

5. Greater Brisbane Region, Australia

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5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Greater Brisbane Region, also referred to in this chapter as South East Queensland, is Australia's third largest metropolitan region. It consists of 12 local governments (Figure 5.1) with Brisbane, as state capital of Queensland, being the largest city. The region has a population of 3.3 million, which represents 70 percent of the state's population living in only 1.3 percent of the state's total area²⁰⁵. Over the past four decades, it has been Australia's fastest growing metropolitan region.

The rapid development of the region has generated many economic and social benefits to its citizens and business, but the rates of urban and population growth have made it challenge for governments to protect environmental assets and to keep up with delivery of community services and essential infrastructure. A focus on growth management has made it one of the best managed metropolitan regions in Australia. Greater Brisbane has been listed several times as one of the world's most liveable cities. However, the economic development of the region has lagged behind the metropolitan regions of Sydney and Melbourne due to weaknesses in the competitiveness and structure of the economy.

Photo 5.1 Brisbane Central Business District (CBD)



Credit: Brisbane Marketing.

To address these weaknesses, state and local governments have embarked on economic reforms, massive infrastructure projects and adopted a model of collaborative governance and metropolitan planning.²⁰⁶ There is a high level of engagement in partnerships and network initiatives involving economic, social and environmental planning, public-private sector partnerships and urban renewal projects which are global best practice. Several of the cities that make up the region, especially Brisbane²⁰⁷ and Gold Coast, are among the best managed local governments to be found anywhere in the Asia-Pacific region.

The state and local governments have been active in developing trade enterprise areas, such as the Australia Trade Coast, and initiatives to make the region more competitive in attracting investment, firms and migrants. However, the region has struggled to develop advanced service and technology-based manufacturing. Improving productivity and strengthening endogenous growth industries are significant continuing challenges for the development of the region's economy.

This chapter explores the development of the Greater Brisbane Region from an economic, physical, social, and environmental management and governance perspective. There are many examples of good practice sustainable city development which provide excellent models for adaptation in other parts of the Asia-Pacific region. Some of these are presented as case studies of good practice partnerships in the latter part of the chapter. They include initiatives to position Brisbane as a new world city and to strengthen cultural and knowledge linkages between cities and communities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Figure 5.1 Twelve Local Governments of the Greater Brisbane or Southeast Queensland (SEQ) Region



Source: Authors based on Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Queensland Government (DSDIP), SEQ Regional Plan Review (Brisbane, DSDIP 2014).

5.1.1 Population Growth

The population of South East Queensland has grown from 1.2 million in 1976 to 3.3 million in 2015, an average of over 55,000 people per year and a growth of 175 percent over four decades. In 2013, Brisbane City's estimated resident population was 1.13 million people, living in a land area of 1,367 square kilometres and with a population density of 827 people per square kilometre. Brisbane City has continued to grow steadily based on the infill development of urban renewal areas and apartment towers in the Brisbane CBD. Analysis of recent Australian Bureau of Statistics figures shows that Brisbane City's share of the region's population is declining as urban areas such as the Gold Coast, Ipswich and the Sunshine Coast have experienced higher growth rates based on new greenfield urban development.

Over the past decade, population growth in South East Queensland has been more variable (ranging from 41,000 to 76,000 per annum) and has slowed relative to two decades ago. However, the latest state government projections show the population growing to 5.5 million by 2041.²⁰⁸

5.2 ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

As with population growth, the Greater Brisbane economy has expanded to be worth an estimated USD 170 billion or just under two-thirds of the gross regional product (GRP) of Queensland's economic output²⁰⁹ (Table 5.1). By 2031, its economy is estimated to be worth over USD 217 billion.²¹⁰ The state's economy is driven by the construction and infrastructure sectors. Brisbane is well placed to leverage this to ensure a diversified, sustainable economy and drive future growth. The current resources and energy sector pipeline valued at USD 165 billion²¹¹ will see the city benefit from substantial investment in the mining, gas and infrastructure sectors.

Table 5.1 Key Economic Facts – Greater Brisbane

	Brisbane City #	Greater Brisbane ^
Value of the economy (June 2014)	n.a.	USD 170 billion*
Estimated residential population	1,131,191 (2013)	3,300,000 (2015)
GDP per capita (2012)		USD 62,175
Employment (April 2014)	811,600	1,141,600
Unemployment rate (April 2014)	5.1%	5.9%
Number of businesses (June 2012)	115,472	189,244

Refers to the Brisbane City Council local government area.

^ Refers to the Greater Capital City area identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which includes Brisbane City Council, Logan City Council, Redland City Council, Ipswich City Council and Moreton Bay Regional Council.

*Source: Brisbane City Council estimate.

5.2.1 Structure and Change in the Economy

Over the decade from 2000 to 2010, the structure of the region’s economy has experienced significant change (Table 5.2). In terms of the proportion of gross regional product (GRP) for 2010/11, the largest contributions came from manufacturing (9.4%), financial and insurance services (9.6%), construction (8.1%) and professional, scientific and technical services (9.2%). Over the decade, the largest contributions to GRP came from the services industries (i.e. finance and insurance services, healthcare and social assistance). Transport is also an important sector of the economy as South East Queensland has a large and diverse transport network that reflects the complex nature of travel needs and behaviours of its residents.

Structural changes have occurred in the region’s economy over the past decade, namely the significant and continued decline in the manufacturing sector and growth in the service sectors. While the region has not been a major centre for heavy manufacturing, as in the rest of Australia, the structural reforms of the 1980s and 1990s resulted in the offshoring of many industries and subsequent loss of jobs. The region has adjusted to this reasonably well, but the job growth has been in service sectors of the economy, which have not been high value-adding, and have occurred mainly in retail, tourism, health and education services. There has been significant endogenous growth in the GRP of professional, scientific and technical services – up 2.5 percent – from 2000/01 to 2010/11. This sector continues to grow in the fields of bionics, neurological sciences and avionics.

Table 5.2 Structure of the Brisbane Region Economy, 2000/01–2010/11

Economic Sectors ²¹²	Proportion of GRP 2000/01	Proportion of GRP 2010/11	Change
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.7	0.3	-0.4
Mining	0.9	1.4	0.5
Manufacturing	12.7	9.4	-3.4
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	1.7	2.3	0.5
Construction	6.8	8.1	1.3
Wholesale trade	6.9	6.8	-0.2
Retail trade	6.3	5.5	-0.8
Accommodation and food services	2.7	2.2	-0.5
Transport, postal and warehousing	7.9	7.7	-0.2
Information media and telecommunications	4.0	2.5	-1.5
Financial and insurance services	8.3	9.6	1.3
Rental, hiring and real estate services	2.5	2.7	0.2
Professional, scientific and technical services	6.7	9.2	2.5
Administrative and support services	2.3	2.6	0.3
Public administration and safety	6.4	6.9	0.5
Education and training	4.9	4.3	-0.6
Healthcare and social assistance	6.5	7.0	0.5
Arts and recreation services	0.9	0.6	-0.3
Other services	2.7	2.0	-0.7
Ownership of dwellings	8.0	8.9	1.0
Gross	100.00	100.00	

Source: Government of Queensland, Australia, Queensland Regional Database 2013.

5.2.2 Regional Exports and Imports

The Port of Brisbane is Australia's third busiest port and the nation's fastest growing container port. Brisbane Airport is also the third-largest airport in Australia with over 25 million passengers annually, of which almost 5 million are international passengers. An analysis of exports and imports for Brisbane City has been done by the National Institute for Economic and Industry Research (Figure 5.2). This shows manufacturing contributing over USD 14.25 billion to the city's exports in 2011, followed by business services (USD 9 billion) and transport (USD 4.75 billion). The tourism and education sectors were estimated at USD 3.9 billion and USD 2.2 billion respectively. The Institute also did projections for the growth of exports by industry sectors for 2031. The largest percentage increases in exports are expected to be in the business services, transport, health, and community sectors, and this is expected to flow on to tourism and advanced business services. No data is available on the destination of exports at the city level or transshipments via the ports of Sydney or Melbourne.

Figure 5.2 Export Value By Industry, Brisbane Local Government Area, 2011–2031



Note: Mining Services are classified under Business Services; Education and Tourism exports generate exports across all industry sectors marked with a *.

