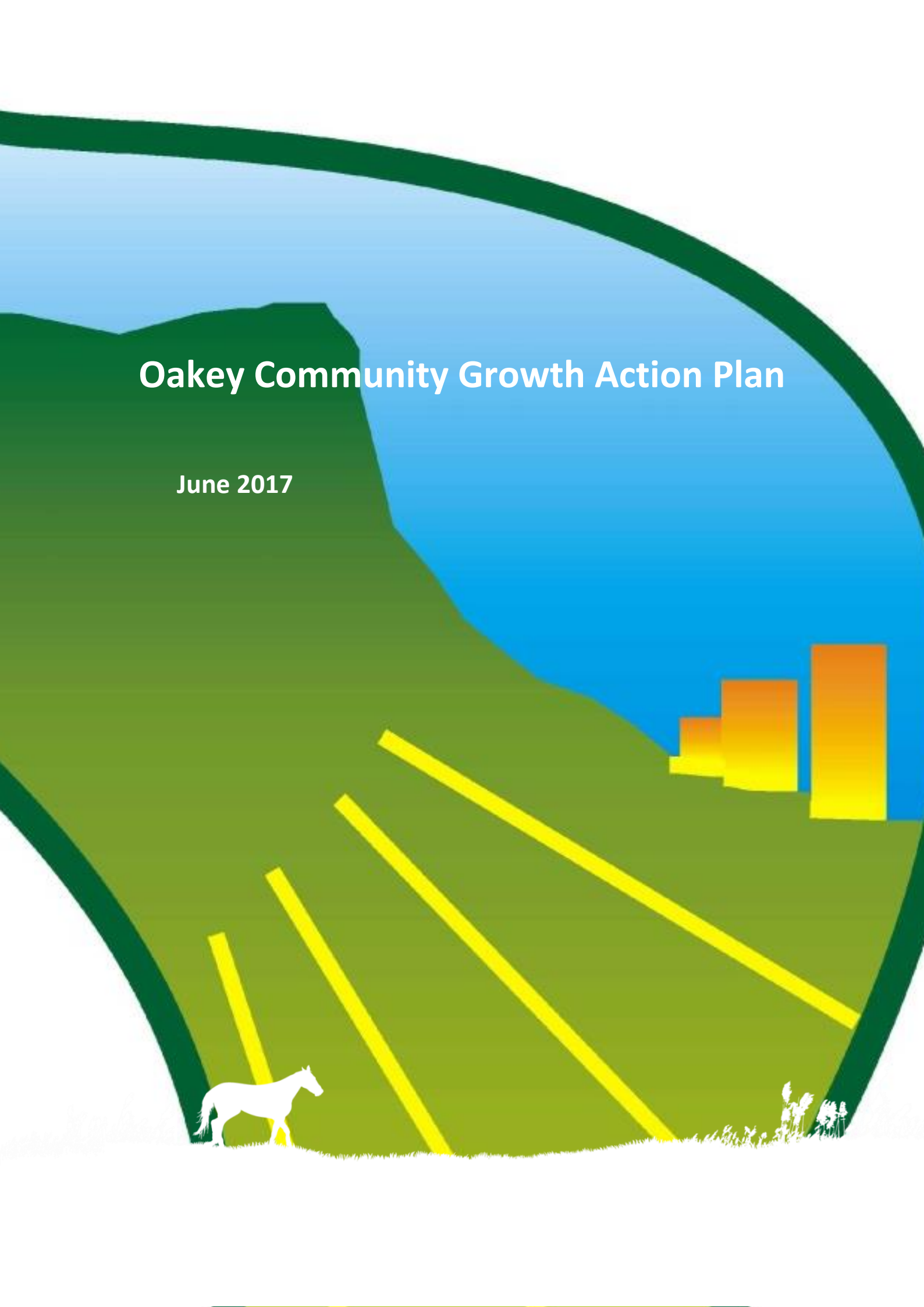


Oakey Community Growth Action Plan

June 2017



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Toowoomba region is made up of a patchwork of rural townships. Each is unique, shaped by its own history, subject to different issues, challenges and opportunities. They are, however, similar in many respects to a large proportion of smaller rural townships across inland Australia that are changing in the face of the global urbanisation trend and evolving agricultural practices. Whilst these factors are changing the shape and feel of towns like Oakey there are still opportunities for the community to shape its destiny to ensure that Oakey remains a place where they, and their children, would choose to live.

Success for Oakey is best determined by the residents themselves, based on their aspirations, ideals and value systems. In order to better understand what these are, Council facilitated a number of meetings with community members to draw out what issues the town is facing, identify what the potential solutions and opportunities might be and to determine which ones should be focussed on as a priority. These have been documented in this Community Growth Action Plan.

