

ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

Organisation: Broken Hill City Council
Name: Mr Frank Zaknich
Position: General Manager
Date Received: 21/03/2012



Broken Hill City Council

... a safe, vibrant, prosperous and culturally rich City achieved through community leadership and sustainable management.

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FZ:AJ

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March 20, 2012

The Chair
Committee on Economic Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Email – economicdevelopment@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Elliott,

Inquiry into the Establishment of Special Economic Zones

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Economic Development and I extend an invitation for the Committee to hold one of its public hearings in the City of Broken Hill.

Council views the establishment of Special Economic Zones as one part of a whole of government approach to enabling real investment in the regions in particular Broken Hill and the Far West Region of NSW.

Background

The City

The City of Broken Hill (area 179sq km) is the largest regional centre in the western half of New South Wales. It lies in the centre of the sparsely settled New South Wales Outback, close to the South Australian border and midway between the Queensland and Victorian borders. The nearest large population centre is Mildura in Victoria, 300 kms distant to the south on the Murray River. The nearest large city is Adelaide, capital of South Australia, approximately 500 kms to the southwest. Because of its location Broken Hill has strong cultural and historical connections with South Australia. The city area is surrounded by and is a regional service centre to the Unincorporated Area of NSW and adjoining shire and district communities.

The most recent estimates place the population at 20,000. This represents a 30% decline since 1971, mainly related to the decline in the local mining industry. However, in recent years the population has stabilised somewhat and the rate of decline has slowed.

Mining development and exploration activity both in the City and surrounding region has seen resurgence during the past few years around high commodity prices - the cycle

continues as it has in the City for the past 129 years, and remains buoyant for the foreseeable term.

Tourism is widely regarded as a strong performer and not subject to the impacts of the mining industry. Although the industry across NSW has been negatively affected by drought, floods and the exchange rate, a number of national and international factors have helped to increase visitor numbers to Broken Hill and region over recent years with domestic visitors to Outback NSW increasing from 402,000 in 2009 to 439,000 in 2010 (9.2% increase). Domestic visitation in 2011 was slightly lower at 435,000 (down 0.9% on 2010).

Current nomination of Broken Hill for national heritage listing if successful will see "the Hill that changed a nation" rightly recognised for its place and role in the nation's development.

Council infrastructure improvements together with film making, retail and renewable energy developments in and around the City will also mean a vibrant and culturally rich Broken Hill will continue to be a liveable regional city for the longer term.

The Organisation

Broken Hill City Council is an award winning organisation recognised by the local government industry and other levels of government and industry sectors in NSW, nationally and internationally with a range of impressive achievements over many years.

Council currently employs 275 full time, part time and casual employees, giving a total of 235 full time equivalent employees.

Council provides a significant range of services to the city and regional community. Council operates a broad "services to property and people" portfolio of community business and invests heavily in social capital.

Council presently owns or manages infrastructure assets of \$231M and faces juggling competing community needs and priorities within a limited financial resource base.

Council's annual operating budget is approximately \$33M (2011). Income from rates and annual charges is in the order of \$13.5M or 41% of its total annual revenue. The balance of income is primarily from Commonwealth and State Government operating grants and contributions (\$11.2M) and user charges and fees (\$3.7M).

This collectively means that service provision and asset management in particular within this environment is a major challenge for the organisation.

Council's challenge is to continue to adjust to change after years of population decline and effectively manage its community assets - in a demanding environment for provision of services with increasing government and community accountability.

Our Vision

"Broken Hill will be a safe, vibrant, prosperous and culturally rich City through community leadership and sustainable management"

In line with this Vision, the Council aims that Broken Hill in 2030 will be a community that boasts:

- a stable or increasing population;

- a more balanced age structure, especially by retaining young people;
- an expanding economy;
- an increase in employment and education opportunities;
- a safe environment in which to live; and
- a range of services that is comparable with those enjoyed by larger communities, including cultural, community and recreational services.

Council will be an organisation with:

- strong and effective leadership;
- a healthy and sustainable financial position;
- a safe workplace;
- a highly skilled and motivated workforce;
- a set of satisfied customers; and
- cost efficient and effective business processes.