Source: National Institute for Economic and Industry Research 2009.

Data on the type and origin of regional imports and invisibles related to investment capital from domestic and international sources are not available. The region’s ports and road–rail transport systems have become significant import/export hubs. Although the extent to which the region’s share of imports is consumed locally or re-exported to other parts of the state or other states and internationally is unknown, it is significant, especially the import of food, household consumer items and business and financial services. Machinery for the mining and agriculture sectors and large numbers of automobiles are re-exported from the region. The fact that statistics on regional trade by industry sector are not easily constructed makes it difficult to identify opportunities for developing import substitution and increasing trade linkages between cities. With trade ties between the Greater Brisbane Region and other metropolitan regions growing, but little data available, the opportunities to value-add to existing supply chains is a significant knowledge impediment to the development of the economy.

5.2.3 City/Region Economic Competitiveness

Brisbane has not been evaluated by studies conducted by international research organizations like the Economist Intelligence Unit, Brookings and PwC, so it is difficult to evaluate its competitiveness relative to similar cities like Seattle or Vancouver. The City of Brisbane was ranked 3rd among Australian cities in a competitiveness index by the ANZSOG Institute for Governance.²¹³ This study used three primary benchmark indicators, namely, productivity, sustainability and liveability, measured by 20 sub-

indicators. In another study measuring sustainability and competitiveness, Brisbane ranked 2nd among Australian cities.²¹⁴ This study makes an important contribution by injecting sustainability into the urban competitiveness debate, something the Greater Brisbane Region has taken into consideration in developing recent policies on urban development. There is a need for the Greater Brisbane Region to develop a more international understanding of its competitiveness and to benchmark the region against similar metropolitan regions, such as Vancouver or Auckland, with which the city competes for international trade and investment. Developing a better understanding of the competitiveness of the region's business and trade dynamics, strategic infrastructure and governance, will be critical to developing strategies for building on the competitiveness it already has in sustainability and liveability.

5.2.4 Investment Environment

Greater Brisbane offers investors opportunities across various expanding industry and market sectors. These include tourism; clean technologies and renewable energy; infrastructure; construction; and the energy and resources sectors. A number of well-known domestic and international mining and energy companies are located in Brisbane, with operations in the area as well as globally.

Across Brisbane, industrial precincts are emerging as integrated business facilities supporting vertical business integration, with facilities located and designed to integrate multiple forms of transportation (including air, rail, sea and road). The challenge is to develop these alternate models for industrial hubs and to ensure that funding for vital transport infrastructure stays well ahead of expected demand. The Australia Trade Coast is a dynamic trade and industry precinct. Located 6km from the Brisbane CBD, it includes the Port of Brisbane and Brisbane Airport. In 2013, an estimated 124,000 square metres of new development was earmarked for delivery, a 25 percent increase on the previous year. To the city's west, industry growth was estimated at 99,900 square metres of new development in 2013, while 100,000 square metres was forecast for Brisbane's southern area.²¹⁵

One consequence of investment in logistics, transportation depots, fabrication and assembly, storage, and a range of large industrial land uses along and adjacent to major transport routes, is metropolitan restructuring. This presents significant investment opportunities for development and gentrification, including in recently vacated inner-city areas. Renewal opportunities include residential, cultural precincts, retail, showrooms, business support, leisure, and mixed employment centres.

The Queensland government has signalled a clear commitment to Brisbane being recognized as a unique and vibrant new world city, in line with Brisbane City Council's vision. The Queensland government is putting its support behind projects (such as the Queen's Wharf precinct) that will attract visitors and investment, reconnect the activity of the Brisbane City centre to the river, preserve and celebrate Brisbane's heritage, and deliver high-quality public spaces. Opportunities exist for integrated development proposals from the private sector within the CBD that incorporate a mix of new uses (for example six-star hotels, retail, restaurant and entertainment zones, theatre and convention facilities, and new open space).²¹⁶

5.2.5 Innovation and Business Support

Krimmer classifies Brisbane as an innovation region, due to its high level of creativity, research and development, and entrepreneurship; a business environment that encourages and enables business innovation; a strong base of individuals and firms developing new or improved products, services and systems; and values that support, nurture and celebrate business innovation.²¹⁷ The city has world-standard innovations and innovators, representing a major strength for the city.

Innovation anchors include Australia's largest city council; Australia's growth airport, Brisbane Airport; eight research-intensive hospitals; international-standard universities; research and commercialization precincts; and diverse international-standard knowledge banks. Innovation precincts include aviation, the creative industries, eco-sciences, health, information and communications technology (ICT), food sciences, technology parks and mining technology.

Support for business investment includes Australia's low tax burden (tax to GDP ratio), which is the fifth lowest of all 34 OECD economies. In 2010, Australia's tax revenue as a share of GDP was 25.6 percent, well below the OECD average of 33.8 percent.²¹⁸ Queensland's payroll tax rate of 4.75 percent is the lowest of all Australia's mainland states. Combined with a threshold of USD 1.1 million, this ensures a minimal state tax burden on business.

The Queensland government and Brisbane City Council both promote a pro-business economic environment, with investors having a safe, long-term investment climate within a stable and resilient economy that responded well to the global financial crisis. Innovation and knowledge-based industries are proactively supported in Queensland, and Brisbane is attracting large numbers of international migrants. This has resulted in a culturally diverse community: a city of many nations. Of all Queensland's local government areas, Brisbane has the highest proportion of residents born overseas (28.3%), followed by the Gold Coast (27.9%) and Logan (26%).

Brisbane and South East Queensland more broadly is an important service hub with specialized skills in professional services (e.g. ICT and biomedical services). With major energy and gas fields located inland, there are also opportunities to serve industries in the region by providing mining services and leveraging on its mining technology capabilities.

The Queensland government has made a significant investment in R&D and the knowledge economy through the Smart State Strategy with over USD 3.6 billion invested since 1998 to support 40 new research institutes and hundreds of research projects. It aims to continue support for innovation and business growth. Three world-class universities, namely, the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology and Griffith University, are located in Brisbane and are highly regarded for graduate quality and R&D initiatives. However, a closer look at R&D investment as a percentage of gross state product in 2008 shows that Queensland's investment (1.59%) lags behind the Australian Capital Territory (4.11%), South Australia (2.38%), New South Wales (2.44%) and Victoria (2.05%).²¹⁹ Recent data show that business investment accounts for 60 percent of total R&D in Queensland, while expenditure by the Queensland government accounts for 7 percent. If Brisbane is to realize the ambition of becoming a world-class innovative

global city, then part of the challenge is to further the R&D agenda through greater and more diversified investment.

5.2.6 Economic Development Planning

The Greater Brisbane Region has developed a series of economic development plans over several decades. The Brisbane Economic Development Plan 2012–31 outlines a vision and priorities needed to support the city’s economic development to 2031.²²⁰ Key features include strengthening Brisbane’s business and cultural links with the Asia-Pacific region and its integration into the rapidly growing digital economy.

The region has, and is continuing to take, significant steps in the current revision of the regional plan in the identification and development of industry clusters, recognizing the importance of these in the creation of new jobs and industries in the region. Industry clusters that are showing significant development and growth prospects in the region are:

- Creative arts, including visual arts, movie and television, and music
- Aviation and aerospace
- Logistics and freight distribution
- Food
- Marine industries
- Information and telecommunications technology services
- Neuro- and, bio-technologies, especially genomics.

Brisbane has recently produced a new economic development action plan for the region, called Brisbane 2022, to support its New World City aspirations.²²¹ The plan is focused on building links with the APEC region and includes the following vision:

*In 2031, Brisbane will be a top ten lifestyle city globally and its high-performing economy will be characterised by deep business and cultural links with the Asia-Pacific region.*²²²

The plan recommends focusing on eight specific industry sectors that will have the biggest impact in transitioning Brisbane’s current economic profile to be more ‘global-facing’. These industry sectors are:²²³

- Knowledge-based and corporate services
- Accommodation and visitor economy
- Higher and international education
- Energy and resources
- Creative and digital
- Property development and construction
- Advanced manufacturing
- Food and agribusiness

5.2.7 Employment

South East Queensland is the employment hub for Queensland. In 2012, South East Queensland accounted for 1.6 million jobs or 70 percent of the state's employment. By 2041, it is estimated that an additional 1 million jobs will be created in South East Queensland.²²⁴ Table 5.3 shows recent employment growth and decline in three major industry sectors.

