




Speech By
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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Advancing Our Cities and Regions Strategy

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.29 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Palaszczuk government's Advancing our cities and regions strategy, which is already creating renewed confidence across the state and in particular in the electorate I represent in this place, Keppel. Last week in Yeppoon I announced that Economic Development Queensland will begin master planning the old railway station site from Queensland Rail—a 2.8-hectare prime Yeppoon CBD site which has sat dormant for decades.

It is an exciting time for Yeppoon which, like many other regional areas, is seeking similar transformational projects which will bring benefits through their innovative range of job-creating urban renewal plans. Last Friday's announcement sent a buzz through the Yeppoon community, which is now excitedly looking forward to the engagement process which will help to formulate and develop the property to its significant potential. This project runs parallel to the redevelopment of the Yeppoon foreshore and central business district, into which this Palaszczuk government has invested \$25 million. Work is set to start on this project by the end of this year. This foreshore redevelopment will create a world-class tourist destination, contribute to a strong economy and support a vibrant and livable community.

I am confident and buoyed by the public and social media support that the Palaszczuk government's new strategy to maximise the use of state owned land is already a winner. Further, I believe that the advancing our cities strategy will prove to be a trail-blazing catalyst for the Keppel region and other regions throughout Queensland. We have enormous opportunities in front of us to deliver smart urban renewal projects which will redefine our regions, deliver better community facilities and more affordable housing and unlock significant economic growth and jobs for Queensland. Creating more jobs for Queenslanders has been the mantra of this Palaszczuk government since we came to government. It will remain so as we continue to grow Queensland.

I have worked with EDQ on many occasions, and I am looking forward to a partnership where we will collaborate with other state agencies to identify land renewal and repurposing possibilities within priority economic and community zones including regional cities, urban renewal precincts, health and knowledge precincts, housing renewal and integration precincts, Queensland renewable energy sites and regional livability precincts.

As a town-planner by profession I back this Advancing our cities and regions strategy, because I am confident that this strategy will deliver a key component of our state's fabric: urban renewal, which is fundamental to the sustainability and livability of regional towns and cities and creates an opportunity

to deliver better access to health, community and jobs—the critical trifecta in our regions. As a planner I also applaud the Palaszczuk government’s Advancing our cities and regions strategy because of its innovative approach to renewing underutilised state land for the benefit of all Queenslanders. Innovation has been a fundamental and deliberate planning element in this government, and this management strategy to make maximum use of dormant government land should be applauded by all Queenslanders who value the creation of significant social and community outcomes with a specific focus on jobs and long-term economic growth. In Yeppoon specifically, the innovative plan is to take the underused state land that is the former railway site and turn it into an attractive, vibrant area to attract further economic activity.

Aside from the significant benefits outlined, the potential is there to create a long-term funding stream for local communities, whilst taking some of the financial burden from the government to continue to maintain these dormant properties. The Advancing our cities and regions strategy goes one step further—a major step which those sitting opposite failed to achieve in their brief foray in government; that is, to partner with the private investment sector to introduce investors into new areas and create social infrastructure which then becomes the heart of further economic development.

This innovative project from the Palaszczuk government lays out a clear and achievable platform for future economic growth where this form of development also provides additional income for reinvestment in future infrastructure projects. Since the announcement last week, people in my community have been so excited about the opportunities that the old Yeppoon railway station site provides. The site is prime CBD land in Yeppoon. I think the advancing our cities strategy is good planning, good economic management and good government.