

Mount Isa City Council News



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Recently, this newspaper ran a story about the delay in the announcement of the \$20 million in State Government funding from the Mount Isa Transition Fund, to assist the community before next year's closure of the copper operations at Mount Isa Mines.

While that funding was celebrated upon its announcement, it has become clear, through Council's Economic Development Plan, that it is not going to be nearly enough. And with the holdup of the announcement, this has meant a holdup with projects – projects that may have already been started are on hold, so as to remain eligible for funding.



Mayor Peta MacRae

Despite not being in a marginal seat, what we need from the State Government is support like that received by Rio Tinto to keep 1000 jobs in Gladstone – tax dollars used to strike a deal that is commercial-in-confidence but has been confirmed to be well in

excess of \$300 million. It makes our community feel very undervalued when only \$20 million is allocated to help with the loss of 1200 jobs. Let me reiterate – the support to Rio Tinto for a job in Gladstone is worth well north of \$300,000 per job, while Mount Isa jobs are worth \$16,660.

The National Bush Summit in Townsville on August 23 highlighted the importance of the bush to both levels of government. The North West Minerals Province is touted as being the key to decarbonisation and will continue to be seen as a cash cow by both levels of government.

Currently the Federal Government

makes \$800 million per year from the Mount Isa area, and the Mount Isa Diversification and Transformation Investment Strategy outlines how returning just two-and-a-half years' worth of that revenue could secure that continued flow to the Federal Government for the next 100 years.

Council has been proactive in investing in this research and strategy to make this as easy as possible for government to understand and fund.

Investment is required by both government and industry, and even if 25% of the primary projects identified in the strategy come to fruition, Mount Isa has a bright and dynamic future.

Economic Diversification Strategy

Council has identified 60 projects, programs and initiatives worth several billion dollars that could be undertaken as part of a long-term economic-diversification strategy for Mount Isa.

The Mount Isa Diversification and Transformation Investment Strategy – focusing on the six key economic pillars of agriculture, critical infrastructure, energy, resources, small and medium enterprises, and tourism – was created in response to last year's announcement that Mount Isa Mines will cease its Mount Isa copper-mining and copper-processing activities by mid-2025, and shut its copper smelter by 2030, leading to the loss of 1200 jobs.

The strategy aims to identify key priorities, to equip Council for high-level advocacy for Federal Government funding opportunities.

Of the 60 identified economic-diversification

projects, programs, and initiatives, the 28 immediate priorities are worth \$2.7 billion alone, and include:

- A new copper and critical-minerals smelter;
- New sulphuric acid production facilities;
- New renewable energy projects;
- New decarbonisation initiatives; and
- New transport and infrastructure projects.

Speaking at the August Ordinary Meeting, Council CEO Tim Rose said it was vital the State and Federal governments stepped up to support Mount Isa.

"Mount Isa sits in one of the geographic zones that's abundant with critical minerals and rare earths. Despite this, we have a declining population that'll be exacerbated by the closure of the copper mine," Mr Rose said.

"Mount Isa City Council cannot of itself do the heavy lifting, and deserves the State and Federal

governments to step up at this particular time to assist us in rising like a phoenix from the ashes of economic despair.

"Mount Isa has always been a heavy contributor to the Australian economy, punching well above our weight.

"But because of our distance from population centres, sometimes we feel like we're just an assumption on the map.

"We've come up with a range of processes that we feel will assist us in becoming what we should become – that is, a powerhouse of the Australian economy. We'd now like to bring these plans to fruition.

"We've got everything we need to be successful.

"This is a start of a significant piece of work that needs to take us on the journey to success."



Drovers' Camp Organisers Praised for Excellent Event

Deputy Mayor Kim Coghlan, and Councillors John Tully, Dan Ballard, and James Coghlan were in Camooweal on Friday, August 23, to help officially open this year's Drovers' Camp Festival.

The annual festival was held from August 23-25.

It featured bush poetry; the Kev Harris Talent Quest; a drovers' invitational lunch; Ringers' Challenge; photography exhibition; whip-cracking competition; damper-making competition; and a bronco-branding competition.

There was also live entertainment from Mother's 2nd Choice, the Rusty Ringers, Jeff Brown, and the Gottani Sisters.

Speaking at the August Ordinary Meeting on August 28, Cr Kim Coghlan said it was a great event.