The Brisbane CBD is becoming a major centre for professional and technical services for Queensland, and employment opportunities in the services sector is set to rise further with the expansion of services to the mining industry. At the same time, heavy and light manufacturing has declined, which also means fewer employment opportunities for less skilled workers. Based on these trends, there will likely be excess supply at the lower skill levels, and excess demand at the higher levels.²²⁵ Employment opportunities exist in the health and community services areas. Other opportunities are in the cultural and creative industries areas in suburbs which are becoming important employment and micro business centres.

Table 5.3 Employment Trends in Greater Brisbane

Unemployment rate	4.0% (2008/09)	5.8% (2012/13)	1.8% increase
Top three industries by employment			
Healthcare and social assistance	87,336 (2006 census)	112,390 (2011 census)	5.2% per annum
Retail trade	90,585 (2006 census)	90,482 (2011 census)	- 0.0%
Manufacturing	85,017 (2006 census)	79,106 (2011 census)	-1.4% per annum

Source: Queensland Government, *The Queensland Plan – Regional Snapshot Brisbane* (2013)

By 2031, employment growth is expected to be greatest in the business services sector, including knowledge-intensive technical, professional and consulting services, with high employment growth also in health, community and education services. Hand-in-hand with the growth in knowledge-based jobs is the opportunity for new types of infrastructure (e.g. high-speed broadband) to increase business profitability and performance. Apart from the Brisbane CBD, those areas of South East Queensland expected to benefit from high employment growth include the Australia Trade Coast, Ipswich, Southport, South Brisbane, Maroochydore, Coomera, Caloundra, Bowen Hills, Woolloongabba and Toowoomba.²²⁶ All have locational advantages, access to skilled labour, access to key transport routes, access to research and knowledge institutes and proximity to suppliers, competitors and customers.

Despite this employment growth throughout the South East Queensland region, there is an increasing distance and mismatch between the location and concentration of employment in Brisbane City and the location of the residential population. This increases commuting distances and traffic congestion, increases transaction costs for businesses, reduces economic productivity, increases the need to build new transport infrastructure, and decreases liveability for South East Queensland residents. This locational mismatch also exists in other metropolitan areas in Australia.²²⁷

5.2.8 Strategic Infrastructure and Asset Management

Over the past decade, the state government, Brisbane City Council and other local governments have invested heavily in strategic infrastructure in South East Queensland. This investment has been linked to the desired outcomes of the South East Queensland Regional Plan²²⁸ and has been critical to the region's prosperity and future-proofing its water, energy and waste management needs. The region's strategic infrastructure includes not only its roads and municipal services systems but its education, health, culture and recreation and knowledge facilities. This investment has raised state government debt levels which will limit the capacity of the state to invest in future infrastructure. Much of the investment in strategic infrastructure has been achieved through a wide range of partnerships involving government (at three levels) and the private sector.

5.2.9 Logistics Infrastructure

Logistics infrastructure in Greater Brisbane is concentrated around Brisbane Airport and the Port of Brisbane, both located within the Australia Trade Coast (Photo 5.2).

Brisbane Airport is the hub of the aviation and aerospace industry in Queensland. As one of Australia's fastest-growing freight and passenger airports, there is no doubt that it is vital to the long-term economic growth of the state and Australia as a whole. By 2033–2034, the airport will contribute an estimated USD 13.4 billion to the Australian economy, facilitate around USD7.6 billion in tourism activity, and support more than 88,000 jobs Australia-wide.²²⁹

The construction of a new runway and taxiway system at a cost of USD 1.3 billion will strengthen the Greater Brisbane economy and provide jobs and new opportunities for industry and the wider community. Building a new runway is not without environmental challenges, and the public consultation process resulted in the inclusion of new water use reduction strategies, an onsite solar energy plant, and a 285-hectare biodiversity zone within the precinct.

The Port of Brisbane, located at the mouth of the Brisbane River, has greatly expanded its area by reclaiming land from Moreton Bay. It is one of the fastest growing multi-cargo ports in Australia and the nation's third-busiest container port. Annually it services approximately 2,500 ships and handles more than USD 50 billion worth of trade (primarily to and from Asia). Around 95 percent of Queensland's containers pass through the port, along with almost 100 percent of Australia's meat exports. Brisbane is the only Australian port with three stevedoring operations that utilize automated container handling equipment. This is a key strength for supporting the logistics supply chain.

Photo 5.2 Port of Brisbane, Brisbane Airport and the Australia Trade Coast Area



Credit: Brisbane Marketing.

The challenge for the Port of Brisbane is to continue to grow and develop to meet future demand. With 95 percent of container freight accessing the port being transported by road, a sustainable long-term rail freight transport solution is needed to reduce freight-induced road traffic congestion and quality-of-life impacts. Compared to roads, little has been spent on improving rail network capacity. This does not bode well for the state and local government road systems which in many parts are not built to accommodate large freight vehicles. Added to this are community concerns regarding pollution, noise and quality of life.

The Port of Brisbane has a large bank of land that presents trade and development opportunities into the future, without the need to expand into urban areas. A key strength of the Port is its proximity to the Australia Trade Coast and Brisbane Airport, making it a key transport hub both for the state and Australia as a whole.

5.2.10 Transport Infrastructure

Transport infrastructure is a key strategic element for the sustainability and prosperity of South East Queensland. Its provision is primarily the responsibility of the state government, but all levels of government are involved and so is the private sector through PPP projects. Funding for asset renewal and maintenance and constructing new road infrastructure presents a considerable challenge in Brisbane. So too does the provision of public transport which is currently more expensive per kilometre than in Sydney or Melbourne, and is some of the most expensive globally.

Road traffic congestion is a major problem in South East Queensland; it increases the travel time for residents and the cost of moving freight for businesses and in turn reduces liveability and economic efficiency. Around 90 percent of freight in South East Queensland is carried by road; and the projected growth in the export market and the economy is expected to double the freight task over the next 10–15 years. The Bureau of

Transport and Regional Economics has estimated that by 2020 the cost of congestion to the metropolitan Brisbane economy will be USD 3 million per annum.²³⁰

Since 2000, the state government has invested strongly in public transport with the development of a world-class busway system in Brisbane and a new light rail line on the Gold Coast. The state government and Brisbane City Council have collaborated on new road and tunnel infrastructure, including the TransApex ring roads to bypass and reduce congestion around the CBD, and the Airport Link tunnel. Generally, these road and tunnel projects have been funded by PPPs with tolls on road users. Both the CLEM7 tunnel (USD 3.2 billion project) and the Airport Link tunnel (USD 4.8 billion) resulted in private sector investors going into receivership. These projects have recently been acquired by Transurban, a toll road operator.

South East Queensland has a clear vision for future transport infrastructure developed collaboratively between the state and local governments and expressed in the Connecting SEQ 2031 Plan.²³¹ The transport plan aims to double the mode share of public transport by 2031 by focusing on new rail infrastructure, including a critical new cross-river linkage in the CBD. In practice, the transport plan faces many implementation and funding challenges including: increasing commuting distances; rising traffic congestion; how to give greater priority to freight movements; a risk-averse private sector; and the Australian Commonwealth government's reluctance to fund public transport.

5.2.11 Flood Management

Flood management is a significant issue for the South-East Queensland region. In January 2011, following a major rainfall event, the Brisbane River peaked at 4.46m, flooding more than 22,000 homes and 7,600 businesses across 94 suburbs, leaving 100,000 without power and an economic damage bill estimated at USD 440 million²³², and considerably more for the region. In 1974, the region had an equally damaging flood, necessitating the construction of a massive flood retention dam west of the city, Wivenhoe Dam, which now serves as one of the metropolitan region's major water supply. Even this dam was not enough to protect the city from the 2011 flood. Important lessons were gained in flood management, especially the need for stricter planning of development on flood-prone land. Most useful, however, was the application of social and multi-media in dealing with the emergency and in mobilizing community support for the clean-up.²³³ In a remarkable achievement, the city was able to self-organize a clean-up and return to normality in less than five days, thanks in part to the use of multi-media and a highly efficient emergency management organization.