Our Mission

“Council will provide responsive community leadership and high quality services in a sustainable manner to maintain and enhance Broken Hill’s lifestyle”

Terms of Reference

That the Committee inquire into and report on the establishment of special economic zones providing state tax and financial incentives to promote economic growth, employment and investment in regional and rural New South Wales; and any other related matters.

What is Council doing in response?

- i) Council in partnership with the Regional Development Australia Far West Board regularly updates the Far West NSW Growth and Investment Strategy - to provide a clearer picture of the quantum of impact for the region and identifying progress with and action needed on large employment generating projects within the region - (copy attached).
- ii) Council is assisting to facilitate major current and planned infrastructure developments (i.e. BeMax Mineral Sands mining/processing expansion, Silverton Wind Farm development, Menindee Lakes Water Savings Project and Hawson’s Iron Ore project) to progress and has requested the NSW and Commonwealth Government to assist also.
- iii) Council in partnership with the RDA Far West is developing and implementing strategies to retain local employment and residents minimise restructure impacts and carryout ongoing monitoring of agreed program implementation.
- iv) Council has in place its own Business Development Policy in support of investment attraction within the City of Broken Hill and uses this to leverage and partner other levels of government to assist in targeted investment attraction to the development industry. – (copy attached)
- v) Council has completed and commenced implementation of the Integrated Planning and Assessment Framework in Group 1 (2010) and the Broken Hill Community

Strategic Plan 2030 has been developed with key stakeholder and broad community input.

- vi) Council, based on the recently adopted community strategic and asset management plans is progressing a range of community infrastructure maintenance and renewal projects to assist with local employment retention/generation (2010/2011 - \$8.6M and 2011/2012 - \$8.9M - allocated to capital works projects)
- vii) Council is a strong advocate for the roll out of the backhaul black spots infrastructure – enabling NBN rollout and backhaul has been completed in and around Broken Hill and region.
- viii) Council has established in partnership with RDA Far West a Digital Economy Working Group to develop and progress a key enabling Digital Economy Strategy for Broken Hill and the Far West NSW Region.
- ix) Key components of the proposed Broken Hill Digital Economy Strategy align with the National Strategy – including online participation by households, online engagement by businesses and not-for profit organisations, smarter management of the local environment and infrastructure, improved health and aged care, expanded online education, increased teleworking, improved online government service delivery and engagement – as strategic outcomes.
- x) Council is the “front door” for NSW and Australian Government service delivery – Broken Hill City Council has a strong performance record with service delivery for a range of state and commonwealth programs – both within and outside the City boundaries.

What is Council requesting the Committee to consider?

- i) Recommending that the NSW and Australian Governments consider a trial Economic Zone Model for Far West NSW as one part only of a whole of government approach to enabling targeted investment in this region.

The World Bank in its review of “special economic zones” 2008 indicated that

“To a great extent, the fate of zone initiatives has been determined from the outset, by the choices made in the establishment of policy frameworks, incentive packages, and various other provisions and bureaucratic procedures. The experience suggests that maximizing the benefits of zones depends on the degree to which they are integrated with their host economies and the overall trade and investment reform agenda. In particular, when zones are designed to pilot legal and regulatory reforms within a planned policy framework, they are more likely to reach their objectives.”

- ii) Recommending to the NSW and Australian Government additional direct funding to Council through existing programs for targeted local infrastructure renewal works (local roads, footpaths and storm water management projects) to assist to fund additional employment generating projects undertaken by Council as currently identified in Councils adopted Delivery Program. The methodology is not dissimilar to the current Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program and Roads to Recovery funding model and Council submits that the focus should be on additional projects and on additional employment generation - albeit short to medium term and project specific.
- iii) Recommend that a “whole of government” response is provided to these critical issues for the City and region and as a further step support a dedicated NSW Jobs Co-ordinator to the Far West and allocated to RDA Far West.

