



CENTRAL HIGHLANDS VISITOR ECONOMY *Action Plan 2025–2028*



This document has been produced by CHDC to provide the Corporation, its partners and industry with a clear and united direction through actions and initiatives that align with QLD Government's Destination 2045 plan for tourism.

FOCUS *Action Areas*

1. CENTRAL QUEENSLAND HIGHLANDS BRAND STORY
2. DRIVE A YEAR-ROUND VISITOR ECONOMY
3. DEVELOP TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCES
4. INDUSTRY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
5. CULTIVATE COLLABORATION & COLLECTIVE INVESTMENT



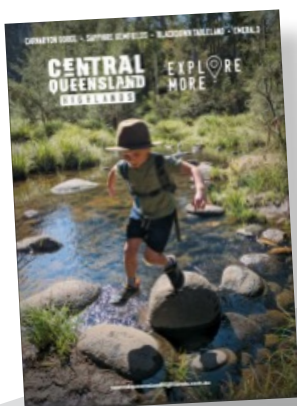
Miners Heritage Rubyvale

1. CENTRAL QUEENSLAND HIGHLANDS

Brand Story

IN THE ABSENCE OF MAJOR TOURISM CHAINS WITH SIGNIFICANT MARKETING BUDGETS, COLLABORATION WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS WILL BE REQUIRED.

The brand and resulting marketing and media campaigns should be developed from a visitor perspective, understanding visitors don't recognise Local Government Area (LGA) boundaries



Blackdown Tableland National Park

ACTION	TIMING
1.1 Ensure all marketing collateral, including brochures, websites, social media, and advertising, consistently reflect the brand story.	Ongoing
1.2 Develop and share high-quality content that tells the stories of the region, its people, and its unique attributes, aligning with the brand story, such as videos, blog posts, and social media content.	Ongoing
1.3 Encourage operators and businesses to use the Brand Toolkit to integrate the brand story into their communications, marketing, and experience delivery.	Short term – 12 - 18 months
1.4 Enhance the visitor experience by ensuring that the brand is reflected in every touchpoint, from wayfinding and signage to visitors information centres and events, creating a cohesive and immersive experience. Seek further funding to update and align interpretive trail assets with the Central Queensland Highlands (CQH) brand.	Short term – 12 - 18 months
1.5 Collaborate with Queensland Country Tourism (QCT) and other marketing partners to ensure assets and messaging reflect our brand story, including integration into its Destination Management Plan and marketing campaigns.	Short term – 12 - 18 months
1.6 Engage with Central Highlands Regional Council (CHRC) to identify opportunities for integrating the brand story into community initiatives, such as cycling trails and interpretive signage.	Short term and ongoing

2. DRIVE A YEAR-ROUND *Visitor Economy*

FOR CENTRAL HIGHLANDS, THE TOURISM INDUSTRY NOT ONLY REPRESENTS 1 IN 15 JOBS, BUT IT IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT SECTOR TO DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY.

Addressing seasonality will ensure long-term industry sustainability, enabling viable, profitable local enterprises and long-term employment.

Gemfields Lapidary and Craft Club, Sapphire Central

ACTION	TIMING
2.1 Establish a research and data collection program for the region in partnership with QCT to investigate feasibility of upgrades to the Central Queensland Highlands Visitor Information Centre (Emerald VIC), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Signage b. Interpretive boards c. Visitor online booking terminal (Internet Kiosk concept) d. Souvenir line expansion e. Reviewed floor plan 	Short term – 12 – 18 months
2.2 Advocate for accessibility and inclusivity by undertaking an audit of tourism experiences, infrastructure, and information.	Short term – 12 – 18 months
2.3 Strengthen the visitor servicing program for the satellite centres in Duaringa, Springsure, and Blackwater, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Developing a Visitor Servicing Toolkit b. Providing promotional collateral, signage, and brochure racks c. Holding familiarisations 	Short term – 12 – 18 months
2.4 Working with QTC, encourage/incentivise industry and event operators to develop transformational summer experiences across the destination to rival coastal experiences.	Short term – 12 – 18 months
2.5 Develop low/shoulder season opportunities and strategies, seeking resources/funding for projects e.g. Dark Sky Sanctuaries.	Long term – 36 months +
2.6 Advocate for enhanced infrastructure for freshwater-based experiences e.g. Lake Maraboon, Bedford Weir, and Nogoia river. Encourage local/regional business cases based on industry and community benefits.	Long term – 36 months +

3. DEVELOP *Experiences*

DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCES THAT ENCOURAGE EXPLORATION OF CENTRAL QUEENSLAND HIGHLANDS IS AN IMPORTANT CATALYST TO REALISE THE DESTINATION VISION AND THE 'EXPLORE MORE' THEME.

Exploring **Central Queensland Highlands** activities solidifies the destination's competitive advantage as a natural adventure location, ensuring they cannot be duplicated or experienced elsewhere. Developing deeply immersive activities like the Sapphire Gemfields and Carnarvon Gorge with a connection to local culture and the natural environment will provide transformational experiences.