The Plan identifies the six actions that the Oakey community agreed should be the priority for collective effort. They are:

- 1. *Develop a strategy to promote and improve Oakey's image***
- 2. *Support large industry development and growth in Oakey***
- 3. *Develop tourism offerings in Oakey including the development of the Oakey Visitor Information Centre and gaining RV Friendly Town Status.***
- 4. *Improve access to the Wellcamp Airport by upgrading Brimblecombe Road or an alternative route to improve heavy vehicle access as export and tourism markets are identified***
- 5. *Develop the Oakey showgrounds as a quality events and sporting facility***
- 6. *Acknowledge the differential in urban and regional development price points by implementing lower TRC development related fees and charges for Oakey.***
- 7. *Investigate improving and upgrading health services for Oakey***

These actions will be best achieved through the involvement and commitment of the broader Oakey community who, as residents, have the greatest interest in their success. Council will partner with the community, assist directly where possible, and endeavour to involve other regional stakeholders when required.

The Community Growth Action Plan is a living document, and will be reviewed annually. These reviews will be an opportunity for the Oakey community to come together to celebrate successes, review what has been done and determine priority actions for the coming year. Council will play a supporting role in this process but maximum community involvement will ensure its relevance and increase the potential for success.

1 OUR TOWN

Oakey is a country town nestled in the Darling Downs Region with a rich agricultural area that produces grain, cotton, oilseeds and other crops. Oakey functions as a service centre for neighbouring towns such as Jondaryan, Gowrie Mountain, Kingsthorpe, Kulpi and Peranga as well as the region's agricultural sector. Oakey is located approximately 30 kilometres west of Toowoomba just off the Warrego Highway, the main road connecting Toowoomba to Dalby.

The extension of the Western Railway from Toowoomba to Dalby allowed Oakey to develop into a substantial town with a number of industries. Like many rural towns in the Darling Downs, Oakey is enriched with a strong pastoral connection typically associated with dairying in the early years. Like many areas throughout the Darling Downs, the pastoral emphasis shifted from dairying to beef, which led to the establishment of feedlots and the abattoir. Coal mining has also had a strong affiliation with Oakey with early coal exploration concentrated east of the railway station and mined for the Queensland railways, before exploration moved north to Acland. Oakey also enjoys a strong connection to aviation defence with the Oakey Army Aviation Centre also located in town.

Oakey allows residents to embrace rural living whilst enjoying easy access to Toowoomba via the Warrego Highway. Oakey is a proud inclusive community eager to foster the town's economic and social development to ensure the best outcome for the community.

1.1 Our People

Oakey is an increasingly diverse community which has recorded small, consistent population growth increasing from 3,460 in 2001 to 4,705 in 2016, representing an average growth of around 2% per annum over this period.

At the time of the 2016 Census, Oakey exhibited a similar age profile to the Toowoomba Regional Council area with a good mix of young and old who currently call Oakey home, with 21.5% of persons aged between 0 and 14 years old and a further 17.2% aged 65 years and older.

The average age of Oakey residents was 38 years as at 2016.

Oakey instils a sense of belonging within the community to ensure a town that works together and values the contribution of its residents and visitors to develop the best outcome for Oakey and its residents. Oakey is a family oriented community with 39.9% of households made up of couples and 38.5% of Oakey households characterised by families with children.

In the past 5 years the number of properties in Oakey owned outright and owned with mortgage have both decreased. Properties owned, outright has continued declining for the past 15 years.

1.2 Our Workforce

Historically, Oakey has generally recorded higher labour force participation rates as well as higher unemployment levels compared to other regional towns in the Toowoomba Regional Council area. As at 2016, Oakey recorded a labour force participation rate of 85.5% with an unemployment rate of 7.1%.

As at 2016, the major industry of employment was meat processing with 15.0% of workers employed in this industry. Other major industries of employment included Meat, Poultry and Smallgoods Wholesaling 5.3%, Defence 5.2%, Road Freight Transport 3.5% and Aged Care Residential Services 3.2%.

1.3 Our Key Industries

Oakey's proximity to the connectivity to the Warrego Highway and its location on the Darling Downs provides a natural affiliation to the agriculture and transport industries.

An analysis of industry specialisation shows that Oakey has high level of specialisation in food manufacturing (meat products), road freight transport, defence and aged care residential services reflective of Oakey's location on the Warrego Highway, its role as a service centre to its neighbouring towns and connectivity to the aviation defence base.