"The luncheon was sensational – very good tucker. When we had the lunch, they actually had a board with photos of all the volunteers that helped make the event. A big thank you to them," she said.

"The school children were sensational with their poem and song, too."

Cr James Coghlan said it was good to see so many people at the festival.

"It's a part of the year when I always encourage people who have never been to Mount Isa to come, because I call it our mid-year Christmas, because everyone's happy," he said.

"This place really comes alive at rodeo time.

"If you want people to come here and enjoy the best of Mount Isa, that's the time to do it."

Cr Kim Coghlan said the councillors also visited several parts of Camooweal on the day and spoke to the town's residents.

"We looked at the aerodrome, the dump, and the work yard, and just did a drive around the town," she said.

"We had a chance to look at the new health facility that's being built out there, and it was really pleasing to see. We went and spoke to the nurse in charge there. Construction of the accommodation facility is actually ahead of schedule. It's a great new facility for the people of Camooweal."

Wider Shared Pathways to be Built Across Mount Isa

Council has endorsed the construction of wider shared pathways to replace existing footpaths on Fourth Avenue, as well as along Urquhart Street and Tharrapatha Way.

The two Fourth Avenue pathways are a 760m-long section from Twenty-Third Avenue to Eleventh Avenue; and an 850m-long section from Eleventh Avenue to the Fourth Avenue bridge.

The 3.4km-long shared pathway on Urquhart Street and Tharrapatha Way will run from Milne Bay Road to Alma Street, while another 1km section will run from the Barkly Highway to Camooweal Street, via Sulphide and Alma streets.

Culverts on Tharrapatha Way will be widened in preparation for the shared path to be constructed in 2025-26.

At its August Ordinary Meeting on August 28, Council also agreed to apply for funding for the creation of an options analysis and detailed design for:

- **A 325m-long shared pathway from the Fourth Avenue bridge to the Isa Street Bridge;**
- **A 1.23km-long off-road shared path from the Isa Street Bridge to Alma Street – or a shared footpath and/or on-road cycle lane along West Street, from Isa Street to Alma Street;**

Tip Tokens Scheme Continues

Council wishes to advise that, in lieu of physical tip tokens, residents can continue to present their current rates notice, driver's licence, or a utility bill with a residential Mount Isa address to claim free residential refuse disposal from 1 September 2024 to 30 June 2025.

This method of redeeming tip tokens was introduced last year, and Council endorsed the program again at the Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday, August 28.

The tip tokens scheme can be accessed on six (6) occasions per residential property and will be valid until June 30, 2025.

The same conditions will apply as per the previous scheme: free entry into the Waste Management Facility, and valid only for domestic vehicles carrying domestic/residential waste.

This includes:

- Cars
- Box trailers
- Vans
- Utility vehicles.

This means that a car towing a trailer, both carrying waste for disposal, would count as two allocated visits for that property. For more information, please call Council during business hours on 4747 3200.

News In Brief

• On August 29, Mayor Peta MacRae, Deputy Mayor Kim Coghlan, and Councillors John Tully and John Doyle met and sat down with Queensland Shadow Minister for Water, Energy, Regional Development and Manufacturing Deb Frecklington MP, as well as Yvonne Tunney, who is the Liberal National Party's (LNP) candidate for the Traeger electorate for October's state election. The issues discussed included the proposed North West Water entity for Mount Isa and Cloncurry councils; youth crime; the proposed correctional precinct for Mount Isa; and the Waste Levy. Ms Frecklington informed the councillors about the LNP's plans to overhaul the Juvenile Justice Act, should they be elected in October, including "adult time for adult crime", and mandatory 12-month monitoring of children convicted of crimes. Cr MacRae told Ms Frecklington about the costs and challenges Council faces from having to be included in the State Government's Waste Levy.

• **Nominations are now open for the 2024 North Queensland Sportstar Awards. Nominate a local Mount Isa sporting legend today at <https://nqsports.com.au/nq-sportstar-awards>. Local nominations close on Thursday 19 September. Categories are: NQ Sportstar of the Year; NQ Rural & Remote Sportstar of the Year; NQ Junior Sportstar of the Year; NQ Athlete with Disability Sportstar of the Year; NQ Sportstar Sports Team of the Year; NQ Masters Sportstar of the Year; NQ Service to Sport Sportstar of the Year; and the Sporting Excellence Award. The awards night will be held at the Mount Isa Civic Centre on Saturday 26 October.**