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MEDIA RELEASE

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Fast-tracked projects and policy reforms for Brisbane's economic recovery

The Committee for Brisbane has recommended to Brisbane City Council 17 projects for fast-tracking and 28 policy and funding initiatives to map a way to economic recovery and reform.

The Committee yesterday presented BCC's Economic Recovery Taskforce Chair Cr Adam Allan with a report entitled "Recommendations for economic recovery and reform", designed to generate new jobs and deliver regional economic value.

Committee for Brisbane CEO Barton Green said COVID-19 was a strategy-derailing event that required structural and governance responses to recalibrate the economy.

"Brisbane's reputation will be determined by how we manage the response to the pandemic and how we plan for recovery - by improving the economy, maintaining a collaborative government, and benefitting our society. That task is too big for government alone," Mr Green said.

"The Committee for Brisbane has developed recommendations and suggestions for Council that have been prepared by experienced businesspeople who represent a wide-cross section of the south east Queensland economy - and who are dealing, daily, with the impacts of the pandemic.

"As a start, we have asked Council to ensure its Economic Recovery Taskforce is a true business-Council partnership, tapping into the private sector experts who have the life and business experience to help chart the bold courses back to economic success, including opportunities for structural reform.

"We have recommended something similar to the model developed by Premier Dan Andrews with his *Building Victoria's Recovery Taskforce*, which is co-chaired by a senior businessperson and two senior bureaucrats, that has just approved the fast-tracking of five, shovel-ready building and development projects across Melbourne, valued at \$1.2 billion, in a bid to kickstart that state's economy and create thousands of jobs."

Mr Green said the Committee's recommendations for fast-tracking included some projects that were already live, but whose staging/phases may be able to be brought forward, and included:

- Connect Inland Rail to the Port of Brisbane – a project that could increase Gross Regional Production by around \$5.4 billion to 2045.
- Finalise the business case and announce the commencement of the \$2.1 billion Brisbane Live entertainment precinct.
- Fast-track the Cross River Rail Precincts Strategy that could leverage up to \$20 billion in new city-changing investment and generate around 35,000 new jobs.
- Resolve the redesign of the Cultural Centre Metro Station and bring forward schedules to deliver the project earlier.

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- Fast-track approval of the \$2.1 billion Waterfront Brisbane project on Eagle Street.
- Recommit to the SEQ City Deal. “With the amount of time and energy expended to date on exploring the SEQ City Deal, it is clearly a logical place to start,” Mr Green said.
- Release visions around the 2032 Olympics and Paralympics candidature and establish a Legacy Planning Taskforce.
- Conduct an audit of potential suburban renewal projects, that are more likely to be tendered and delivered by local businesses and professionals.
- Promote Brisbane’s creative sector to highlight the value of creativity, culture and lifestyle and re-engage people with arts and culture.
- Develop a Brisbane Charter of Digital Capability to support SMEs to competently ask for and access suitable standards of service.
- Commission an audit and develop a program to rectify Brisbane’s internet “black holes”.

Mr Green said the Committee also presented 28 suggestions for policy reform and funding initiatives, including:

- Develop a Brisbane Infrastructure Investment Plan to attract more private sector investment.
- Advocate to the State Government to commission a “root and branch” review of Queensland’s planning laws.
- 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.
- Pledge \$1.25 million to provide immediate assistance to creative artists and creative organisations.
- 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.
- Invest in and/or support more social/affordable housing.
- Undertake an analysis of advanced manufacturing opportunities for greater Brisbane.
- Help to grow a digitally-competent regional economy by providing funding support for the retraining and upskilling of workers, managers and employers, including digitisation strategies.
- Undertake a detailed review of Council operations, policies and supply chains to embed circular economy and carbon reduction principles.

Note: a copy of the full report can be found here: https://committeeforbrisbane.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CFB-Recovery-Strategy-Group-recommendations_260520.pdf

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For more information, please contact Committee for Brisbane CEO Barton Green on 0411 702 209.