- iv) Reversing the short-sighted decision to close the Broken Hill Regional Office of NSW Trade and Investment– which has resulted in the loss of two local jobs (and up to 70 jobs in NSW) and impacted not only on the local community in addition to the negative messages it sends to potential investors, risk of others now scaling back, impact on business and regional projects including indigenous developments. Council seeks to understand what the replacement program is and who will deliver it?
- v) Consider streamlining further the regional development model, dismantling further the committee structures and placing and funding the whole regional development function within the charter and responsibility of Local Government linked to a regional planning model and the NSW 2021 Plan. Service delivery can be decentralised by utilising the existing council shopfronts across NSW and in particular Far West NSW.

The savings in administrative costs would appear to be significant and these savings can then be directed to on the ground project works in the region.

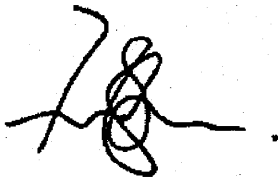
- vi) Consider further contributions to the Broken Hill Community Foundation - Capital Fund. The Foundation was established during the last major mining restructure in the city "to assist Broken Hill to complete the transition from a once great mining icon to a vibrant, diverse and self reliant community". The Foundation's objective is to be a credible, sustainable community capital fund that facilitates employment opportunities and encourages social development. The Foundation is a possible vehicle for allocation of any funding to assist with ongoing restructure of the city's economy.
- (v) Australian Government and NBN Co funding support for partnering with regional, rural and remote Local Governments and Regional Development Australia to assist them to understand develop and progress the enabling digital economy strategies for their particular region.
- (vi) Requesting NBN Co. to include key strategic locations including Broken Hill for priority roll out of the NBN.
- (vii) The key reasons for Broken Hill being a priority location for the NBN rollout are,
 1. Additional telecommunications capacity will assist to improve the commercial viability of major projects that are planned in the region and to attract the service and support businesses to the region that are reliant on telecommunications.
 2. This has a projected additional value added Gross Regional Product benefit of upwards of \$50M for the region over the next 2 years.
 3. Economic Stimulus that will result from the direct investment in the region through the construction phase of the network and ongoing maintenance of the infrastructure.
 4. Additional access to competitive high speed data carrying capacity will improve the pricing service and business opportunities in the region.
 5. From Broken Hill the additional network capacity can be distributed throughout our region, providing a valuable communication asset for mining, primary industries, film, renewable energy projects and other economic development that may not otherwise be possible.

6. Improved ability to develop high quality educational opportunities in the region – connected campuses.
7. Opportunities for more sophisticated and cost effective health service delivery (remote diagnosis, link to remote specialist clinics during local procedures)
8. Improved telecommunications access for clinical placement programs by the Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health for Broken Hill and region.
9. Improving telecommunications access for smaller indigenous communities in the region
10. Improved access and integration of Broken Hill City Council services across a range of remote sites including Airport, Regional Aquatic Centre, Landfill and Youth Services.

Thank you again for the opportunity to assist the Committee by providing information relevant to the Terms of Reference.

Council looks forward to progressing the key issues raised in partnership with the NSW Government to best effect.

Yours faithfully,



FRANK ZAKNICH
GENERAL MANAGER

Major Projects

The reactivation of mining projects in Broken Hill during 2011 that were placed in care and maintenance back in 2008 has resulted in strong investment in the Far West Region and is a positive indicator for future growth.

The expansion of Broken Hill Operation's **Rasp Mine** in Broken Hill was approved by the NSW Government in early 2011 with construction commencing shortly afterwards. It is expected to be operational by mid 2012.

Perilya commenced the redevelopment of the **Potosi Mine** in early 2011 with the mine expected to begin operations in 2013. Strong growth in global silver prices has also resulted in the company considering reopening the **North Mine** with a decision expected in late 2011.

Uranium One's **Honeymoon Mine** commenced operations in July 2011 and has an expected mine life of approximately 10 years.

Carpentaria Exploration is currently undertaking feasibility assessments for the **Hawsons Iron Project**, 60km south-west of Broken Hill. The project has the potential to be a multi-billion dollar investment for the region. This project is part of the Braemar Iron Alliance, which has been formed to facilitate iron ore developments in NSW and SA.