5.3 SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

As the state capital and a metropolitan region, Brisbane is not immune from urban challenges²³⁴ requiring innovative social and environmental responses. The city's population is becoming increasingly culturally diverse, as Queensland grows as a global destination of choice for international migration. Direct overseas migrants have become the largest contributors to population growth, based on recent census data. Over the 2006–2011 period, the number of overseas-born residents living in Brisbane grew by 111,865

people, increasing the share of overseas-born residents to 25 percent of the Brisbane population.²³⁵

The changing multicultural face of Brisbane is evident in some suburbs, in which more than half the population was born overseas. Along with established areas that are home to Greek, Italian and other European migrants, there are emerging ethnic communities and multicultural hubs with new refugees and asylum seekers from Africa, Afghanistan, Burma, Iraq and Iran – contributing to a new social fabric in the city.

The Brisbane City and Queensland government's Local Area Multicultural Partnership (LAMP) programme integrates the principles and practices of multiculturalism and promotes positive intercultural relations in the region. However, Brisbane is not immune to the challenges of living in a multicultural society, with recent world events and heightened security concerns creating tensions locally in the Brisbane community. These challenges have required all levels of government and the community to act to protect the basic rights and cultural diversity of all people who live in Australia.

The city's population is also ageing and this presents challenges for the provision of appropriate housing, support and healthcare. While older people have different housing needs and aspirations, the majority prefer to 'age in place' and this policy is supported by Commonwealth, state and local governments. As part of its commitment to older residents, Brisbane City Council developed the Seniors Strategy 2012–2017 to address the housing needs of the elderly through services, facilities and planning processes.²³⁶

5.3.1 Liveability

Australian cities rank very highly in the annual global liveability survey conducted by the Economist Intelligence Unit because of their social stability, high-quality health and education services and good urban infrastructure. However, the 2014 liveability survey ranked Brisbane 20th behind Melbourne (1), Adelaide (5), Sydney (7) and Perth (9).²³⁷ Reasons for this lower ranking include public transport quality and costs and the availability and cost of housing.

Growth in median household incomes suggests that Brisbane's economic growth has brought with it faster household income growth.²³⁸ Between 2006 and 2011, a 25 percent increase in household incomes placed Brisbane in equal second position behind Perth but similar to Sydney and to the average for Australia. This is a significant improvement to a decade ago when Brisbane incomes were below the average for Australia.

Despite this increase in incomes, housing affordability is a significant issue in the region. Among the seven developed nations assessed in the 2015 Annual Demographic International Housing Affordability Survey, Australia ranks third last as one of the most unaffordable major markets.²³⁹ Many commentators say the market is overvalued. In 2014, Brisbane's housing price increased by 5.3 percent compared to 12.2 percent for Sydney, 1.2 percent for Perth, and 4.5 percent for Melbourne. In 2014, the nation's housing market slowed with prices in the capital cities increasing by 6.8 percent, compared to an increase of 9.5 percent in 2013.²⁴⁰

Around two-thirds of Brisbane residents live in separate detached dwellings. However, over the past two decades the number of family households has declined. The growth in one-person households is dramatic and by 2029 it is estimated to be more than twice that of the growth in two-parent family households across all Australian states. With declining fertility rates and increasing longevity, the age structure in cities is changing dramatically, reflecting Australia's ageing population. This presents challenges for the provision of housing more suited to changing household structures. In Brisbane, state and local governments are strong advocates for urban infill, including more medium density, attached housing in inner-city areas, to address housing need. Nevertheless, the purchase cost and a desire for more space and land continue to be important factors for many households.

Brisbane's population is becoming better educated, with 56.8 percent of residents having post-school qualifications (e.g. degrees, certificates or diplomas), an increase of 3.9 percent since the 2006 census.²⁴¹ This is an opportunity to capitalize on growth sectors for the city and state economic development, as people make educational choices to gain the right skills for existing and future jobs. The challenge will be to develop a skills plan for Brisbane driven by an emphasis on the future of work, with education and training focused on developing the skills needed for the future workforce.

Liveability varies between inner and outer areas in Brisbane and other Australian cities. Many outer metropolitan areas suffer from a locational disadvantage, with low socioeconomic status and poor access to services and public transport. People and households in these areas are vulnerable to increases in housing prices, mortgage rates and petrol costs. Providing adequate public transport to these generally low-density areas is difficult and costly. There are also issues about prioritizing new public transport infrastructure in these areas compared to inner-city areas where residential and employment densities are higher and cross city network linkages need to be made.²⁴²

5.3.2 Environmental Management

Brisbane City is a subtropical river city with many parts of it built on the floodplain of the Brisbane River. The South East Queensland region covers a number of river catchments and is rich in biodiversity and environmental assets, including: the unique marine areas and sand islands of Moreton Bay; the Gondwana World Heritage Rainforests of the Scenic Rim; and the largest urban koala population in Australia. Much of the region's coastline has been modified to accommodate urban growth and accompanying infrastructure. The Brisbane River empties into the Moreton Bay Marine Park, an area of important environmental significance.

Environmental management is the responsibility of state and local governments and involves balancing urban and regional growth with the need to protect unique environmental assets and enhance land management and water quality in catchments. The South East Queensland Natural Resource Management Plan is the key non-statutory environment management plan for the region and it provides measurable targets for the condition and extent of the region's environment. It is not a traditional natural resource management plan but is designed to guide the plans, strategies and actions of governments, the Healthy Waterways Network, land care and community catchment groups, and individual landowners.

The region is vulnerable to climate change and this is a challenge, due to the growing population and its coastal location. The 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change identified the region as a ‘hot spot’ for climate change.²⁴³ More extreme weather events, such as the 1974 and 2011 floods, and their increasing frequency, highlight the impacts of climate change on unique ecosystems, human settlements and infrastructure.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework and the Position Paper on Adapting to Climate Change in Australia are the principal initiatives guiding climate change adaptation in Australia. The challenge for Brisbane and the South East Queensland region will be to coordinate and integrate climate change into regional and sectoral plans. In 2009, the state government released a Draft SEQ Climate Change Management Plan but this was never finalized and endorsed. The Brisbane City Council is a key player in environmental sustainability with responsibility for current and future land use but has provided little leadership in relation to climate change policies. Low Choy et al. outline the key challenges for governments to achieve climate change adaptation, as follows.²⁴⁴

- Achieving effective horizontal and vertical coordination and integration between planning and other adaptation instruments
- Including climate change impacts in local and regional statutory and non-statutory plans
- Balancing mandatory and voluntary adaptation and engagement of the non-government sector in the climate adaptation decision-making process
- Achieving a synergy between planning with adaptation options for the urban landscape to foster the long-term biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services values for the whole region
- Addressing legal and other barriers to climate change adaptation through statutory and non-statutory planning
- Prioritizing policy responses to specific climate change impacts at local and regional planning scales.

5.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE

Australia has three levels of government – the Commonwealth, state/territory and local. Each level holds elections, makes laws and provides public goods and services, and each has various responsibilities affecting urban areas.²⁴⁵ The Commonwealth (or central) government sets the context for urban growth with control of immigration, taxation and the Australian economy, along with funding for infrastructure projects. The state governments are the major providers of community infrastructure and services, including transport, education, health and emergency services and they prepare metropolitan planning strategies. Local governments provide local roads, water, and community services, and prepare local land use plans. Recent neoliberal government policies have seen the private sector become more involved in the provision of infrastructure and urban services.

There is no regional or metropolitan level of government in Australia. In many policy areas, all levels of government share responsibilities, such as urban management, transport, environmental management and health. This results in conflict and collaboration and multiple layers of networked governance and presents many challenges and opportunities.

