and bridges have potential for a fully operational on-site Construction Training environment. The proposal for the Mackays Road Bridge is to turn it into a viewing platform as it is no longer supports transport.
- Various points along the trail have sound conservation and land management educational and development capabilities as well as bush fire mitigation as the trail could provide a 50 metre wide fire break.
- Indigenous 'Points of Interest' at Gawula (Mt Wheeler), Mt Jim Crow and Mackays Road Bridge – (eg: Indigenous History Plaques, Indigenous Art and storytelling, Natural Bush Tucker)

Training and Development Opportunities

- The redevelopment of the trail as a culturally and historically significant recreational and tourist cycle and walkway corridor between Yeppoon and Rockhampton presents a major opportunity to provide training to Indigenous and Culturally Diverse Peoples through community managed employment programs such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work.
- In partnership with Livingstone Shire Council (LSC), and community action groups such as the Cap Coast BUG, The Rockhampton Community Policing Board (CPB) opportunities could be created that will enable the earthworks, pathway construction and other infrastructure such as bridges, gateways and fences to be completed by participants under qualified trade trainers and in a high functioning work environment, thus, saving labour costs for LSC.

Identified Qualifications

- Certificate I in Construction (Construction White Card)
- Certificate I in Conservation & Land Management

Ticketing Opportunities

- Heavy Machinery Operations
- Working at Heights
- Light Vehicle/Four Wheel Drive
- Enter and Work in Confined Space
- Material Handler

Guiding Principles

Health and physical activity and the growing concerns about obesity & lack of exercise

Need for a free/low cost family friendly, multi-purpose and non-competitive exercise space outside the norms of organised sport

History – Indigenous Cultural and Historical significance – Gawula (Mt Wheeler)

Environment – Maintenance of the corridor via Native Tree and Bush Tucker Planting, Weed Control and general Landcare and Bush Fire Mitigation practices

Education – Providing future generations with a safe place to exercise and learn about the natural environment that surrounds the region

Key Drivers

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| ■ Employment | ■ Tourism |
| ■ Education and Training | ■ History |
| ■ Health and Physical Activity | ■ Environment |

Strategic Priorities - Community Engagement

- Encourage Livingstone Shire Council (LSC) to acknowledge the Rail Trail corridor as a worthwhile opportunity not a liability
- Encourage LSC to undertake the required actions to establish tenure and enable development and use of the corridor
- Engage continued community stakeholder engagement to grow community support and enthusiasm for the project.
- Establish sustainable partnerships with community groups, Indigenous Organisations, Business, and Industry to expedite the development of the Rail Trail.

Business Benefits

Livingstone Shire Council – Proposed Workforce Development will free up council staffs to enable other priority works to be carried out

The Oaks – Rest Stop, Refreshments, Indigenous Cultural History – Gawula Story Telling Platform: Create pathway to Oaks via Gravel Pit Road or other suitable access

Cawarral Store and Treehouse Tavern – Rest Stop and Refreshments

Mt Chalmers – Rest Stop, Story Telling - Gold Mining History

Nerimbera – Connection to Mt Archer Reserve (Rockhampton Regional Council [RRC] Mt Archer Re-Activation Master Plan)

Tourist Guides – Drop-Off and Pick Up's – Bike Transportation

Indigenous Ranger Program Integration

Sports and Recreation – Events | Duathlons, Running (all distances), Mountain Biking and Hybrid Cycling, Horseriding

This opportunity for training and development of Indigenous and Culturally Diverse Peoples would be mutually beneficial to stakeholders as workforce development programs have the ability to propagate job-related knowledge and skills, access to employment opportunities, and real jobs. It provides participants with the opportunity to develop into Worksite Mentors and Supervisors over time.

The delivery of this project has the potential to evolve into a highly sustainable workforce development, education and training and future employment package for Indigenous and Culturally Diverse participants from the local area.

Depending on the current government funding cycle project stages could be completed on schedule and to specifications while providing purposeful education, training and work experience for participants.

Justification *(Queensland Cycle Strategy 2011-2021)*

There are over 30 established rail trails in Australia, the majority of which are in Victoria. The Riesling Trail (<http://rieslingtrail.com.au/location/>) in South Australia is a perfect example of how decommissioned railway lines are potentially a tourism mecca for any region having achieved the 'Certificate of Excellence' 2015 Winner – Trip Advisor. In 2015 up to 52547 people visited the trail (www.railtrails.org.au – Riesling Trail 'Traker' Readings).

In Queensland, the Fernvale to Lowood Rail Trail and the Linville to Blackbutt Rail Trail have been open for a number of years. Both trails will become part of the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail (BVRT). The BVRT now runs from Fernvale to Toogoolawah and Moore to Yarraman. Construction is underway from the Qld Rail station at Wulkuraka toward Fernvale – Cost – \$3M (50/50) Local/State Government. Over 100 kilometres of the BVRT is open to the public. Upon completion the rail trail will be 161 kilometres long and extend from Wulkuraka to Yarraman – the longest rail trail in Australia.

