



## 28 POLICY AND FUNDING LEVERS/INITIATIVES



The Committee for Brisbane requests that Brisbane City Council engages fully on these recommendations – and others that will eventuate as strategic planning progresses – to ensure the region is well-positioned for the earliest and strongest economic recovery from the pandemic.

The Committee for Brisbane calls on Brisbane City Council to:

### POLICY AND FUNDING LEVERS

#### Construction and infrastructure

- Establish** a Brisbane Economic Recovery Taskforce of industry experts and council (a business-Council partnership) to undertake immediate and longer-term actions for economic recovery, including:
  - Identifying and progressing fast-tracking opportunities for construction and infrastructure, including the design and procurement phases, to get as many people back into the workforce as quickly as possible. This should include both large-scale projects that support big workforces over longer time frames as well as smaller, labour-intensive projects, such as maintenance. Projects that are not quite shovel-ready need to be brought forward as quickly as possible, and the definition broadened to include projects that are at the procurement/planning/design stage and could be shovel-ready in six to 12 months, including business cases.
  - Simplifying Council procurement processes (incentives, transparency of process and decision making) and fast-tracking by removing barriers to deliver efficiency.
  - Ensuring that project proponents are genuinely encouraged to suggest innovative responses that benefit a project and/or the community, by awarding contracts based on the value proposition, rather than just price.
  - Reviewing Council's "buy local" tendering requirements to ensure they provide the best possible support for regional economic recovery, and long-term economic stability.
  - Conduct a "no agendas" review of project financing models and opportunities, including borrowing and the reuse/recycling of city-owned capital, including land.
- Review** the Brisbane Vision 2031, the Brisbane Economic Development Plan, the Brisbane City Plan and the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan to accommodate post-COVID-19 work, travel, and settlement patterns.
- Advocate** to the State Government to commission a "root and branch" review, in partnership with the development and infrastructure sectors, to improve lengthy and complex assessment and approval processes and modernise Queensland's planning laws to encourage and stimulate long-term economic activity.
- Develop** a Brisbane Infrastructure Investment Plan - in proper consultation with industry - including alternate funding models for infrastructure projects and how to attract more private sector investment in infrastructure. Considerations should include any opportunities for investment triggered by a possible trans-Tasman/Pacific/east Asia bubble, including from Brisbane's sister cities.
- Conduct an international **review** of project risk-management/sharing options. Project risk sharing needs to be recalibrated. Equitable risk sharing is paramount to project success and governments at all levels need to be partial risk holders. Government must share the burden on projects, particularly at this time when the Balance Sheets of developers and contractors are being hit. Collaborative contracts should be implemented for project delivery going forward.
- Direct or lobby** Queensland Urban Utilities to review and amend its infrastructure charges to reflect the economic impact of COVID-19 on construction projects and to provide direct financial relief to support economic recovery.



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7. **Initiate** a project to integrate land uses with transport across the entire SEQ rail network. With its planned delivery of increased rail capacity and frequency of service, Cross River Rail could be transformational by delivering economic benefits not only to Brisbane's inner city, but also to areas showing the greatest growth in population like Ipswich, Logan and Moreton and Brisbane's "missing middle".
8. **Lobby** the State Government to provide demand side stimulus, eg stamp duty relief and additional first home buyer assistance, to reboot the housing construction sector. While there are shovel ready projects in the residential development sector, demand is subdued due to job losses and economic uncertainty and the necessary constraints on sales operations. Tax and financial incentives will provide an important boost to this critical economic sector.
9. **Consider, and adopt** where relevant to Brisbane, proposals for economic recovery recommended by industry associations, for example the Property Council of Australia's seven-point plan, to ensure specialist industry advice informs Council's strategic responses.