1.4 Our Services and Facilities

Oakey's town centre is a vibrant, well-performing centre with a diverse range of successful services and facilities lining Campbell Street enhanced by street scaping. Oakey functions as a service centre for neighbouring towns such as Jondaryan, Kingsthorpe, Gowrie Mountain, Kulpi and Peranga boasting a broad range of services and facilities for residents and visitors. Oakey has the broadest provision of services and facilities compared to other rural towns throughout Toowoomba including a supermarket, post office, banks, newsagent, hospital, police and ambulance as well as mix of retail shops and commercial services.

Oakey boasts exceptional education facilities with strong links to the Inner Downs Trade Training Centre, making it an ideal place for families. Oakey provides childcare facilities, a private and public primary school as well as a secondary school, which offers senior years to Year 12.

Oakey's range of aged care and medical facilities offers provides older residents with peace of mind, allowing older residents to enjoy rural living whilst having easy access to health care services. Oakey's provision of health care services as well as its proximity to Toowoomba also offers a level of reassurance to young families with children as well as older residents who may require medical assistance.

2 OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

2.1 Our Action Plan

Vision: To build and develop Oakey to achieve sustainable economic and lifestyle benefits for the district. To promote the district as an exceptional place to live, work, invest and visit.

Mission: Working towards our vision for the future requires the Oakey community and Toowoomba Regional Council (TRC) to work together as one to nurture the economic and social development of Oakey as an exceptional place to live, work, invest and visit by identifying the actions required and committing to them. These include:

- **Local Governance and Planning:** identifying those key actions that can be implemented by Council that will assist in fostering the economic and social growth and development of Oakey;
- **Community Services and Facilities:** identifying those key actions that can be undertaken by the local resident and business community with Council support to foster the economic and social well-being of Oakey;
- **Infrastructure:** identifying those key actions required to improve and introduce new infrastructure within Oakey to enhance the economic and social development of Oakey;
- **Business and Investment:** identifying those key actions required to attract and retain key business and development opportunities to foster the economic growth and development of Oakey; and
- **Tourism:** identifying those key actions that could assist in increasing the number and frequency of tourists to Oakey.

2.2 Our Key Priority Strategies

Action 1 : Develop a strategy to promote and improve the perception of Oakey

Oakey's image has suffered significant blows in recent years due to the negative perceptions around the water contamination issues. Oakey remains a strong united industrial town with increasing opportunities for development and growth.

HOW	WHO
Develop a website to promote the many attractions and highlights of Oakey and the region	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Lobby all levels of Government to develop a coordinated approach to improving the image of Oakey and promoting development	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Initiate a social media campaign to promote Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Engage with media outlets to promote a positive attitude towards Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Promote the liveability/ investment prospectus for Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Develop a consistent message or slogan to promote Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Promote the positive aspects of Oakey including affordable housing, strong industry, proximity to larger population base, range of services and current and future infrastructure developments	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Design a strategy to counteract negative media that aims to reduce the positive perception of Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Develop a strategy to engage closely with the local community such as holding community events, multicultural festival, Health & Wellbeing Expo.	Oakey Community Care Committee or similar organisation
Work with large companies to assist in the promotion of Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Identify key technologies that may be used to improve the liveability of Oakey and raise the image of the town	Oakey Chamber of Commerce/ Toowoomba Regional Council

Action 2 : Support large industry development and growth in Oakey and district

To ensure the future prosperity of Oakey, work with large industry to ensure future investment and growth of their businesses. Work with the community on the New Acland Mine Stage 3, Oakey Beef Expansions and Defence Base upgrades as well as attracting other large industries to Oakey

HOW	WHO
Provide support for the planned Stage 3 development of the New Acland coal mine	Oakey Chamber of Commerce / New Hope Group
Gain an understanding of the issues facing the proposed Stage 3	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Advocate to Government to approve the development of Stage # of the New Acland mine in partnership with New Hope Group	Oakey Chamber of Commerce / New Hope Group
Get regular briefings and updates from large industry bodies in Oakey such as New Hope Group, Abattoirs, transport, TSBE and defence to see where opportunities for growth may come from	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Advocate and provide support to development applications for industry expansion that will increase jobs and growth in Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Investigate freight issues and opportunities for large industry development in Oakey.	Oakey Chamber of Commerce/Local Transport Operators/Dep.t of Transport & Main Roads
Advocate for improved infrastructure, including relocation of the Railway Crossing to the west of Oakey.	Oakey Chamber of Commerce/Local Transport Operators/Dep.t of Transport & Main Roads
Encourage the Department of Transport and Main Roads to undertake a study of heavy vehicle operations across the region	Oakey Chamber
Improving road infrastructure for heavy vehicle operations on rural roads in the region to improve the movement of livestock, freight and agricultural products across the district eg. Bowenville-Moola Road, Bowenville-Norwin Road	Toowoomba Regional Council, TMR Qld, Heavy Working Group

Action 3 : Develop tourism offerings in Oakey including the development of the Oakey Visitor Information Centre and gaining RV Friendly Town Status.