Bemax Resources is currently undertaking feasibility studies into the potential development of their **Atlas – Campaspe** mineral sands deposits located south-east of Broken Hill.

The **Broken Hill Plaza Shopping Centre** is due to commence construction in late 2011 with retail operations to begin in mid-late 2012. The shopping centre will greatly increase the retail sector in the region and support approximately 300 jobs.

The table below provides a summary of the major projects planned for the Far West Region that are currently active and where project data was available. The map (opposite) indicates the location of the mining and energy developments.

Only projects where updated data was made available have been included in the economic impact modelling. This has been done to ensure a conservative estimate of economic impacts while ensuring that projections are based on current and reliable data. Mining and renewable energy projects included in previous editions of the study that have been removed due to lack of available data include Epuron's **Silverton Wind Farm** and Havilah's **Kalkaroo, Mutooroo, Oban** and **Benagerie (Portia)** projects.

Projects that were commenced after 2006 and that are fully operational are also included in the modelling based on their expected operational life. These projects include Bemax Resource's **Snapper Mine**, Pinnacle's **Edwards Pit Project**, Exco's **White Dam Mine** and Broken Hill City Council's **Aquatic Centre** and **Film Studio**.

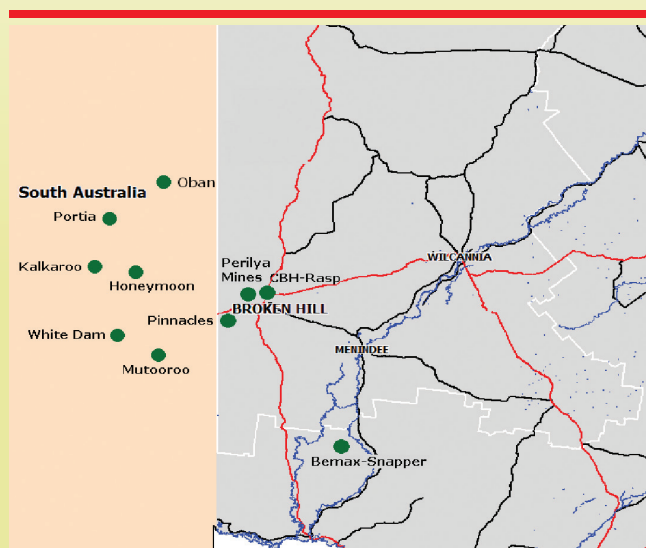


Table 1: Planned Major Projects Included in Economic Impact Modelling

Company	Project	Probability	Construction Phase				Operation Phase				
			Year Start	Total \$m	Region \$m	Jobs	Year Start	Life Years	Total \$m	Region \$m	Jobs
Uranium One	Honeymoon	High	2009	\$138	\$48	120	2011	10	\$32	\$2	85
Leasecorp	Plaza Shopping Centre	High	2011	\$18	\$13	85	2012	40+	\$12	\$4	290
Broken Hill Operations	Rasp	High	2011	\$150	\$45	90	2012	13	\$58	\$35	165
Perilya	Potosi	High	2011	\$43	\$26	90	2013	3	\$60	\$36	90 ^(a)
Bemax Resources	Atlas	Low	2013	\$138	\$28	200	2014	15	\$82	\$21	193
Carpentaria Exploration	Hawsons Iron Ore	Low	2013	\$2,700	\$945	1,000	2016	50	\$600	\$300	700

Growth Indicators

The economic indicators outlined in the table below demonstrate the continued strong performance of the Far West Region's economy. The unemployment rate in the region was recorded at 8.5% in the June Quarter 2011, a 0.3% decline over the last 12 months.

Demand for housing recorded strong growth with a median house price of \$134,000 in the June Quarter 2011. Investment in residential building has been particularly strong with the value of new residential building approvals more than doubling during 2010-11 as a result of confidence returning to the market and the construction of teacher housing units. Non-residential building approvals were a different story, slowing considerably during 2010-11.