Brisbane City Council is the largest local government in Australia by population. Because of its size, it provides a wide range of economic, social, environmental and planning services and, in many ways, rivals the state government. The Council has developed a long-term vision and strategy for the city called Brisbane Vision 2031.²⁴⁶ This is an overarching, aspirational community plan that aims to position Brisbane as Australia's new world city. Brisbane City Council has adopted policies for inner-city urban renewal, PPPs for roads and tunnels, and local economic development and has witnessed the uneven effects of economic restructuring. More recently, there has been a move to local spatially-based neighbourhood planning programmes to address economic and social issues and engage local communities. Lawson suggests that this shift to a spatial focus is part of a rescaling of urban governance in Australia.²⁴⁷

Following Queensland local government amalgamations in 2008 and the de-amalgamation of Noosa Council in 2014, the South East Queensland region now includes 12 local governments (Figure 5.1). Local governments in the region are larger than in other parts of Australia. The region contains five of the ten largest local governments in Australia, namely, Brisbane City; Gold Coast City; Moreton Bay Regional Council; Logan City; and Sunshine Coast Regional Council. Larger local governments mean that more infrastructure and services can be provided for communities and councils can engage more effectively in strategic land use and transport planning processes.

Local governments in SEQ are more organized and unified at the regional level than in other metropolitan regions of Australia²⁴⁸ or in many large urban areas globally. Since the 1970s, the region's local governments have actively collaborated on planning and the provision of services through voluntary arrangements, including the Moreton Regional Organization and the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils. In 2005, they formed the Council of Mayors South East Queensland to collaborate with and lobby the state and Commonwealth governments. These arrangements have enabled local governments in South East Queensland to effectively engage with other levels of government and to present a united approach in many complex policy areas, including transport infrastructure funding priorities and regional planning. In relation to regional planning, it enabled new institutional arrangements to be established at the regional level, namely, the Regional Coordination Committee which became the Regional Planning Committee.

5.4.1 Planning for the South East Queensland Region

Because of the large size of Brisbane City, planning at the regional level was slow to develop compared to other Australian metropolitan areas. However, rapid population growth in the 1980s, and the associated urban sprawl, environmental impacts and infrastructure backlogs, led to recognition by the South East Queensland community that regional growth had to be managed. In 1990, state, Commonwealth and local governments agreed to voluntarily collaborate through the SEQ 2001 Project to produce

a non-statutory growth management strategy.²⁴⁹ This plan was endorsed by all three levels of government in 1995 as the Regional Framework for Growth Management. The framework provided the context and impetus for the collaborative development of a number of key sectoral strategies for transport, water quality, and nature conservation.

In 2003, following a community media campaign about open space and the need to strengthen regional planning, the local governments in South East Queensland agreed to the preparation of a statutory regional plan. This was an ‘historic change of policy for SEQROC [South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils]’, which had previously opposed any statutory regional plans which would limit councils’ planning powers.²⁵⁰ State and local governments worked collaboratively through the South East Queensland Regional Coordination Committee and the Office of Urban Management to prepare the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005–2026 which came into effect in June 2005.

The Regional Plan introduced three important growth management policy instruments, namely: the urban footprint; infill dwelling targets; and the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program (SEQIPP). Urban development was prohibited outside of the urban footprint and this allowed future urban areas in South East Queensland to be identified and sequenced and for the demand for new infrastructure to be managed. The plan aimed to achieve more compact development and local governments were required to amend their planning schemes to achieve specified infill dwelling targets. The SEQIPP was to be prepared annually as part of the state budget and it identified a 10-year regional infrastructure funding programme. SEQIPP was not just about infrastructure for urban growth areas but was a comprehensive programme covering all infrastructure classes such as transport, water, energy, education and health facilities, and economic activity centres.

The South East Queensland Regional Plan was reviewed in 2008/09 and the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031²⁵¹ came into effect in July 2009 (Figure 5.3). Although it incorporated another five years of population growth, there was no net change to the area of the Urban Footprint and the broad policy settings of the plan remained the same, including updated infill dwelling targets for local governments. A number of key sectoral strategies have been prepared linked to the South East Queensland Regional Plan including the Connecting SEQ 2031 transport plan; the South East Queensland Water Strategy; the Rural Futures Strategy; the South East Queensland Natural Resource Management Plan; and the draft Regional Climate Change Management Plan.

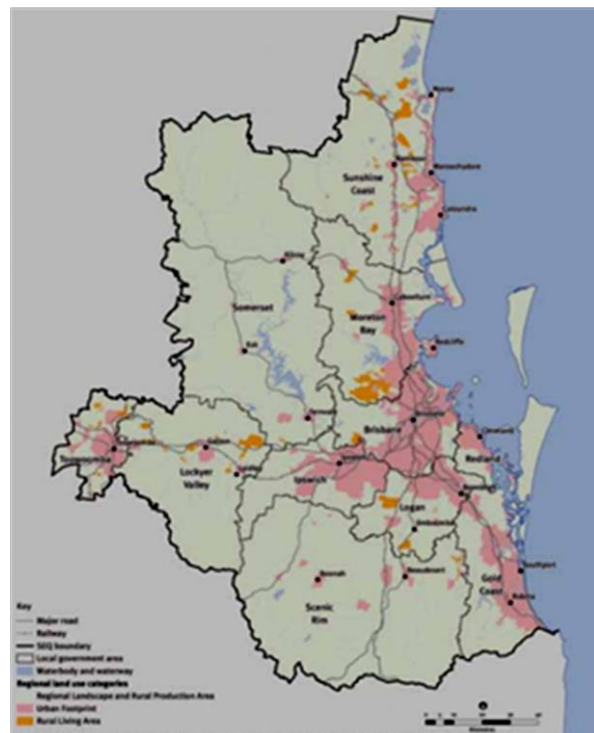
The SEQIPP was prepared annually from 2005 to 2011. However, with a deteriorating budget outlook and following a change of state government in 2012, no further SEQIPPs have been prepared. The loss of this link between state infrastructure budgets and programmes and the South East Queensland Regional Plan has raised old fears for local governments about urban growth occurring without proper infrastructure provision.²⁵²

In 2013, a review of the South East Queensland Regional Plan commenced in the context of the state government's desire to promote economic growth and to reduce the impact of planning and other regulations on development. In December 2013, the State approved a comprehensive, single State Planning Policy which defined state interests and outlined broad policy approaches to these. One of the implications was that regional plans could be less comprehensive and focus on specific regional interests and problems. In 2016, the state government began a review of the South East Queensland Regional Plan, with a draft document released for public comment. The new long-term regional plan is expected to be released in late 2017.

The focus of governments in the region on growth management and regional planning has facilitated the development and adoption of a broad range of integrated sectoral policies and strategies that go well beyond traditional land use planning and contribute to sustainable urban development. However, there are some notable regional policy gaps in the areas of economic development and climate change adaptation. Gleeson et al. contend that, while Brisbane and the rest of the region offer a positive governance narrative involving a new and widely supported regional spatial and infrastructure framework, weaknesses are evident. These include:²⁵³

- Brisbane City's extraordinary institutional scale offering it unusual influence over wider regional development patterns and policy priorities, demonstrated most clearly in transport planning
- A growing tendency to resort to project-led planning, meaning the increasing dominance of infrastructure schemes over planning schemes
- A 'democratic deficit' or lack of effective community engagement or 'voice' at the regional level.

Figure 5.3 Map of South East Queensland



Source: Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, Queensland Government (DILGP), 'SEQ Regional Plan 2009–2031' (Brisbane: DILGP, 2009).

Collaborative governance arrangements through the Regional Coordination Committee and Regional Planning Committee have proved very effective and resilient to a changing political and economic context with different levels of government and the community playing leadership roles in support of regional planning at different times.²⁵⁴ However, high-level governance arrangements in South East Queensland are currently in need of revitalization, and collaborative leadership is needed by Brisbane City, the Council of Mayors South East Queensland, and, the state government.

5.5 CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable city development requires coordinated planning and urban management on priorities across a range of sectoral areas, including: fostering economic development and trade and improving the investment environment; identifying and delivering strategic infrastructure; improving social and environmental sustainability; and fostering collaborative and effective governance structures. In all of these areas, Greater Brisbane faces challenges.