To gain RV Friendly town status under the CMCA Oakey will need to provide parking in town for RV's, visitor information and a low cost camping option. Oakey Chamber of Commerce is committed to developing the Railway Station as an Community Tourist Information Centre and Oakey Lions Club to delivering a place-making project in the adjacent area. An RV dump point is already provided work with local providers for a low cost camping option.

HOW	WHO
Develop a business plan for the Oakey visitor information centre to understand needs and uses	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Submit funding applications to fitout the Oakey visitor centre	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Develop an RV/ caravan plan for Oakey including access to parking and short term, low cost overnight camping	Oakey Chamber of Commerce/Oakey Lions Club
Work with local accommodation providers to improve access and patronage	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Conduct an audit of tourism related facilities, attractions, accommodation and experiences	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Develop a tourism guide to promote Oakey as a destination and send throughout regional tourist information networks	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Improve online presence of local businesses and attractions through websites and social media eg, trip advisor, RACQ, facebook etc.	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Promote the Oakey Parkrun as a destination run	Oakey Parkrun
Complete an application to gain RV friendly town status or alternative status once conditions are met	Toowoomba Regional Council/ Oakey Chamber

Action 4 : Improve access to the Wellcamp Airport by upgrading Brimblecombe Road or an alternative route to improve heavy vehicle access as export and tourism markets are identified

Western Queensland holds the key to the agricultural export industry for Wellcamp Airport. Beef products manufactured in Oakey will become a key export product from the Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport as export markets are accessed. Lobby for a more direct access to the airport from the Warrego Highway, with the preferred option being the upgrade of Brimblecombes Road to a route suitable for road trains.

HOW	WHO
Develop a needs analysis for the development of a western access corridor for access to Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport, by investigating the amount of freight currently and planned to be exported through the airport	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Hold a meeting with potential beneficiaries of the road to understand their needs	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Identify tourism and event related visitation potential for Oakey	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Hold a meeting with Toowoomba Regional Council on future plans to upgrade the road and the Oakey community needs	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Write a letter to Toowoomba Regional Council requesting a meeting to upgrade the transport corridor	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Develop a plan to upgrade the transport corridor suitable for heavy vehicles	Toowoomba Regional Council
Investigate funding opportunities to develop a heavy vehicle transport corridor to Toowoomba Wellcamp airport	Toowoomba Regional Council

Action 5 : Develop the Oakey showgrounds as a quality events and sporting facility

Oakey Showgrounds has been the venue for a number of successful events, including the Queensland Heritage Rally and the Pony Club State Championships, attracting visitors to Oakey. Opportunity to develop a vibrant horse racing and other equestrian industry in and around Oakey, there is huge potential in utilising the Showgrounds as a major events venue and potential temporary accommodation options for campers.

HOW	WHO
Identify and implement a Oakey Showgrounds User Group	Toowoomba Regional Council
Identify the user's needs of the Oakey Showgrounds	Toowoomba Regional Council / Showgrounds User Group
Develop a masterplan for the Oakey Showgrounds in partnership with current and future users of the reserve to give maximum benefit to the Oakey community	Toowoomba Regional Council / Showgrounds User Group
Work with Toowoomba Regional Council to implement leasing/ licenses over the grounds for existing and potential user groups: Oakey Agricultural, Pastoral & Rodeo Society; Oakey & District Race Club; Oakey Pony Club; Toowoomba Polocrosse Club and Toowoomba and District Old Machinery Society.	Toowoomba Regional Council – Property Services
Identify the unique aspects of the showgrounds and promote those to potential users	Oakey Showgrounds User Group
Investigate opportunities to increase the range of camping/ caravan/ RV options for the showgrounds	Oakey Showgrounds User Group
Promote the showgrounds as a major event destination through the tourism network, promotional brochures, internet and social media	Oakey Showgrounds User Group, Oakey Chamber of Commerce, Toowoomba Regional Council

Action 6 : Acknowledge the differential in urban and regional development price points by implementing lower TRC development related fees and charges for Oakey.

Oakey continues to have its reputation affected by ongoing negative media and uncertainty around the continuation of the New Acland mine. This has adversely affected property prices and led to decreased investment in the Oakey district. The decreasing land value is making it far less attractive for developers to invest in the region with the high infrastructure charges by Council. The Oakey community would like lower infrastructure charges implemented in light of recent events.

