

Ipswich City Council

Media Release

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Economic development key to city's financial future

Ipswich is open for business with the city's innovative Economic Development Strategy – underpinned by a strong 2023-2024 Budget – set to deliver a suite of new initiatives.

Economic and Industry Development Committee Chairperson Councillor Nicole Jonic said a focus in the budget will be progressing the recently launched strategy.

“Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027 is a roadmap for how council can ensure that we are doing all we can to support sustainable economic growth,” Cr Jonic said.

“It shapes how we can build the economy of the future, attract and retain diverse and high value jobs, and how we can better support business and our community.

“The Ipswich community is growing rapidly – we are Queensland’s fastest growing city. Along with more residents comes greater need for goods, services and access to quality jobs and educational opportunities.

“The strategy identifies Ipswich’s competitive identity – what makes us different and what we can offer - as a point of difference to other cities in the south-east. It looks at how council can review and evolve our policy settings and culture to prioritise economic development and foster productive relationships.”

Cr Jonic said council will prioritise the business community through delivering a range of commitments under the Small Business Friendly Initiative – of which Ipswich was the first council to sign up.

“We are committed to creating opportunity so residents can reap the rewards of working where they live,” Cr Jonic said.

“We’re committed to providing skills training and employment opportunities to our residents as a major component of our economic development within our region.

“We have been working with local businesses to hold mentoring sessions on how they can bolster their capability and upskill to meet the demands of the modern business world.”

Cr Jonic said the five-year strategy hoped to establish 11,500 new jobs for Ipswich residents; expansion of key industries including defence, manufacturing, health, transport and logistics; an increase of \$6.5 billion in Gross Regional Product; and for Ipswich to continue to grow as a tourist destination.

“We can only achieve these things by working in partnership with our business community,” Cr Jonic said.

More than 50 new businesses have opened in Ipswich central over the past two years with positive signs ahead as the Nicholas Street Precinct continued its major construction focus at the Venue and the Commonwealth Hotel.

Cr Jonic said the budget will also aim to drive investment through enabling investment in hotels and higher density residential in our city centre – with opportunities for council to expand existing development incentives.

“The 2023-2024 Budget signals an exciting new chapter for the economic growth and prosperity in Ipswich,” Cr Jonic said.

“It will build on the success of the past year, which has seen the opening of Brighton Homes Arena at Springfield Central, the Coles Distribution Centre at Redbank, development underway at the Frucor Suntory facility, new Mater Hospital, and state-of-the-art Aegros biopharmaceuticals facility at BioPark Australia.

“And with a State election on the horizon, council will continue its high priority advocacy projects, including the Ipswich Central to Springfield Central public transport network business case, and funding critical upgrades to Ipswich’s strategic highway network: Warrego, Cunningham and Centenary Highways, which are vital to sustainable growth for our major industries.”

Cr Jonic said the budget would also enable council to review process and culture to improve customer experience and application procedures.

“We want to create the best possible user experience for business and our community.”

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