The Broken Hill Airport has continued to experience steady growth in passenger numbers due to the increase in services and airline capacity. Over 63,000 passengers passed through the airport in 2010-11, an increase of 4.3% from the previous year.

Table 2: Key Economic Indicators

Indicator	Period	Level	Ann % Chg
Population	2010	22,584	-0.6%
Unemployment Rate	Jun Q 2011	8.5%	-0.3%
New Residential Approvals	2010-11	\$15.2M	128.7%
Commercial Approvals	2010-11	\$11.4M	-57.6%
Median House Price	Mar Q 2011	\$133,500	37.6%
Overnight Visitors ^(a)	2010-11	435,000	-0.9%
Broken Hill Airport RPT	2010-11	63,098	4.3%

Note: All data is valid as of 31st October 2011. RPT – Regular Passenger Transport passengers (a) Outback Tourism Region.

Source: ABS 3218.0, DEEWR SALM, ABS 8731.0, NSW Department of Housing, Tourism NSW, Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics

Tourism Sector

The tourism sector is a key driver of the Far West Region economy. The Far West Region forms part of the Outback NSW Tourism Region that also includes Balranald, Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Walgett and Wentworth.

In the year ending June 2011 there were an estimated 435,000 domestic overnight visitors to Outback NSW, down by 0.9% from the previous year. International visitors represent a small proportion of overnight visitation with 14,200 visitors in the year ending June 2011.

Domestic overnight visitors were estimated to have added \$199M to the Outback NSW economy in the year ending June 2011, an increase of 12.3% from the previous year. The significant increase in the amount of water within the Menindee Lakes is expected to result in increased visitation to the region.

Infrastructure Developments

Investment in infrastructure is strong in the Far West Region with several major projects having recently been completed, in progress and in the planning process including:

- The redevelopment of the Broken Hill Regional Aquatic Centre is in the final stages of construction. The project will complete the \$10 million transformation of the old North Family Play Centre Pool to a multi-faceted Aquatic Centre. The construction of an enclosure for the 25 metre pool and a new indoor hydrotherapy pool are centrepieces of the development.
- The Broken Hill Airport runway is scheduled to be resealed in late 2011 to ensure safe future air traffic operation.
- Development planning of a Heavy Vehicle Haulage Road to improve the movement of heavy vehicles in and around Broken Hill.

Water Availability

During the last decade, the Menindee Lakes have been dry as a result of the prolonged drought in the Far West Region. Major rainfall in the catchment area led to a significant inflow of water starting in early 2010 resulting in the lakes reaching full capacity in late 2010. The increased availability of water in the region is likely to have contributed to the significant impact on the economy including agriculture and tourism.

The availability of water improves the profitability of farming with major agricultural producers such as Tandou looking to increase irrigated cropping in the coming years. The Menindee Lakes have continued to receive inflows through winter ensuring water availability for the 2012 and 2013 crops. As a result of water availability, Tandou has been able to increase its productive area with the rotational planting of 2,400 hectares of winter cereal crop. The company currently employs approximately 55 workers.

The availability of water in the Menindee Lakes is expected to result in significant growth in tourism visitation to the Far West Region. The Menindee Lakes are an iconic ecological asset of national significance and have the potential to support a vibrant tourism sector built around bird watching, indigenous tourism, ecotourism and recreation. The water security has the potential to facilitate investment in tourism operations in Menindee and the surrounding region which could create job opportunities.

Economic Impacts

The economic impact modelling assesses projected impacts of major projects on the Far West Region from the base year of 2006 used in the original study. The region recorded economic and employment growth in 2007 and 2008 as construction commenced on several projects, before declining in 2009 as the mining industry contracted significantly as a result of existing mining companies resizing operations in late 2008.

