



SUSTAINABLE
MALANDA

Dynamic Rural Village

DRiVe Malanda

A 21st century model for a rural village in transition
BLUEPRINT FOR THE BUSH SCOPING DOCUMENT - 2011

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Developing an innovative strategy for a product, industry, town or region is a hard task even during the best of times. The Malanda Township began in the early 20th century as a place of hardy pioneers, facing an uncertain future in an unfamiliar landscape. The intervening century has seen many changes but nothing compared to the days the early pioneers faced, until now. In recent years, Malanda town and surrounding areas have experienced more than their fair share of challenges: with Wet Tropics World Heritage Listing in 1988 resulting in the protection of our world class forests at the expense of employment in the timber industry; the deregulation of the Dairy Industry in 1999 causing many farmers to leave the industry and the local milk factory to scale down employment; Tropical Cyclone Larry in 2006 causing widespread damage to properties and farms; the Global Financial Crisis in 2009 reducing tourism in the region; and then Tropical Cyclone Yasi in 2011 causing more damage. These events coupled with the uncertainty associated with a changing climate, the increasing costs of fuel and an unstable global economy find Malanda residents, along with many other rural communities challenged and concerned about their future.

However, a group of concerned Malanda citizens undaunted by the task of revitalising the area got together in 2009 as part of the Regional Council's Town Plan consultation process, to brainstorm how to increase community prosperity and enhance economic diversification. They recognised that in spite of the difficulties, the area had exceptional environmental amenity and strong community cohesion. There was also a long history of vigorous grass roots movements, well-functioning community groups and innovative economic projects which had been used to formulate new strategic directions incorporating the strengths of the past with the trends of future.

In 2010, the group expanded and decided to keep working together under the name Sustainable Malanda, and with funding from the Queensland Government's Building Rural Communities Fund through Blueprint for the Bush, undertook the role of investigating opportunities for the region that are practical and feasible and would, while diversifying economic risk, also help maintain the strong community spirit and unique environmental qualities which are prized by its citizens and the envy of visitors.

Sustainable Malanda, has brainstormed, analysed, commenced strategic planning and gathered other stakeholders from the area to develop this Scoping Document as a first step toward its primary goal: the creation of a model for economic reinvigoration of a rural town in the 21st Century.

The process has been lively and inclusive, involving up to 100 stakeholders in meetings and workshops, and has resulted in Transitional Strategies, objectives, action plans and a new name – Dynamic Rural Village (DRiVe) Malanda as a vision for future.

The six key Transitional Strategies for diversifying from a largely conventional agricultural economy have focussed on proven but progressive technologies and innovative alternatives rather than developing new and high risk projects. These Transitional Strategies are as follows:

1. Rural Innovations
2. Education and Training - Green Jobs
3. Rural Technology Village
4. Health, Aged Care and Ecotourism
5. Renewable Energies
6. Green Build

The Queensland Government's Building Rural Communities Fund through Blueprint for the Bush provided funding to develop the project goals, objectives, process and benefits as outlined below.

Project goal

To optimise the economic opportunities of sustainable development based on the characteristics of Malanda and its discrete geographical region.



Project objectives and process

- Invite stakeholder engagement to define sustainable community/economic objectives
- Consult with professionals to identify and develop responses to outside trends
- Report back to community stakeholder groups to refine key objectives for further action
- Produce a model/lighthouse project for regional renewal across the broader region of the Southern Tablelands

Project benefits

Enhancement of existing community generated sustainability program by:

- Actions to respond to community and economic multipliers in the 2011 program
- Sourcing information relevant to diversifying drivers of economic prosperity
- Reinforcing community confidence and values going forward in the redevelopment
- Providing working/lifestyle opportunities for new residents/returning young families

OVERALL PROCESS AND HISTORY OF SUSTAINABLE MALANDA

The group, Sustainable Malanda, the latest in a rich history of community-driven initiatives to improve the town and surrounds, first coalesced as the Malanda Area Reference Group (MARG). See [Appendix One](#) for more details.