HOW	WHO
Assess the current infrastructure charges and develop a strategy for a goal amount for the Oakey region	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Write a letter to the Council with a proposal and request a meeting with relevant officers and Council	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Arrange a meeting with relevant Council officers and Councillors to discuss lowering the infrastructure charges further	Oakey Chamber of Commerce
Develop a strategy to promote the lower fees to potential investors in the region	TRC/ Oakey Chamber

Action 7 : Investigate improving and upgrading health services for Oakey

Oakey is well catered for with health services. The current upgrade of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, the relative flat landscape and growth in various groups, improved health services in Oakey would greatly improve the attractiveness of the down as a place to live

HOW	WHO
Desktop statistical analysis of future demographic change and the demand this will place on Health & Aged Care services.	Toowoomba Regional Council
Work with existing Health and Aged Care Providers to map existing services, and envision how these can be expanded.	Oakey Community Care Committee
Introduce Planning instruments to identify and encourage the development of Aged Care Housing and other Facilities.	Toowoomba Regional Council

2.3 Past Priority Actions and Updates

<p>1. Identify opportunities for Oakey in relation to the Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport, Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, proposed Inland Rail and Toowoomba Enterprise Hub.</p>	<p>This is being continued with more specific emphasis on access to the airport and monitoring of the inland rail project.</p>
<p>2. Identify and discuss potential development options to better utilise land adjacent to the rail line with Queensland Rail (RV parking, parking for employees working in core).</p>	<p>Oakey Lions lease the car park, Oakey Chamber of Commerce now lease the rail station. A development of this area will be planned in partnership between the two organisations.</p>
<p>3. Acknowledge the differential in urban and regional development price points by implementing lower TRC development related fees and charges for Oakey.</p>	<p>Toowoomba Regional Council has Temporary Economic Development subsidies available to promote development. This scheme will continue to be promoted throughout the region.</p>
<p>4. Investigate opportunities to improve and maintain the quality of roads and heavy vehicle routes in Oakey.</p>	<p>This is being refined to include increasing access to Brisbane West Wellcamp airport.</p>
<p>5. Investigate opportunities to support place making initiatives and beautification projects in Oakey to enhance the appearance of town.</p>	<p>Oakey had a 7-day makeover in June 2017, transforming the central area over 7 days. This has inspired the community and will continue momentum moving forward.</p>
<p>6. Investigate opportunity to make Oakey a RV Friendly Town.</p>	<p>Oakey requires a low cost over night stop to become RV friendly. This is being developed as part of the showgrounds masterplan.</p>

2.4 Other Priorities Considered

LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING		
Action	Rationale	Priority
Investigate supply of suitably zoned industrial land to determine if the current supply meets existing and projected demand for industrial land in Oakey.	Suitably zoned industrial land is required to attract new investment and support expansion of existing industry.	
Develop a Transport and Logistics Strategy for the region.	Oakey is a transport hub and has the potential to build on this opportunity.	
Investigate the supply of town water to the affected properties	Lobby Council and Defence to supply water to the properties with the affected bores	
Promote the liveability of Oakey properties with good block sizes, more affordable housing and lower rates	Update the investment profile as information arises and promote Oakey through various media options including news, social media, websites and brochures	
Acknowledge the differential in urban and regional development price points by implementing lower TRC development related fees and charges for Oakey.	Toowoomba Regional Council has committed \$3 million over three years to boost growth and investment in regional townships. The temporary economic development incentives offer significant infrastructure charge discounts to eligible industrial, business and residential developments in these areas.	
Retain Council and Government services and facilities in Oakey	Lobby Council and other Government services to retain and increase levels of service in Oakey. This is vital with increasing investment and growth in the mining and manufacturing sectors of Oakey	
Identify and discuss potential development options to better utilise land adjacent to the rail line with Queensland Rail (RV parking, parking for employees working in core).	The Chamber and the Lions share a lease over this area. Develop a plan to work together to improve and increase usage of this space with the intention of increasing foot traffic through the town centre and retail precinct	

