

December 2013

Chair's Annual Report

In 2014 SCBC will celebrate 10 years of service to the region and we look forward to many more. In that time we have had to evolve along with the demands of the market and today our advocacy work is more grounded in regionally focussed evidence based research. We have taken on a stronger role as a regional 'thought leader' or probably more 'thought provoker' on issues that impact the regional economy, particularly around investment and employment and we plan to continue to expand this role in 2014.

Broadly speaking, the past decade can be viewed almost as two halves in regional economic terms with the first half experiencing strong economic growth and the second half much slower economic growth and the emergence of several systemic challenges which are still impacting our regional prosperity. In 2014 SCBC will focus on how we can work with government to address these systemic challenges.

At our annual strategy workshop in February 2013 the Board agreed that the focus for CY 2013 would be:

- Delivering on SCBC Economic Directions 2012 strategies which included specific infrastructure projects such as-
 - Kawana Health Precinct
 - Maroochydore PAC
 - Extension of Sunshine Coast Airport
 - Upgrade to Bruce Highway.
- Contributing to regional strategic discussions through evidence-based research.
- Regional leadership around the economy particularly investment and employment.

What we achieved

Delivering on SCBC Economic Directions

Kawana Health Precinct

In July 2013, SCBC conducted a feedback session with the Sunshine Coast Council (SCC), nine (9) months in to the action plan agreed to at a 2012 workshop. The people who participated in the original action planning session were invited to the feedback session as well as others who have involvement in the health precinct project. Status presentations were provided from the key stakeholders including:

- Ms Kimberley Pierce from Ramsey Health on the Sunshine Coast University Private Hospital.
- Professor Mike Hefferan on the SARC from an educational partner.
- Ms Leeza Boyce (TAFE) and Mr Kris McCue on workforce development.
- We focussed on the early signs of the 'ripple effect' with presentations from Ms Nicky Graham Lend Lease, Ms Melanie

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INVITED GUESTS

Michael Hefferan
Pro-Vice Chancellor (Regional Engagement) and Professor Property & Development
(retired)

Jason Laws
Past SCBC Chair, Regional Manager Telstra Qld

Ross Hepworth
V.President CCIQ Sunshine Coast

Jacobson representing the Kawana Chamber of Commerce and Mr Brad Moses from Shadforth.

- Mr Kevin Hegarty provided an update on the Sunshine Coast University Public Hospital.
- Mr Mark McMahon provided an overview of the next stages for Stockland.
- Mr Craig Matheson overviewed general progress against the action plan and the linkages to and status of the Sunshine Coast Economic Development Strategy.

Status

SCBC will continue to work with stakeholders to report to members and more broadly to the community on the expected 'ripple effect' being experienced in the economy.

Maroochydore Principle Activity Centre (PAC)

SCBC met again in 2013 with the Mayor and CEO of SCC regarding concerns being expressed in the business community and from professions such as architects, that the plans for the Maroochydore PAC were underwhelming. We, like several other industry groups, believe this is an opportunity to show leadership in urban development and to build an environment for the future, not the past. We offered our views on what is required in any new commercial precinct and expressed our view that the analysis required to understand where future demand is coming from has still not been adequately addressed. We believe it would be an opportunity lost if the PAC did not anticipate retail and office space trends and supplied outcomes not matching the shift in trends and demand.

SCBC are being regularly contacted by members expressing their disappointment in the plans for the PAC and we would urge the SCC to take any opportunity to work with local groups such as the Association of Architects to ensure the PAC is a development of the future and not the past.

Status

SCBC will continue to work with Council and like-minded organisations to advocate on a progressive grand vision for Maroochydore.

Extension of Sunshine Coast Airport

SCBC welcomed the advancement of the airport upgrade project which has focused on Council progressing an environmental impact statement for the project. We also acknowledged the contribution made by the State Government of three allotments which are critical to the upgrade project.

Status

SCBC will continue to work with Council in 2014 to ensure private and government funding is fast-tracked for this critical project.