The five members of MARG were chosen by Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) from applicants involved in the community consultation phase of the development of the TRC Amalgamated Land Use Planning Scheme (final due in 2015):

- Peter Axford – Malanda High School;
- John Finter – Malanda Chamber of Commerce;
- Chris Symons – Malanda Lions Club;
- Christine Doan – Malanda North**
- Ex-officio Rhonda Sorensen – Councillor.



Sustainable Malanda members, Peter Axford and Cr. Rhonda Sorensen

Called into action in 2009, MARG soon satisfied the TRC Planning Department purposes but the members had educated themselves in town planning issues sufficiently to feel empowered to continue serving the community by taking that knowledge and broadening the scope of the original remit of MARG. One of these members, Christine Doan, owner of the triple bottom line property development Malanda North, had already undertaken significant research in current sustainability thinking for that project and this assisted the group in moving forward.

In late 2010, the group named themselves Sustainable Malanda, expanded their membership and engaged an outside facilitator, Nicky Swan with strengths and commitment in the field of sustainable development, to assist the group and its ideas to evolve. Funding for this Scoping document was obtained in January 2011.

A broad stakeholder forum in July 2011 by invitation to 70 key local representatives from business and community groups was particularly successful in attracting a diverse range of participants to listen to presentations of the work to that point and input in a very lively workshoping process.

Recent support of the local Regional Development Australia (RDA) Board member, Dr Geraldine McGuire to facilitate two strategic planning workshops in August and September 2011 using Issues Management Planning templates resulted in the development of objectives, actions and key messages for each Transitional Strategy. Furthermore, formal support from the Malanda Chamber of Commerce has been secured to continue to auspice and assist the ongoing development of the Sustainable Malanda initiatives through a formal sub-committee. All these advances have enabled this project to evolve, encouraging continued and additional local support and demonstrating regional leadership in triple bottom line (sustainable) initiatives.