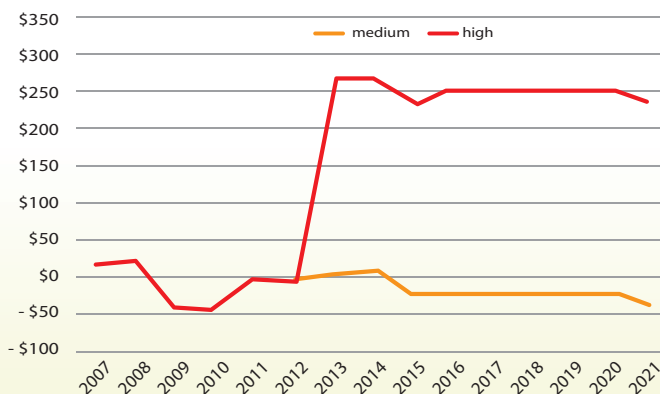
In previous years, the analysis has included a low, medium and high scenario based on the probability of certain projects proceeding. This year, all projects are either in progress (operational or under construction) or in the feasibility stage - meaning there is considerable uncertainty regarding their future development. Therefore, only two scenarios have been included this year comprising a medium scenario with the projects that are operational or under construction and a high scenario with all proposed projects with available expenditure and employment estimates.

The economic impacts in gross regional product (GRP) for the Far West Region of major projects in 2012 are expected to almost negate the negative impacts caused by the mine closures in 2008 (see **Figure 1**).

Employment in the Far West Region is projected to increase by up to 226 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions in 2012 based on the medium scenario. The employment breakdown includes 143 direct jobs and 83 flow-on jobs with the total representing growth of 2.3% from 2006 (see **Figure 2**).

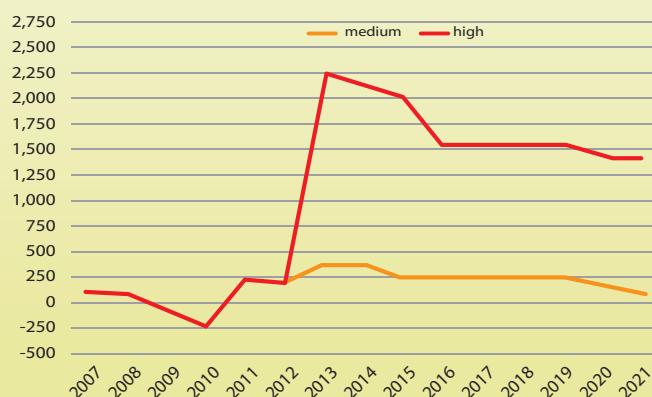
Table 3 below provides an overview of projected changes in employment by industry from the base in 2006. Employment in the mining sector is expected to partially recover in the medium term as new projects commence, though not to the 2006 level, unless downsized operations recommence full operations. In the short term, the construction sector is projected to record growth with the development of new projects, while the highest flow-on employment growth is expected in the retail trade and arts and recreation sectors.

Figure 1: Projected Change in GRP (\$m)



Note: Change from 2006. Scenarios based on the assumed probability of major projects commencing.

Figure 2: Projected Change in Employment (FTE)



Note: Change from 2006. Scenarios based on the assumed probability of major projects commencing.

**Table 3: Projected Additional FTE Employment
(Medium Scenario)**

Sector	Report Base Year	Additional Employment				Avg. Annual %
	2006	2011	2016	2021	2006 to 2021	
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	730	4	1	-1	-0.01%	
Mining	655	-186	-66	-151	-1.73%	
Manufacturing	376	17	-4	-9	-0.15%	
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	229	3	-1	-1	-0.03%	
Construction	497	273	-3	-4	-0.05%	
Wholesale Trade	298	6	-1	-2	-0.05%	
Retail Trade	1,678	16	290	285	1.05%	
Accommodation and Food Services	652	10	0	-3	-0.03%	
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	390	9	0	-2	-0.04%	
Information Media and Telecommunications	99	5	1	-1	-0.06%	
Financial and Insurance Services	164	9	-1	-3	-0.12%	
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	99	6	0	-1	-0.06%	
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	209	31	0	-6	-0.21%	
Administrative and Support Services	292	1	0	0	0.00%	
Public Administration and Safety	834	1	0	-1	0.00%	
Education and Training	787	6	1	-2	-0.01%	
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,439	6	0	-2	-0.01%	
Arts and Recreation Services	143	23	50	30	1.26%	
Other Services	456	8	0	-3	-0.04%	
Total	10,027	249	266	124	0.08%	