## Creative industries

10. **Pledge** \$1.25 million to provide immediate assistance to creative artists and creative organisations via quick response grants, to ensure Brisbane remains a creative city, globally recognised for its dynamic cultural scene. To ensure fast turnaround and notification of grant applications, Council can draw on the expertise of the local sector to conduct peer reviews.
11. **Provide** programming subsidies to Brisbane venues to purchase creative content. Alternatively, **provide** a programming "line of credit" to venues to invest in booking talent, to be repaid from ticket sales. The intent of the subsidy or line of credit is to give venues the ability to engage artists directly, with an incentive to sell as many tickets as possible. Venues are generally booked by promoters, with a relatively long lead time. If venues had the budget, they could immediately employ local talent, reducing the financial risk from paying upfront fees to artists.
12. **Create connections** with, and **incentivise**, local businesses/landlords to activate empty or under-utilised premises for creative purposes. For relevant spaces/locations, Council and the State Government should **facilitate** (uncomplicated) liquor licences and noise permits to enable events and optimise opportunities for a range of temporary/pop-up activities to stimulate economic activity.
13. **Provide** free parking at Council managed car parks and free public transport if attending an arts/cultural event.
14. **Identify** BCC owned assets that could be offered for use and activation by artists. Council could **provide** venues, such as the Seven Hills Theatre, in-kind to encourage more local events as well as provide spaces for creative development and use of public spaces for pop-up activations and temporary art.
15. **Provide** a Council-managed "self-storage" facility at subsidised rates. This will give creatives and collectives a storage solution to safeguard equipment, sets and road cases, ready for re-use or touring opportunities. There is potential to design the Brisbane Tool Library into this facility and have it manage the space and loans.
16. **Implement** a communication strategy to boost consumer confidence as entertainment precincts and arts organisations start to re-open. Be an ally and amplify the voices of the creative sector, advocating for the city's creative workforce to other levels of government and promote the value and importance of the arts to the Brisbane community.
17. Offer **incentives** to developers and businesses to work with artists to contribute to the identity of neighbourhoods, for example, via the commissioning of public art.

## Social and affordable housing

18. **Invest** in more social/affordable housing – to provide people with homes and keep builders building. The demand for more social/affordable housing stock and the need to renew old social housing stock existed before the pandemic. Demand will continue to grow, and private dwelling investment is likely to decline, so the time for Council investment in and/or support for social/affordable housing is now. For example, projects such as St Vincent de Paul's Peel Street and 3rd Space in Fortitude Valley are ready, or near-ready, for Council consideration and, when submitted, should be assessed speedily.
19. Conduct a proper consideration and **assessment** of realistic (ie attractive to private sector investors) build-to-rent projects as a counter cyclical activity to offset a likely dampening of mum-and-dad investment in rental stock. Brisbane's essential workers need access to affordable housing to enable them to live as close as practicably to their employment.



## POLICY AND FUNDING LEVERS

### Supply chains and advanced manufacturing

20. Undertake an **analysis** of advanced manufacturing opportunities for greater Brisbane, including industry attraction initiatives, and consider programs to support re-tooling, including R&D grants, to re-establish a robust manufacturing sector in the region. For example, the Rheinmetal Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence is about to be commissioned for construction of LAND400 and an opportunity may exist to expand training and re-skilling (ie through TAFEs) and manufacturing opportunities to support the project.
21. **Provide assistance** (funding and/or resources) to identify local and regional supply chains that can provide the critical goods and services to support existing and future local manufacturing.
22. The Lord Mayor's election pledge to reduce payment terms for small businesses that supply to Council from 30 days to seven days to **commence** from 1 July and be a permanent change to Council's supply chain management.

### Skills and training and entrepreneurship

23. Help to grow a digitally-competent regional economy by providing **funding support** for the retraining and upskilling of workers, managers and employers in Brisbane, including digitisation strategies for the delivery of services and managing supply chains. This type of agile learning could be achieved in partnership with the region's TAFEs.
24. Consider **establishing** business incubators to provide direct advice and support to Brisbane businesses that may need to recalibrate their products and/or services. Alternatively, consider a grants scheme to provide funds directly to businesses to enable them to access the right support.
25. Consider **establishing** an innovation fund that encourages, and provides financial support for, Brisbane businesses that opt to recalibrate their products and/or services or that are ready to move to the commercialisation (scale-up) phase. This could be based on the Federal Government model, chaired by Will Hodgman, of an equity investment fund to provide longer term equity funding to small businesses.

### Community spaces, placemaking and temporary urbanism

26. **Support** local business communities through the (temporary) reclamation of street space to increase public space and improve local streets and paths. Acknowledging that physical distancing will likely be in place for some time, it will be important to provide shared spaces for people and transport. One example is Perth's recent easing of licencing requirements to allow cafes and restaurants to operate in temporary reclaimed spaces. Another is the NSW Streets as Shared Spaces grants that provide funding for temporary activations that accommodate physical distancing requirements and help to support local businesses - and build on local character and improve the attractiveness of centres and public spaces.
27. Brisbane could earn a reputation as a place where businesses can seamlessly integrate flexible working solutions as a part of their employee value proposition - to deliver a competitive advantage in the search for future talent. Part of successful flexibility will include access to "community" where employees don't gather daily in a workplace. Brisbane City Council could play a significant role in **identifying and creating** community and green spaces to facilitate "off-site" interaction.

### Reducing waste and carbon

28. Using the catalyst of reduced carbon emissions (worldwide) as a result of the lockdown, undertake a detailed **review** of Council operations, policies and supply chains to embed circular economy and carbon reduction principles into "Business As Usual" activities, to rebuild the regional economy with strong environmental credentials.