Usage Statistics for the Upper Brisbane Valley Rail Trail | Blackbutt (Population – 1055) to Linville (Population – 647) in comparison Yeppoon 13,500 | Rockhampton Region 83,653

***2015**

- 10 June to 8 August (59 days)
 - Linville – 1583 – Average 27 per day
 - Blackbutt – 1358 – Average 23 per day
- 9 August to 20 September (42 days)
 - Linville – 1282 – Average 31 per day
 - Blackbutt 1263 – Average 30 per day
- 21 September to 21 October (32 days)
 - Linville – 552 – Average 17 per day
 - Blackbutt – 712 – Average 22 per day

***2016**

- 12 December to 27 January (56 Days)
 - Linville – 2151 – Average 38 per day
 - Blackbutt – 3626 – Average 64 per day
- 28 January to 29 February (33 Days)
 - Linville – 962 – Average 31 per day
 - Blackbutt – 1387 – Average 42 per day
- 7 April to 28 April (22 Days)
 - Linville – 363 – Average 16 per day
 - Blackbutt 687 – Average 31 per day

Overall Counter Registrations since installation

- Linville – 1089 Days – Total = 33619 – Average 30 per day
 - Blackbutt – 671 Days – Total = 23754 – Average 35 per day
- (Note: Counter registrations may not all be human due to cattle and other wildlife on the trail)

Current Projects in Queensland

- State Government has just completed a \$3.2M upgrade of the Samford Rail Trail
- Hervey Bay (Fraser Coast RC) has just committed approximately \$750,000
- Toowoomba RC has provided funds for both the Cooyar and Murno Rail Trails
- Tablelands RC has just completed stage two of the Atherton Rail Trail
- Ipswich City Council has recently completed the Brassall Rail Trail
- Stage 1 - Kingaroy to Kilkivan Rail Trail. Completion late 2016. Funding for Stage 2 acquired (Gympie RC and South Burnett RC / State Government).

Why are they popular? - Rail trails are popular because they are:

- often accessible from large population centres
- close to existing or easily developed tourism infrastructure in or near townships along the rail trail – places to eat, explore and stay
- a car-free facility for people to walk or ride bicycles in safety to school and the shops, or just to enjoy the scenery
- a pleasant experience even in hilly country because trains, like walkers and cyclists are not partial to steep gradients
- a long continuous natural heritage corridor

BVRT has a user group who hold regular bike rides along the Rail Trail - 40 to 50 riders hire a local bus and truck to transport the group to the starting point and these riders purchase refreshments at the local cafe and lunch at another town - this can generate revenue of around \$2500.00 into the local towns each ride

- RSPCA hold the Million Paws walk and weekly social dog walks are held
- Annual Fun Run - average of 800 people plus a fun day after the run
- Annual Duathlon – multiple competitors plus spectators
- Bike Week accounted for 300 riders in May
- Local Bird Watchers also access the trail

Funding

The first 4.5km section from the centre of Yeppoon to the Yeppoon - Rockhampton Road was the culmination of eight years of lobbying. It saw the amalgamation and then de-amalgamation of the local council and the incorporation of the Bicycle Users Group (BUG) and an e-petition with 1122 signatures presented to the state government. It is anticipated similar processes would be utilised once again to kick start applications for funding for the next stages. Furthermore, it is anticipated other funding sources will be investigated to align with the training and development opportunities for Indigenous and Culturally Diverse Peoples and/or State Infrastructure and Sport and Recreational Funding mechanisms. These options are still being investigated.

Implementation

The implementation of the proposed project will enable engaged training providers to:

- Support directly and indirectly its enablement to attract, train and retain an Indigenous and Culturally diverse workforce
- Expand access and improve quality and relevance of VET for Indigenous and Culturally Diverse Peoples
- Develop business and industry capabilities to harness the skills and abilities of Indigenous and Culturally Diverse Peoples
- Provide transitional assistance for Indigenous Peoples without the dislocation from *Country*
- Building human resources and essential and sustainable infrastructure on *Country*
- Contribute to the development of an improved and sustainable local and regional skills base
- Strengthen existing productivity of economically competitive and productive industries within the region
- Invest in and respond to a long-term strategy to increase regional economic growth and productivity

To achieve these overarching objectives it is recommended that the following training and workforce outcomes as a priority for the project:

- Maximised employment opportunities for local Indigenous and Culturally Diverse Peoples in the first instance
- Enhance the region's skills capacity across a range of Vocational Education and Training (VET) areas and employment
- Increased sector-wide skills and labour force capabilities

To meet these objectives, the projects will be managed in alignment with the Project Framework. The actions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be developed in close coordination with identified key stakeholders and the Program Manager.

Responsibilities

Key stakeholder partnerships with LSC would maintain the overarching responsibility for implementing the project, moreover, a high level of responsibility also exists to ensure that participants access applicable training and recruitment opportunities and enrolment processes are optimised.

The division of responsibilities is summarised below:

- ⇒ **Training Providers, MDA & LSC** – would have the overarching responsibility for implementing the training and construction element of the project and to ensure that enrolment, recruitment and training conditions and commitments are met as well as the alignment of participants into a suitable workforce post program.
- ⇒ **Training Providers** would be required to develop Training and Workforce Development Plans that:
 - Identify the skill requirements of the project and within VET requirements
 - Identify the skills, knowledge and site experiences required to support each element of the project
 - Provide evidence of ensuring that training and qualifications meet the skills development needs of the project and aligns participants into a suitable workforce
 - Arrange training and qualification programs to meet the skill development within each project
 - Develop and implement training and qualification systems according to the Australian Qualifications Training Framework (AQTF)
 - Ensure that only suitably qualified people support participants and maximise the inclusion of qualified Indigenous trainer/assessors and staff to support all phases of the project
- ⇒ **Partners and Stakeholders** – To augment the benefits of the project it is advocated that the *Dixon Partnering Model* (<http://www.iandixon.com.au/>) partnership approach and that is to collaborate with relevant business and industry, government and community stakeholders.

Partners and Stakeholders are:

- encouraged to promote and enhance the benefits of a tailored workforce development program
 - to collaborate with relevant industry, government and community stakeholders
 - to maintain responsibility for delivering against their agreed scope of works
 - liaise at described intervals with the Program Manager who is responsible for managing the partnership activities and reporting back to The Key Stakeholders
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