Strategy Update

Strategy/Action	12 Month Progress Report	Planned Actions for Next 12 Months
Promote Knowledge Development & Dissemination <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify information requirements for government, business and investors. 2. Identify information/knowledge gaps. 3. Consult and involve stakeholders in data/information collection. 4. Collaborate with partner organisations to collate/prepare required data. 5. Collaborate with partner organisations to disseminate information. 	<p>An efficient e-Newsletter capability developed. All key contacts for region have been identified. Social media platform development to be completed by calendar year end. Key stakeholders fully consulted for input on submissions to Governments.</p>	<p>Regular, efficient communications will continue with all key stakeholders. Submissions and other forms of information feedback to governments will continue. Targeted contacts will continue with market participants as appropriate.</p>
Facilitate Industry and Community Engagement <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inform, involve and collaborate with key stakeholders. 	<p>Through RDA Far West and Digital Economy and Skills Working Groups.</p>	<p>Key strategies in place and implementation commenced.</p>
Build Community Capacity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess community capacity in terms of skills gaps. 2. Facilitate community workshops and seminars. 	<p>Working Group established. Stakeholders consulted.</p>	<p>Ongoing data collection, analysis. Ongoing partnership with Federal and State agencies, stakeholders.</p>
Support and Assist Existing Business <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult with local business owners regarding opportunities and issues. 2. Develop strategies to capitalise on opportunities and mitigate threats. 3. Build linkages and networks between local businesses. 	<p>Ongoing through RDA Far West, Chamber of Commerce and Digital Economy and Skills Working Group.</p>	<p>Targeted actions to be pursued during 2012 and beyond.</p>
Attract and Encourage New Businesses <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Profile current business base and identify target businesses and needs. 2. Identify and set aside specific requirements for target businesses. 3. Market to target sectors. 4. Facilitate relocation activities. 	<p>Ongoing through RDA Far West, BHCC, Digital Economy and Skills Working Group</p> <p>Delegations to potential funding bodies</p>	<p>Update Profile Ready to commence</p> <p>Planned approaches to market participants during 2012 and beyond in targeted areas</p>
Promote Economic Development and Diversification <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify specific economic development initiatives. 2. Engage with relevant stakeholders. 3. Review regional economic plan. 	<p>Ongoing through RDA Far West, BHCC, Digital Economy and Skills Working Group</p>	<p>RDA Far West and all regional stakeholders are engaged in Regional Plan activities during 2012 and beyond</p>
Facilitate Infrastructure Provision and Development <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify critical infrastructure gaps. 2. Work with partners to develop strategies for infrastructure development. 3. Develop and implement mitigation/development strategies. 	<p>Airport Master Plan</p> <p>Ongoing through RDA Far West, Digital Economy and Skills Working Group</p>	<p>Natural gas feasibility; integrated transport study to be pursued.</p>
Ensure Land Use Efficiency and Resource Protection <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify potential land needs. 2. Engage with the NSW Department of Lands regarding tenure. 3. Develop Draft LEP for Broken Hill City. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>LEP rezoning completed</p> <p>LEP rezoning completed</p> <p>Completion by July 2012</p>
Attract and Retain Skilled Labour <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the availability of labour. 2. Attraction of skilled persons to the region. 3. Consider overseas recruitment options. 4. Improve the effectiveness of the local training system. 5. Increase training investment by the private sector. 6. Increase indigenous participation in the workforce. 7. Support skills strategies from other levels of government. 	<p>Direct discussions with mining, agriculture and other employers in region occur regularly with RDA Far West NSW. Training and education service providers including schools, TAFE and Robinson College are kept informed of emerging industry skills needs. Skilled migration applications to the region are facilitated by RDA Far West NSW. During 2010-11, 14 applications for jobs in the region were processed.</p>	<p>An education, jobs and skills coordinator has been appointed for the region (Dubbo-based) and maintains regular contact with RDA Far West NSW and training and education representatives. A consultancy in the region funded by the NSW Government has recommended future employment facilitation actions that can progress during 2012 and beyond. These include actions to (a) reduce unemployment (b) increase links between training and employment (c) target training to meet industry needs as needed and (d) improve local services in remote towns.</p>
Attract Investment and Financing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a working group to identify strategic investment opportunities. 2. Develop website for investment promotion and conduct developer tours. 3. Provide the required management support for the project. 	<p>RDA Far West NSW Regional Plan 2011-21 developed.</p> <p>Website improvements ongoing; digital economy strategy being developed for region.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Target key areas highlighted in the Plan.</p> <p>Digital economy strategy for Far West NSW and Broken Hill City Council will be completed and implemented during 2012 and beyond.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Contacts and Support