The Greater Brisbane region economy is over-reliant on the building and construction and the mining and resources sectors which, in turn, depend on continuing rapid urban growth, high levels of government funding for infrastructure programmes, and high international resource prices. Every one of these has fallen in recent years. Efforts to diversify the economy and strengthen the knowledge economy began in the late 1990s through the state government's support for the Smart State Strategy. Over the past decade, diversification of the economy has been evident through growth in research centres at universities and hospitals in the region and growth in professional, scientific and technical services sector activity, and jobs generally.

However, this challenge to diversify and strengthen the knowledge economy is ongoing. Brisbane City Council and other local governments in South East Queensland have recently added their support, through the New World City vision and action plan.²⁵⁵ After extensive research and consultation, eight key industry sectors have been identified which can assist in transitioning Brisbane's economic profile to be more global and focused on the Asia-Pacific region. Investments and supporting actions by private sector businesses, research and education institutions and governments are now required in these industry sectors.

Over the past decade, the state government has invested heavily in strategic infrastructure for roads, public transport, water supply, hospitals and schools in South East Queensland in accordance with the desired outcomes of the South East Queensland Regional Plan. However, the recent downturn in economic activity in Queensland and higher levels of state debt are now limiting the state's capacity for future infrastructure investment. In this climate of limited investment funds, the challenge is to manage the demand for new infrastructure, to improve the region's capacity to identify critical infrastructure and to find innovative funding approaches involving all levels of government and the private sector.

Traffic congestion is a growing problem throughout South East Queensland. Construction and recent completion of the Trans-Apex tunnels and roads system have reduced some congestion around the Brisbane CBD. However, this will be eroded by the continuing growth in single-occupant car traffic, unless better public transport services and demand management policies are put into place. Congestion affects the movement of freight by road and increases transaction costs for businesses. Priority needs to be given to the movement of freight, by measures such as priority freight lanes and roads, but this will cause conflict with car users.

Housing affordability is a major challenge to the social environment and liveability of South East Queensland. Provision of more single bedroom dwellings in medium-density housing, apartment blocks and student accommodation is assisting with this and also responding to the housing needs of the ageing population and the increasing number of international students in South East Queensland. However, many families with children and low-income households can only find suitable and affordable accommodation in the outer parts of the region with poor access to community services and public transport and high levels of automobile dependence. These families are vulnerable to rises in mortgage rates and petrol prices. More jobs, services and public transport infrastructure need to be provided in these areas.

The Greater Brisbane Region, with its long and erodible coastline and extensive areas of flood-prone land along the Brisbane River and other waterways, already faces many natural hazards and challenges – which are likely to increase with the future impacts of climate change. Planning for flooding has been addressed by state and local governments after the devastating 2011 Brisbane floods, but broader planning for climate change adaptation remains a major issue and challenge. The multiple effects of climate change on the economic, social and physical fabric of cities have become more apparent since the draft South East Queensland Climate Change Management Plan was prepared in 2009. The Queensland government, the Council of Mayors South East Queensland and Brisbane City Council need to take the lead in planning for climate change adaptation and complete this important planning work.

In relation to governance and integrated planning, as already discussed, and discussed again in the next section, Greater Brisbane has a strong record of governments, at different levels and business and community groups, collaborating and working in partnerships. However, high-level governance arrangements in South East Queensland in relation to growth management and regional planning are currently in need of revitalisation and this provides a challenge for collaborative leadership by Brisbane City Council, the Council of Mayors South East Queensland and the state government. Key challenges requiring collaboration across levels of government include: infrastructure planning and funding; planning for an ageing population; freight transport planning; regional economic development; addressing locational disadvantage in outer metropolitan areas; and planning for climate change adaptation.

5.6 GOOD PRACTICE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Brisbane city and the South East Queensland region have attracted international recognition for some of their sustainable development practices. The following section describes several partnership initiatives undertaken in the Greater Brisbane Region which demonstrate examples of sustainable city development good practice.

5.6.1 The South East Queensland Regional Coordination Committee, Collaborative Governance and Integrated Planning

The South East Queensland Regional Coordination Committee was a high-level committee involving key state ministers and local government mayors which met regularly (about every three months) between 1994 and 2009.²⁵⁶ At various times, the Commonwealth government and peak business and community sector groups were also represented on the committee. The Regional Coordination Committee, its predecessor, the Regional Planning Advisory Group, and its successor, the Regional Planning Committee, came into existence because of the need for, and agreement of, South East Queensland governments at different levels to work in partnership to manage rapid growth and develop regional policies. But the ways of working together and the nature of the meetings were also important in developing collaboration and trust.

Meetings of the Regional Coordination Committee and the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and their associated committees provided politicians in South East Queensland, officers and community group members with opportunities to share experience and knowledge, and strengthen their commitment to metropolitan planning policies. The open discussion of thorny issues in growth management and the exercise of consensus decision-making in these forums were central to achieving this shared commitment.²⁵⁷

The Regional Coordination Committee facilitated collaboration between state and local governments, while the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils facilitated collaboration between local governments. The South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils was responsible for presenting a unified local government view to the Regional Coordination Committee meetings and to the state government. The meetings of the Regional Coordination Committee also provided a platform for state and local politicians to develop and show leadership on regional issues.

The experience of the Regional Coordination Committee holds valuable lessons for urban and metropolitan areas that operate under multiple governments with interdependent and overlapping roles. In such areas, high-level ‘metropolitan forums for collaboration’ could be very helpful. Such forums would allow senior politicians from different governments to come together to discuss issues and potential joint approaches and projects. To be successful, the forums would need to incorporate certain features. The forums should be based on open and consensus-based processes. They would have to be chaired by a senior politician. They also need to be provided with sufficient resources, including professional staff and project funding. Links with business and community groups with relevant insights into the specific issue under discussion should also be sought.²⁵⁸

Collaborative governance requires leadership and a willingness to share power and act collaboratively rather than unilaterally in relation to joint issues and problems. Brisbane City Council showed leadership in establishing and facilitating the voluntary cooperation of local governments in the region through the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils. The state government showed leadership in relation to growth management by establishing the SEQ 2001 planning project and inviting the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and local governments to become involved on a voluntary basis. Seed funding from the central government, as occurred in SEQ in relation to water quality management, can also facilitate urban and regional collaboration. In all these cases, the establishment of forums involving relevant governmental and sectoral groups was a critical first step. These forums can contribute to sustainable development by: improving horizontal and vertical coordination and information flows; leading on to joint actions and agreed regional plans; and the establishment of more permanent institutional and statutory arrangements.

South East Queensland also provides a good practice example of integrated urban planning. The concept of regional growth management was defined broadly to include environmental, social, economic and physical aspects of sustainable development. Policy development in all these areas was integrated in order to produce the voluntary Regional Framework for Growth Management and later the statutory South East Queensland Regional Plan. The South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 is a statutory plan under the planning legislation with which local government land use plans need to comply and be consistent. But it is also a policy plan that has been endorsed by state and local governments as the primary regional plan for South East Queensland. It thus provides a framework for other sectoral policy plans, such as those for transport, natural resources, centres, etc., which are integrated and consistent with it in spatial and policy terms. For example, the Connecting SEQ 2031 transport plan builds on the population projections, urban growth areas, economic centres and policy directions identified in the South East Queensland Regional Plan.