Green – Complete

Red – No longer an option

Blue – New priority

Orange - Commenced

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES		
Action	Rationale	Priority
Improve the level of detailed information currently available about Oakey on the TRC website by including a profile of the community and identify key events, attractions, facilities as well as the history of Oakey.	Information currently available on the TRC website specific to Oakey is too sparse. Additional details are warranted to better communicate the history of Oakey, articulate what makes Oakey unique and welcome readers to visit the town. Information available on the TRC website will complement information available on the Oakey Community website.	Complete
Investigate opportunities to collectively improve and maintain Oakey Creek.	Oakey Creek serves as a community asset; coordination among stakeholders will encourage the sustainability of this natural resource. Potential to use the creek for events.	Masterplan to be implemented
Encourage businesses to maintain their properties and clear rubbish from footpaths.	Appearance of town would benefit from greater attention to the state of entrances by business owners.	
Investigate opportunity to support Oakey Creek Linear Corridor Master plan and encourage local use as well as promote to visitors.	Opportunity to leverage this corridor to nature enthusiasts.	Parkrun proposed as developed
Identify two individuals in the community responsible for finding grants and applying to relevant funding schemes.	Having one or two people identified to find and identify relevant grant funding programs will help the community accomplish desired projects.	
Develop and promote the race track at the showgrounds	Oakey has quality horse training facilities that may be accessed. Promote the facilities throughout the region	New Priority
Develop greater connections throughout Oakey for pedestrians	Look at expanding the linear corridor masterplan to provide paths throughout Oakey	
Investigate seating throughout Oakey	Conduct an audit on seating along key pedestrian routes to cater for all residents	
Develop a sporting facilities masterplan for Oakey	Oakey has a large number of sporting facilities that may be utilised more strategically. Investigate the development of a masterplan and future direction for Oakey sporting facilities	
Health opportunities in Oakey	Oakey has good levels of health service in town. Promote the level of service as a great reason to live and invest in Oakey. Work with Government to increase the level of specialty services and grow the healthcare industry in Oakey	
Investigate opportunities to support place making initiatives and beautification projects in Oakey to enhance the appearance of town.		

INFRASTRUCTURE		
Action	Rationale	Priority
Meet with Bus Queensland and the operators of the Oakey Community Bus service to investigate opportunities to improve public transport through increased and more frequent services between Oakey and Toowoomba for residents.	Bus Queensland services pass through Oakey. An Oakey community bus also operates from Oakey to Toowoomba and return, on Tuesdays and Fridays. The community has identified that this service should be more frequent.	
Improve the gateway entrances to town by installing new signs with new regional branding.	Conveys a consistent image throughout the TRC boundaries. Provides an appealing gateway into Oakey welcoming motorists to the community. A region wide signage strategy is nearing completion.	Complete
Develop a masterplan of Heavy vehicle routes through Oakey with a focus on rail crossings and getting access to new infrastructure.	Investigate opportunities to improve and maintain the quality of roads and heavy vehicle routes in Oakey.	
Lobby defence to promote more opportunities for developing defence housing in Oakey	Defence personnel are often housed off base. Defence could improve the image of Oakey through investing in Defence housing to be located in and around Oakey	
Identify opportunities for Oakey in relation to the Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport, Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, proposed Inland Rail and Toowoomba Enterprise Hub.	Monitor progress on the major infrastructure projects and maximise benefits for Oakey as the projects progress	

BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT		
Action	Rationale	Priority
Meet with the New Acland Coal Mine to investigate supply chain opportunities with mine's expansion to match local businesses with local suppliers.	Collaborate with the mine and encourage supplies to be sourced locally when possible.	
Identify and collate information regarding any underutilised assets in Oakey that could provide renewed development/investment opportunities in an underutilised assets register.	A compiled register of underutilised assets could provide renewed development or investment opportunities.	
Meet with horse trainers that currently utilise the existing cinders track at Oakey to identify opportunities in the equine industry to better capitalise on the existing cinders track.	Cinders tracks are not widely available and can be a drawing card to develop the equine industry in Oakey.	New Priority
Meet with the Oakey Abattoir to determine best mechanism to support their expansion plans.	The Oakey Abattoir is a significant employer within the community.	
Work with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce to investigate opportunities to better support the professionalism and sustainability of the Oakey Chamber of Commerce.	Accessing available resources will help build the capacity of the Oakey Chamber of Commerce and ultimately enhance the efficiency of the organisation. The community has identified weak business confidence, poor ability to attract investment and lack of cohesiveness between local businesses.	
Develop an Investment and Liveability Prospectus that can be utilised by TRC, TSBE, DSDIP and the community to promote business and residential growth by highlighting the best of Oakey.	An Investment Prospectus summarises the condition of Oakey and can be used to highlight desired areas of growth, a valuable tool for investment attraction.	Complete
Investigate opportunity to develop and implement a downtown commercial improvement program aimed to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the town.	Oakey's core is performing well, with a vacant shopfront rate of less than 3%. The development of an incentive for commercial improvement in the downtown area has potential of encouraging property owners to invest in their properties.	
Investigate opportunities to arise from the solar farm developments around Oakey	The Oakey Solar Farm and the Yarranlea projects are under development. Continue to monitor developments and promote opportunities where they arise	