For further information please contact:
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www.rdafarwestnsw.org.au



Profile compiled by AECgroup. Published by Regional Development Australia Far West NSW and Broken Hill City Council in November 2011. RDA Far West NSW, Broken Hill City Council and AECgroup would like to thank all organisations contributing to this profile.



Purpose

To contribute to a viable cultural and economic base within the City and surrounding region that contributes to a prosperous economy and a vibrant lifestyle.

Scope

Broken Hill City Council's role in economic development is to provide leadership and direction, partnering with other agencies to facilitate, encourage and maximise sustainable development opportunities within the City of Broken Hill and surrounding region.

General Principles

Council facilitates business partnerships, participates in local and regional networks and undertakes co-operative research and planning in the identification of business opportunities.

In order to encourage diverse and innovative business initiatives in the City and surrounding region, Council may offer incentives and support through the business development policy.

The policy aims to provide appropriate incentives and support to:-

- An existing business, located within the City, to expand its operations.
- An existing business, located outside the City, to relocate or establish within the City
- A new business to establish within the City

in the expectation that the business will directly or, in some agreed circumstances, indirectly provide increased employment opportunities for residents of Broken Hill.

4. Types of Assistance

Council in partnership with other community economic development agencies provides information to industry about developing/relocating to the Council area and /or region including facilitation with existing local businesses and identification of possible business locations. Various State and Federal Government assistance programs may also be available to some businesses to encourage expansion and relocation, information on these programs is also available through Council and from the various locally based community economic development agencies.

In addition to this support Council may, on application, consider the following measures as potential incentives for business development.

- Assistance in preparing applications for State and Federal Government support
- Hosting visits by key personnel (including extended visits)
- Meeting the cost of relocation expenses for key personnel
- Waiving or reducing the Council component of Development Application fees
- Providing land or buildings at a reduced rental or at cost or under a lease/purchase, delayed settlement or terms purchase arrangement
- Facilitating the release of land
- Providing direct financial incentives, linked to the cost of establishment or relocation
- Council rate holidays
- The provision of infrastructure (that would otherwise be met by the industry/commerce)
- The provision of council plant for works in kind
- The provision of assistance to engage consultants or business planning advice

These measures can be considered by Council singularly or in combination on a case by case basis dependent on the merits of each case.

5. Determination of Merit

- The viability of the business, as presented in a business plan.
- Type of development and potential for the development to encourage expansion of existing businesses and infrastructure or in-migration of other businesses.
- Number of employees, direct and flow on which the business will develop/provide.
- Benefit to the community including an identified need for the businesses or services in the Far West NSW Economic Development Plan or related strategic planning activities.

6. Applications for Assistance

Applications for assistance must be made in accordance with the business development procedure.

Associated Policies & Documents

Policy Details

Key Direction	2, Our Economy
Objective :	To provide leadership and direction in economic and community development and facilitate, encourage and maximise sustainable development opportunities within the city
Function:	Economic and Community Development
Strategy :	Take a proactive and where necessary an entrepreneurial role in the creation of economic development partnerships and opportunities
File Reference No.:	11/58
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Reviewed:	July 27, 2011
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Next Review Due:	July 2013
Responsible Officer:	General Manager