Upgrade to Bruce Highway

The SCBC Board added its voice to the Sunshine Coast Daily's petition for an upgrade to the Bruce Highway. We also wrote to Federal and State transport ministers, and met with the Queensland Premier to advocate for the urgent need to upgrade the highway between Caboolture and the Sunshine Coast.

We welcome the pre-election commitment by the new Abbott Government to fund the upgrade of the Bruce Highway.

Status

SCBC will continue to advocate federal and state governments for funding to

be allocated to the upgrade of the Bruce Highway from Caboolture to the Sunshine Coast.

Evidenced Based Research

SCBC commissioned two (2) research project in 2013:

- *SCBC Investment Market Survey, January 2013* which was undertaken to support the combined industry submission on the Draft Planning Scheme. The research was also used in discussions by the taskforce in the formulation of the Sunshine Coast Economic Development Strategy.
- *The Middle Class in the Asia Century: Where should the Sunshine Coast focus?* This research was released in March 2013 at a SCBC forum to over 100 people. It was very well received and stimulated better informed discussion on potential opportunities for the Coast from the growing middle classes in Asian countries.

Forums

SCBC conducted three (3) forums in 2013.

- The first was the release of the **Asia** research held March 2013 mentioned above.
- The second was the **Kawana Health Precinct Action Plan Status Feedback session** which was held in July 2013 and already addressed under Kawana Health Precinct above.
- The third forum was held on 12 November and was intended to put a spotlight on the health, social and economic consequences of youth unemployment. **The Youth Prosperity Forum** attracted over 120 people to the event with a strong follow up by attendees asking to participate in other youth unemployment events. It was evident from the interest evidenced that this is a topic that resonates with our regional business and community services groups and once we will continue to focus on in 2014.

Industry Collaboration and Partnering

SCBC continued to work closely with industry partners and in 2013 through activities such as:

Draft Planning Scheme

SCBC collaborated with several other industry and business groups to submit one coordinated response to the draft Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme and we have continued to work together to monitor the changes and their implementation.

Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS)

SCBC contributed to the REDS through the work of board member, Mr Gwyn Jarrott and through various workshops/meetings held throughout the year.

We support the Economic Development Strategy as a high level statement of the region's direction and look forward to working with the business community to contribute to its successful implementation.

We are already actively involved in implementing the REDS strategies through our collaboration with:

- SCC on the agriculture sector. This time we are putting the spotlight on regional agriculture as a growth pillar in the REDS. We are aiming to hold a feedback session with key stakeholders in February 2014 to discuss the state of agriculture and what can and needs to

be done to ensure it is capable of fulfilling a role as a growth pillar in the future.

- Other business groups to bring clarity to the vision for the PAC and how it will deliver future social, cultural and economic benefit for future generations in a fast modernising world.
- Industry and government to continue to reduce and remove red tape and provide business with quality infrastructure to compete and succeed in their chosen industries.

Summary

As CY 2012 draws to a close I take this opportunity to thank the following Board members for their contribution:

- Mr Gwyn Jarrott for his six years of service and work in 2013 on the REDS and for raising the 'unpopular' issues.
- Professor Mike Hefferan for his four years of service and advice which we look forward to continuing in his role as Invited Guest.
- Ms Sandra Reardon and Mr Barrie Adams for their contribution during 2013.

2014 is a new year and a new decade for SCBC and I look forward as Chair to working with the SCBC Board to continue to work on behalf of Sunshine Coast businesses.

Our success very much depends on our sponsors and members. Unless we are able to increase our membership base and our sponsors in 2014 we will not be able to continue to contribute the research we have in the past three years. This research gives SCBC the fact base to successfully advocate for business on Sunshine Coast. We need the support of industry and large business and urge you to introduce new members, so we can keep up our work on your behalf.

I would like to thank the Sunshine Coast TAFE for their continued support as Patron Sponsor during 2013 and hope we will continue our relationship with Sunshine Coast TAFE into the future. I also thank those members and businesses asked to fund specific events for their generosity in doing so to benefit the region.

Lastly, I would like to thank you our members for your commitment to the Sunshine Coast and the Sunshine Coast Business Council, and the Board for their time, efforts and cooperation over the past 12 months.

Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year.