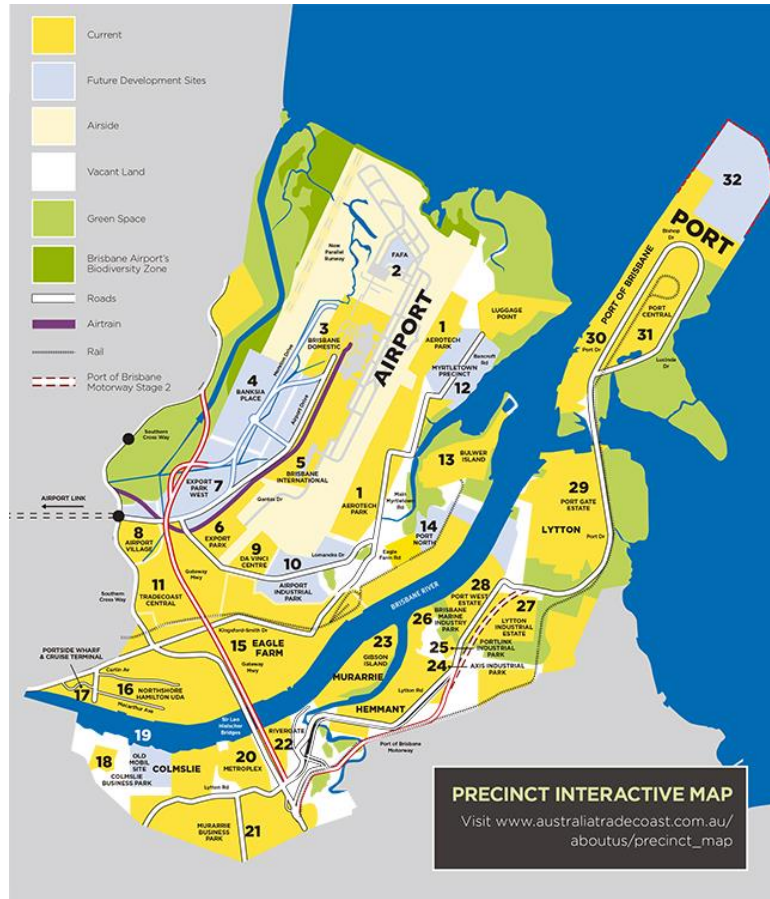
The Greater Brisbane experience with collaborative governance offers lessons for other cities in the Asia-Pacific region where multiple governments share responsibilities and have interdependent roles in relation to complex issues and urban growth management.

5.6.2 Australia Trade Coast

At the mouth of the Brisbane River is over 8,000ha of largely flood-prone land containing some heavy industries. That land had remained vacant for many years before the relocation of the Port of Brisbane and development of a new Brisbane Airport. The costs and difficulties of providing services, fragmented land ownership, environmental constraints and access issues were major impediments to the area's development. In 1993, the concept of an inter-modal transportation centre was studied by the Queensland State Premier's Department. The resulting Gateway Ports Strategic Plan was released in 1994.

The plan adopted an innovative approach in economic thinking for the development of the area. Historically, the focus had been to promote its comparative advantage in terms of location, cheap land, access to transportation, low taxes, enterprise zones, etc. The reality was that there was a surplus of land in gateway ports around the Pacific Rim. Most of these ports provided conditions for development just as favourable as Brisbane. In 1999, the Australia Trade Coast was established as a partnership between four of Queensland's most powerful industry leaders (Queensland government, Brisbane Airport, Port of Brisbane and Brisbane City Council) to drive inward investment and industry growth in the area. The paradigm driving economic development of the Australia Trade Coast is a collaborative advantage. The Australia Trade Coast partners collaborate to reduce factor costs of production (i.e. labour, raw materials, capital, infrastructure, range and quality of services) to make inward investment more attractive. The thrust of the collaboration strategy was to build strategic leadership, and foster technology, innovation and product development, information and marketing intelligence systems and a spirit of civic entrepreneurship. The intent was to get competing parties, business and communities working together to develop new ideas and products for established or emerging markets.

Figure 5.4 Australia Trade Coast and its 32 Development Precincts



Source: Brisbane City Council, 'Australia Tradecoast Local Plan' (Brisbane: Brisbane City Council, 2013).

The Australia Trade Coast is now home to around 1,500 leading businesses with over 60,000 employees. It contains a wide variety of industries spread over 32 employment precincts (Figure 5.4). Industries located within the precinct include logistics, transport, export and import, aviation and warehousing. Infrastructure projects have been implemented to attract high-technology manufacturing, food and beverages and general manufacturing industries. Australia Trade Coast has become one of the largest and fastest growing trade and industry districts in Australia. The area is forecast to employ more than 110,000 people by 2026.²⁵⁹ Its development potential is likely to increase if the proposal for a new inland rail route from the Port of Brisbane to the Port of Melbourne, a second long-runway for the airport, and a new cross-river rail tunnel goes ahead in the next decade.

Australia Trade Coast is a good practice example of a partnership between major government and private sector landowners and transport operators which proceeded because each recognized the advantages provided by collaboration in terms of sharing and reducing transaction costs to business and its importance to attracting investment. Australia Trade Coast and its partners have invested more than USD 1 billion in infrastructure development in the past five years generating around USD 4 billion of private sector investment in the area.

5.6.3 Brisbane Inner-City Urban Renewal (New Farm and Newstead)²⁶⁰

The old port of Brisbane in the Newstead reach of the river covered a 2km stretch of dockland, warehouses and industries that experienced significant decline during the industrial restructuring that took place in Australia during the 1980s. In 1991, Brisbane City Council established an Urban Renewal Task Force to investigate opportunities for urban revitalization.²⁶¹ The focus of the task force was on the renewal of a 730ha inner north eastern suburban area, including Fortitude Valley, New Farm, Newstead, Teneriffe and Bowen Hills, as a pilot for revitalization of inner-city areas. It was to deliver a master plan, development strategies and procedures for implementation based on practical solutions and viable investments to achieve a population of 30,000 people (up from 12,000) over 20 years.

The governance mandate of the Urban Renewal Task Force from Brisbane City Council was to manage the urban renewal programme and act as a broker between the private sector, government and the community in planning, investment and development. The task force had no specific powers or legislation other than using the city council's plan-making powers to create a Development Control Plan for specific areas.

Critical to the success of the project was the leveraging of capital. The Brisbane City Council had secured funding of USD 31 million from the Commonwealth Government's Building Better Cities Program. Equitable funding was provided by the Queensland state government and the Brisbane City Council for operation of the task force and for infrastructure projects such as the conversion of the old New Farm Powerhouse to an arts and cultural hub (Photo 5.3); the Inner-City Bypass; sewerage at Teneriffe; bike paths; street tree planting; and bus facilities. It is difficult to value the extent of the economic benefits generated by this urban renewal initiative, but it is estimated that USD 4 billion in funding for redevelopment projects was provided by the private sector.

Photo 5.3 Powerhouse Brisbane – From Power Station to Arts and Cultural Facility



Source: Brisbane Marketing.

The project provides a good example of cooperation between three levels of government in partnership with the private sector and local community. At the time the project was conceived, there was no real focus on specific sustainability initiatives, but the nature of the project involved inner-city revitalization, reuse of heritage buildings and improved public transport services, which are in themselves sustainable development elements. The New Farm–Newstead urban renewal project is a good example of the way Brisbane has been transforming obsolescence in a post-industrial city into opportunity. While this has been done in many other cities, such as Vancouver and Singapore, it is the level of cooperation, scale and the ability to leverage a relatively small amount of public capital that makes this project a good example of best practice sustainable development in the APEC region.

The Urban Renewal Task Force was later transformed in 2003 into an organization called Urban Renewal Brisbane and given a widened focus of the whole inner city.²⁶²

5.6.4 Healthy Waterways Network

In 1998, the Moreton Bay Water Quality Management Strategy was developed and released as part of the SEQ 2001 planning project.²⁶³ Developing the strategy required funding from the Commonwealth for new data collection, modelling and analysis and involved research organizations, state agencies, local governments and local community catchment groups working closely together. The subsequent investments in reducing point source pollution under the strategy have proven highly effective. Water utilities and local governments have upgraded wastewater treatment plants, significantly reducing water pollution and the incidence of algal blooms in Moreton Bay. These partnerships and collaborative working arrangements are ongoing and evolving.

The Healthy Waterways and Catchments Network is an independent, non-government organization that brings people and organizations together across multiple sectors to manage waterway health in South East Queensland. Member organizations include state and local governments, water utilities, private water industry companies, university

research groups and environment and catchment groups. The Healthy Waterways and Catchments Network facilitates careful data collection, the release of an annual Report Card on ecosystem health for all rivers and waterways in SEQ,²⁶⁴ and coordinated planning and rehabilitation actions at local and regional levels.

The waterways are an integral part of the region's lifestyle and economy. With a rapidly growing population and increasingly unpredictable climate, the challenge is to protect the waterways now and for future generations.