Oakey Community Growth Action Plan

TOURISM		
Action	Rationale	Priority
Meet with Toowoomba Conferences to identify and implement key strategies to actively promote event hosting opportunities available in Oakey (e.g. the cultural centre).	Oakey is the largest of the six regional centres. The Cultural Centre facility is a Council owned asset that has potential to attract a one day conference that gathers officers from surrounding regional councils. Raises Oakey's profile and uses the available space.	
Investigate opportunities to better integrate the Oakey events calendar with Council's events calendar register.	Inclusion of Oakey events on the TRC Events Register will help boost awareness across the region and increase numbers.	
Investigate opportunities to develop and promote key cycle routes through Oakey by establishing key cycle routes between Oakey and Toowoomba.	Cycling is a growing sport and the identification of prime cycle routes for this target market is an opportunity. Oakey is reasonably close to Toowoomba and a loop between the two is a feasible route for avid cyclists.	
Investigate opportunities to host a festival in Oakey.	Oakey has a high proportion of multicultural residents who work at the abattoir. This presents an opportunity to celebrate their heritage through a Multicultural Festival.	
Meet with local sporting groups to investigate potential sporting event opportunities that could be held annually in Oakey (e.g. Triathlon or fishing tournament utilising Oakey Creek).	Oakey Creek is slowly being revitalised and serves to be an asset to the community. The creek has potential to develop events that attract special interest groups into town.	
Meet with the FKG Tour of Toowoomba event organisers to investigate the potential to include Oakey as a stage in the FKG Tour of Toowoomba.	Oakey has the potential to integrate with the FKG Tour of Toowoomba due to its proximity to the city.	
Investigate opportunities to leverage tourism opportunities off air base/museum/fly-in exhibition etc.	Defence is a significant sub-sector to Oakey, accounting for 9.1% of total employment. The air base is unique to the community and the Australian Army Flying Museum serves to be a great attraction for visitors. The Annual Fly-in and exhibition weekend is significantly supported by sponsors and presents an opportunity for growth.	
Investigate opportunities to promote Oakey's involvement in Council's Summer Tunes Program.	The Summer Tunes program provides free, live music and is a great way to relax with friends and family on a Sunday afternoon. Increasing awareness and growing attendance of the event may warrant more dates, thus more appealing to locals and visitors alike.	
Tourist information centre at railway	Develop the tourist information centre at the railway the Chamber of Commerce has a lease over	
Historic tourist walk	Investigate opportunities for the development of a heritage walk through Oakey. Investigate RADF funding to partner in this project	
Picnic race meeting	Oakey has a rich racing tradition. The establishment of a country picnic racing meeting would promote and highlight this industry. Work with various stakeholders and racing Qld to establish	
Helicopter display	Continue to investigate a helicopter display for Oakey to highlight the links to the army aviation base. Contact air museum.	
Integrate with Woolshed	Oakey was the base for the Jondaryan Woolshed. Work with the Woolshed to increase tourist visitation to the area.	
Investigate opportunity to make Oakey a RV Friendly Town	Oakey will need to have a low cost camping option which is currently being investigated under the Toowoomba Regional Council RV Strategy and the formation of the local camping reference groups,	

APPENDIX 1: 2015 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

2.5 Strengths

2.5.1 Services and Facilities

- **Provision and quality of parks and sporting facilities:** Oakey has a number of sporting facilities that provide quality recreational space for residents and visitors;
- **Provision of event space:** Oakey has a variety of quality event space such as the cultural centre with capacity to host a range of events;
- **Broad range of services and facilities:** Oakey has a variety of quality existing services and facilities including retail, health care, education and recreation;
- **Library and the service it offers to the community:** the library offers a range of services to the local Oakey community including youth programs, digital hub including Wi-Fi, workshops and resume writing. The library also provides information for visitors;
- **Close linkages with trade training facility at high school:** the Oakey High School is one of four schools in the region with a close relationship with the Inner Downs Trade Training centre, which offers industry standard training to students; and
- **Well performing town centre:** Oakey has a well performing centre with a broad range of services and facilities with low vacancy rates (2.6% or 492m² of vacant shopfront).

2.5.2 Housing and Lifestyle

- **Ease of access:** Oakey is easily accessible through multiple entry points into town with heavy transport restricted in areas where it is not required;
- **Proximity to Toowoomba:** located approximately 30 kilometres west of Toowoomba, Oakey's proximity allows an easy commute for residents to Toowoomba to work/visit, as well as an easy commute for visitors to Oakey; and
- **Wide variety of housing stock options:** through a wide variety of housing options to cater for a variety of housing preferences for individuals, couples, families and groups.

2.5.3 Industry

- **Connectivity with the New Acland mine:** located northwest of Oakey, the New Acland mine provides employment opportunities, stimulus to the town centre as well as community funding and support; and
- **Value adding to primary industries:** Oakey has an abattoir which represents significant value adding to beef cattle production in the broader region.