ACTION	TIMING
3.1 Connect industry and event operators with local experts and guides (e.g. film & tv, land, cultural, arts, nature, farmers, producers, historians, and educators) to help interpret and co-create transformational CQH experiences.	Long term – 36 months +
3.2 Encourage industry and event organisers to participate in Tourism and Events Queensland's Best of Queensland Experiences Program and prepare for drive market ahead of the 2032 Olympics.	Long term – 36 months +
3.3 Work with QCT, industry and strategic partners to develop visitor experiences based on CQH's Unique Selling Points (USPs) with Brand Toolkit and Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) Ultimate Transformational Experience Guide.	Long term – 36 months +
3.4 Advocate for increased resources for long-term transformational experience programs and incentives for operators e.g. foodies experiences, First Nations, mining tours and accommodation near Blackwater/Blackdown Tableland.	Long term – 36 months +
3.5 Advocate for increased resources for long-term transformational experience programs and incentives for operators. Support community groups to progress a feasibility study focused on the development of adventure, biking, and riding trails in the Central Highlands.	Long term – 36 months +
3.6 Ensure the region is represented on government and industry databases, such as: a. Location Asset Register, Screen Queensland and Film Australia b. Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) c. Queensland Tourism Resilience Platform (QTRP) d. Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC)	Short term – 12 – 18 months
3.7 Encourage industry and events to develop fully accessible experiences.	Long term – 36 months +
3.8 Events – advocate for significant events – economic impact modelling of local events.	Short term – 12 – 18 months
3.9 Investigate education tourism opportunities. a. Identify local providers interested in participating. b. Establish partnerships with target education institutions. c. Align required learning outcomes with the region's products and experiences. d. Facilitate product and itinerary development.	Long term – 36 months +
3.10 Encourage the packaging of transformational experiences, subject to funding resources. Engage packaging experts to create seamless travel options, e.g. flight, car hire, accommodation, and collaborate with trade and distribution channels, including online travel agents.	Long term – 36 months +

4. INDUSTRY *Capacity*

GROWING INDUSTRY CAPACITY WILL ENABLE EXPERIENCE INNOVATION AND ENCOURAGE LEADING INDUSTRY SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES.

Fostering innovation in tourism products and experiences will enable businesses and the destination to attract high-value visitors.

Van Gogh Sunflowers,
Emerald

ACTION	TIMING
4.1 Continue to work with industry to identify training/mentoring requirements, partnering to deliver industry capacity-building programs e.g. experience development, accessibility, event management.	Short term – 12 – 18 months
4.2 Operate a quarterly familiarisation program for VIC staff/volunteers and tourism businesses across the region to increase awareness of tourism activity and encourage cross-promotion.	Short term – 12 – 18 months
4.3 Partner with QCT to develop capacity-building programs to enhance operator knowledge and engagement with sustainability principles e.g. Operator EA certifications including Eco, Eco Guide and Respecting Our Culture (ROC), Sustainable Tourism and Climate Change Certification. Embed sustainability measures as part of marketing incentives and funding opportunities.	Long term – 36 months +
4.4 Run an annual forum working with tourism groups to support the industry in increasing sustainable operations with a practical guide to innovation, including a long-term Net Zero emissions target, share knowledge, and inspire new ideas and innovation in the local industry.	Short term – 12 – 18 months
4.5 Promote the Central Highlands Business Excellence Awards program to the tourism industry as a tool to increase industry service standards, and support key businesses to enter in the Queensland Tourism Awards process.	Long term – 36 months +
4.6 Establish and maintain an industry Facebook group to share information and knowledge, and cross-promotion, depending on staff and funding.	Long term – 36 months +
4.7 Using membership service upgrades available with QTIC and QTC continue to work with industry to identify training/mentoring requirements, partnering to deliver industry capacity-building programs e.g., experience development, accessibility, and event management.	Short term – 12 – 18 months



5. CULTIVATE COLLABORATION & *Collective Investment*

CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION WITH A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO AN INTEGRATED WHOLE-OF-DESTINATION APPROACH WILL ENABLE:

- an increase to CQH's profile as a tourism and event-friendly destination,
- a maximisation of private and public sector return on investment,
- the provision (or development) of infrastructure that supports sustainable tourism,
- more (or enhanced) business-to-business and town-to-town referrals increasing regional dispersal, length-of-stay and visitor spend.

Capella Pioneer
Village Museum

ACTION		TIMING
5.1	Work in partnership with CHRC to deliver relevant actions from the RV Caravan and Camping Strategy.	Long term – 36 months +
5.2	Establish a single steering group (Tourism Strategy Group) with its whole of the Central Highlands in mind to monitor progress.	Long term – 36 months +
5.3	Advocate for planning changes at state level with partners QCT, allowing for fast-track recreational and agritourism experiences in rural areas.	Long term – 36 months +
5.4	Continue to engage with industry sector groups e.g. Study Tourism, Screen Queensland, Caravan Parks Association Queensland, etc.	Long term – 36 months +
5.5	Advocate for increased investment in protected areas and for nature-based walking, hiking, cycling, food/ drink and rail trails, linking with towns, villages, accommodation and dining.	Long term – 36 months +
5.6	Advocate with our QCT partners for improved inter and intraregional transport connectivity at all levels of government.	Long term – 36 months +



76 Egerton Street
Emerald Q 4720

T +61 7 4982 4386
E enquiries@chdc.com.au
W chdc.com.au