5.6.5 Logan Together Community Partnership for Children's Development²⁶⁵

Logan Together²⁶⁶ is a partnership of local people from the community, non-government organizations, governments and businesses who care about the wellbeing of children in Logan City. Logan City is located south of Brisbane City (Figure 5.1) and has a large low-income and migrant population. The aim of the partnership is to close the gap in healthy development outcomes for children and their families. The partnership targets children from before birth to age eight to ensure they develop the whole-of-life skills and competencies necessary to participate in the workforce after leaving high school.

Logan Together is doing this by taking a collective impact approach to drive coordination and cooperation between stakeholders – to enhance skills competencies and promote knowledge development. The collective impact model has its origins in the USA, where it has been used to improve outcomes in areas such as educational attainment.²⁶⁷

To advance its aims, Logan Together established an organization to develop common goals, and develop and implement coordinating mechanisms and shared systems.²⁶⁸ The leadership of Logan Together was drawn from the local community, Griffith University and government and non-government organizations. The group prepared a roadmap to provide direction and operations guidance to the participating partner organizations. A Joint Commissioning Mechanism that involves funders across all levels of government, university and business was also established with the task of aligning resources from funding partners with the delivery of the roadmap.²⁶⁹

Logan has already seen many benefits from this initiative, similar to the US experience. Logan Together is providing a valuable partnership for addressing the development of social capital and early competency-based learning for children in one of the poorest and most disadvantaged areas of the Greater Brisbane Region. The project is a good example of a sustainable development initiative to invest in building long-term social capital to support community and economic development in disadvantaged sectors of urban populations which could be adapted and replicated in other cities of the region.

5.6.6 Asia-Pacific Cities Summit

The Asia-Pacific Cities Summit and associated Mayors' Forum is a conference and networking event initiated by Brisbane City Council in 1996. It has been held biennially since 1999 with the venue alternating between Brisbane and another city in the Asia-Pacific region. Initially, the Asia-Pacific Cities Summit involved 34 cities and 128 delegates. It has grown steadily since, and recent summits have involved 150 cities and

over 2200 delegates and attracted influential corporate partners such as Microsoft and the Brookings Institute.²⁷⁰

The summit is now recognized as the region's leading high-level, business and government forum for managing cities and urban development. The Asia-Pacific Cities Summit aims to:²⁷¹

- Create deepened dialogue, shared learning, strategic partnerships and economic opportunities in partnership with business as the keys to strengthening cities' prosperity.
- Facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, and create a blueprint for future prosperity and shared solutions for sustainable living in the region's cities.
- Support the development of strategic and commercial partnerships between all levels of government, private and public sector agencies and business communities in the region.
- Provide a platform that delivers long-term economic outcomes for cities and businesses seeking trade and investment opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.
- Explore new models for city development strategies that strengthen the ability of cities to serve their communities, contribute to regional prosperity and improve quality of life.

The APCS provides a dynamic and interactive forum for local government politicians, business people and professional officers in the Asia-Pacific region to collaborate and exchange knowledge, identify common agendas, develop shared solutions and economic opportunities and improve city governance.

5.7 CONCLUSIONS

The Greater Brisbane Region faces challenges but demonstrates many aspects of sustainable urban development, which illustrate leading practice not only in Australia, but the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.

Because of the role played by Brisbane City Council, Brisbane is ahead of other Australian state capital cities in many ways in relation to innovation and business support, and its location is ideal to capitalize on Australia's economic role in the Asia-Pacific region. However, despite its New World City aspirations, Brisbane is still Australia's third city in terms of population and economic activity and it needs to grow and diversify its economy, especially the knowledge economy. There is significant potential for the expansion of R&D to drive innovation and growth in the Brisbane economy and there are many examples of international investment being leveraged to commercialize innovation with a global reach (e.g. biosciences/genomics, mineralogy, cancer vaccines). A key factor in a strong economic future for Brisbane is capital investment by business and governments across a range of key industry sectors identified in the economic plan,

including: knowledge-based services; accommodation and tourism; higher education and research; energy and resources; creative and digital industries; advanced manufacturing; and food and agribusiness.

Since 1990, state and local governments in the Greater Brisbane Region have maintained a continuous focus on collaborative planning and urban growth management. This has resulted in the endorsement of various statutory and non-statutory regional plans leading to the statutory South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031. The Regional Plan contains strong policies to manage the future pattern of urban growth including: the definition of the Urban Footprint; infill dwelling targets; and the identification of a network of cities and urban activity centres for services and employment growth. The Regional Plan provides a policy and statutory framework for local land use plans and for sectoral plans for regional transport, water supply, etc. These plans allow infrastructure provision, particularly public transport, to be managed and integrated. The policies also offer lessons for other rapidly growing urban regions which contain multiple cities.

The future urban management challenge for Greater Brisbane is to maintain and strengthen the policy focus on compact urban development and residential infill in inner parts of the region where most the region's present and future employment will occur. At the same time, there is a need to improve employment prospects, services and infrastructure provision to vulnerable families and residents in some outer parts of the region. Another challenge is to face up to the multiple effects of future climate change on large urban areas and for an effective regional plan for climate change adaptation to be put into place.

Based on the analysis of sustainable urban development in this chapter and the good practice partnership examples discussed, the aspects of urban planning and management in which Greater Brisbane offers leading practice lessons for other Australian cities, and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. These can be summarized under the following themes:

Collaborative city governance and integrated planning

Large cities contain multiple governments that interact spatially and between different levels. Forums need to be created and resourced to allow governments (at political and officer levels) to exchange information, work together and collaborate on citywide planning and management issues. This facilitates integration between their various plans. Higher level governments or large local governments, such as Brisbane City, which generally have more resources, should take the lead in establishing and resourcing these forums.

Economic development cannot be left just to business organizations and the private sector. Local governments can play a leading role with business in developing an economic vision for their area and in identifying key industry clusters that build on local competitive strengths. Local governments also need to collaborate with each other to develop a citywide economic vision and action plan.

Collaborative partnerships for business advantage in key economic areas

In each city, there will be areas and spatial locations that already play a key role in economic development, employment and trade or that have the potential to do so in the future. The Australia Trade Coast is a key economic area in Greater Brisbane. If governments and large private and government corporations involved in the area collaborate to develop a vision and proposals for the area, it can create a positive business and investment environment that allows smaller businesses to flourish and innovate.

Identify and fund strategic infrastructure linked to city plans

Large infrastructure projects in cities compete with each other for limited government and private sector funding. These could be transport, education or health projects, new telecommunications links or areas of green open space, all of which may be important for sustainable city development. City plans and economic strategies need to be actively used to identify and prioritize strategic infrastructure projects for funding across sectors.

Governments to lead urban renewal projects

All cities have run-down areas that need, and/or have potential for, urban renewal. Many of these are old industrial and port areas in the inner city. The government can assist in developing a new vision for these areas by creating a planning and institutional framework to facilitate investment by private sector organizations and individuals.

Community involvement for environmental and social wellbeing

Many environmental and social issues require strong, grassroots community involvement and input to build and implement solutions. In Greater Brisbane, local land care and catchment groups have collaborated with governments and research groups to develop water quality management strategies. Local governments can play a key role in outsourcing and resourcing such community involvement, as in the case of the Logan Together partnership for children's development.

Create forums to share knowledge across the APEC region

Brisbane City initiated the Asia-Pacific Cities Summit in 1996 and has promoted and resourced its development. The forum now plays a key role in creating links and sharing knowledge about sustainable city development among APEC economies and cities. APEC or its constituent governments or involved local governments should create other forums in relevant areas to share knowledge and strengthen cultural links.

The Greater Brisbane Region has been a leader in developing partnerships for sustainable development in Australia for many years. It is a region known for progressive innovation in urban design, planning and development. It is a leader in integrated development of road, pedestrian, cycle, rail, air, river and ocean shipping transportation systems. It is a leader in waterway systems management and recycling. These achievements in sustainable development have been led by strong political structures, good governance, planning and financial management, and well-established community engagement practices. There is still much the region needs to do to become more sustainable, but the

regional and local government planning and collaborative governance processes are directing it along a path towards a more renewable-energy, green design and clean industry future. As a semi-tropical climate metropolitan region, it has much knowledge and experience in sustainable development practices it could share with other cities in the APEC region.