2.6 Weaknesses

2.6.1 Business, Infrastructure and Investment

- **Weak business confidence:** the community has indicated that there is a lack of confidence amongst local businesses, which is likely to stifle local business growth, development and investment;
- **Ability to attract investment:** despite Oakey's proximity to Toowoomba, location just off the Warrego Highway, connectivity to the New Acland mine etc. Oakey appears to have struggled to

attract significant investment. The community is concerned that there are misconceptions of Oakey that discourage investment such as appearance, uncertainty over flooding, expectation of lower costs compared to Toowoomba etc.;

- **Lack of cohesiveness within the local business community:** concerns were raised suggesting that the local business community is fractured; and
- **Lack of regular public transport:** public transport between Oakey and Toowoomba is limited and is predominantly serviced by a local community funded bus service which operates between Oakey and Toowoomba twice a week.

2.6.2 Community

- **Negative perceptions of Oakey:** the community has raised concern that there is a negative perception of Oakey in the broader community, which can deter individuals and businesses as a place to live, visit or do business; and
- **Limited population growth:** population growth in Oakey has been limited in recent times with concerns this may be associated with the negative perceptions associated with Oakey. Population growth is fundamental in trying to further grow a community both economically and socially to provide a strong population base.

2.7 Opportunities

2.7.1 Tourism

- **Drive tourism market:** Oakey has a number of unique visitor attractions such as the Jondaryan Woolshed and Army Museum, providing an opportunity to entice visitors to Oakey particularly given its connection to the Warrego Highway;
- **Opportunity to promote Oakey to cyclists:** Oakey is a favourable route for many cyclists. An opportunity exists to better promote Oakey as part of a safe cycle route for avid cyclists, whilst promoting local services and facilities;
- **Aviation theme:** unlike other rural towns in Toowoomba, Oakey's affiliation with aviation defence lends itself to offering a potential tourism opportunity to attract special interest groups with appreciation for aviation history;
- **Potential to make Oakey an RV friendly town:** Oakey is a popular destination for RVs, which provides a range of services and facilities that are easily accessible to RVs representing a logical opportunity to work towards Oakey gaining RV friendly status; and
- **Multicultural community festival:** Oakey has diverse mix of cultures, representing an opportunity to celebrate the town's cultural diversity through a festival.

2.7.2 Business and Investment

- **Business community fractured:** the community has recognised an opportunity to improve the cohesiveness of the local business community and improve the overall functionality of the local Chamber of Commerce;
- **Opportunity for aged care services:** the town currently provides a hospital and two medical practices. With an aging population, an opportunity exists to develop additional aged care services for the older residents of Oakey;
- **Local buy campaign:** Oakey has introduced a local buy campaign to encourage residents to buy locally. Whilst the campaign is a good community initiative, the community has indicated that the local buy campaign requires some tweaking;

- **Improve aesthetic appearance of town buildings:** existing buildings appear weathered and would benefit from renovation to improve the aesthetic appeal of Oakey; and
- **Oakey Creek beautification:** Oakey Creek is the main water body through Oakey, which has become increasingly popular for recreational activity particularly fishing. Oakey Creek represents a natural asset that could be increasingly utilised by residents and visitors for recreational pursuits such as fishing.

2.7.3 Infrastructure

- **Cinder track:** the cinder track is a unique asset to Oakey currently utilised by a number of Toowoomba clubs. The uniqueness of the track represents an opportunity to further promote the track;
- **Increased utilisation of school halls for sports:** the community has identified an opportunity to increase the use of school halls for sporting opportunities particularly for young girls; and
- **Transport and logistics:** Oakey has good road access with linkages to Charlton Wellcamp with an opportunity to enhance Oakey as a transport and logistics hub.

2.8 Threats

2.8.1 Economic Conditions

- **Development costs impacting viability of development:** Council's development costs are seen as an impediment to development opportunities in town;
- **Uncertainty of future mining operations:** the volatile nature of mining operations poses a potential threat to Oakey given the towns connectivity with the New Acland mine;
- **Uncertainty of the air base:** the future of the base is unknown as the government has been developing aviation training at other bases;
- **Underground water contamination:** the threat of underground water sources being contaminated presents an issue for the community; and
- **Decreased disposable spending:** continued economic uncertainty coupled with increased living expenses has led to a decrease in the amount of available discretionary income.

2.8.2 Growth and Development

- **Continued misperception of Oakey:** residents have already expressed concern that Oakey is negatively perceived by the broader region, posing potential implications for attracting future residents, visitors and business investment. The continuance of negative perceptions associated with Oakey can serve as a deterrent for the overall social and economic development of Oakey; and
- **Continued limited population growth:** historically, Oakey has experienced limited population growth with concerns that should this trend continue it would undermine Oakey's social and economic development as well as future business investment.