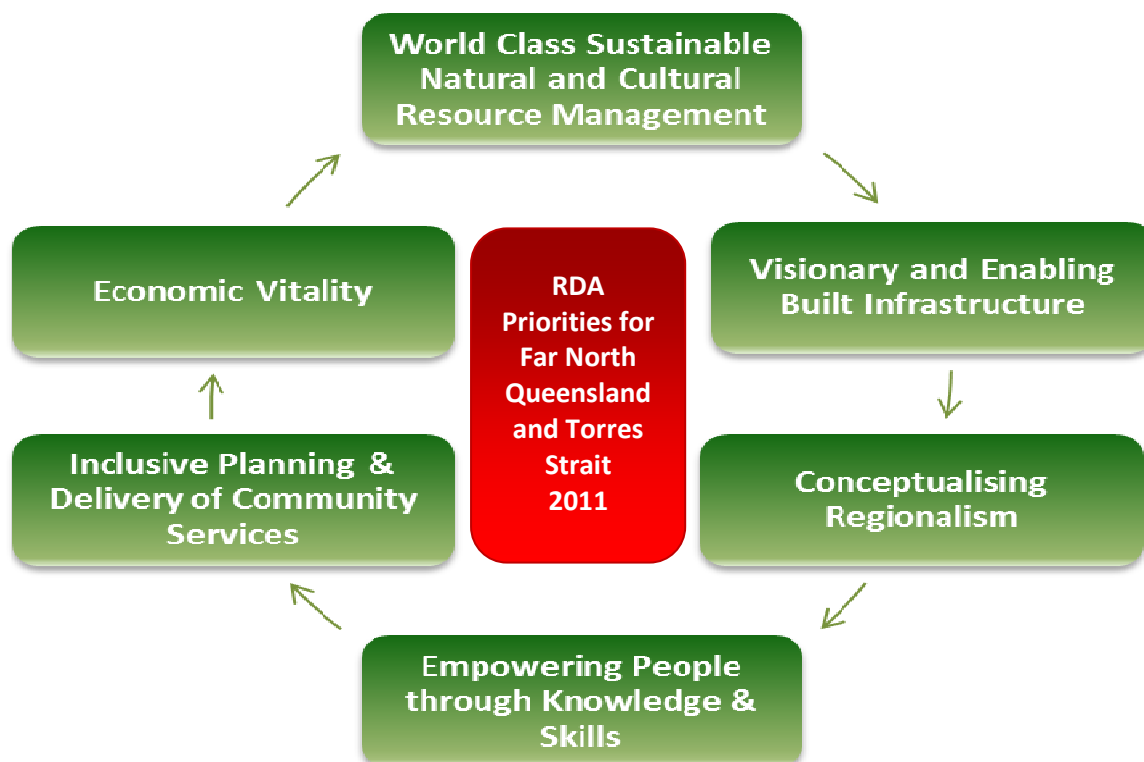
****Note:**

Starting in the mid-1970's Christine Doan acquired three properties now totalling 45 hectares bounded by Atherton - Malanda Roads, the North Johnstone, Cleminson Creek and Ginn Road now referred to as "Malanda North".

THE SIX KEY TRANSITIONAL STRATEGIES

The six Transitional Strategies are interdependent. Each is conceived to integrate with and leverage from the others. Part of the purpose of this document is to outline the Transitional Strategies as well as to identify probable starting points with minimum requirements and/or strong integration with other Transitional Strategies. It also identifies work in progress which falls under the six categories or relates to more than one strategy. This document is not intended to be an end in itself but a living document leading to, or accelerating and integrating action. Action creates interest; attracts investors, investment and job opportunities; and builds community confidence.

The six key Transitional Strategies were developed after carefully considering the Regional Priorities detailed in the Regional Development Australia (RDA) Far North Queensland and Torres Straits Roadmap (RDA Roadmap 2011) and align with the following Priorities:



This Scoping Document allows the community to develop a path into the future. Although some of the ideas proposed may seem quite futuristic at this stage, if each sector takes ownership and responsibility for implementing actions as outlined and starts to collaborate with each other, there will inevitably be changes towards a stronger, more economically diverse and resilient community. This community initiative is a display of regional economic leadership, offering the possibility of revitalisation across the Southern Tablelands as well as creating a viable model for other Rural Communities in decline around Australia and elsewhere.

The six Transitional Strategies are:

1. Rural Innovations
2. Education and training including Green Collar Workforce (Green Jobs)
3. Rural Technology Village
4. Health, Aged Care and Ecotourism
5. Renewable Energy incorporating Smart Grid Principles
6. Built Environment including Green Build

Potential Indicators

Indicators need to be SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time based. As a starting point for discussion the following are presented for consideration by the community as measures to verify the success of these strategies:

Regional Priorities	Transitional Strategies	Indicator	Source of Information
Planning	All	Revitalisation of Malanda region illustrated by increase in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> working population (lowering of unemployment rate by 2%) and population diversity – more families with young children immigrating to the area, within 5yrs 	Tablelands Regional Council residents database / Census data
Empowered people - Increased regional consciousness and engagement.	All	The number of people involved in the Sustainable Malanda process and who have attended workshops and contributed ideas – growth over time	Meeting notes and minutes
Economic vitality	All	Malanda seen as “Model for economic reinvigoration of a rural village using sustainable technology” in State Plans by 2020	DEEDI and other Qld Government agencies
Reconceptualising regionalism	Rural innovation	More regional agricultural based industries (increase by 15%) to sustain and support current businesses through increased diversity	DEEDI - Dep of Primary Industry
		Malanda site for NBN early roll-out	DEEDI
	Green jobs	X number of new ‘green jobs’	DEEWR and Tablelands Industry Workforce Group
Infrastructure – visionary and enabling infrastructure	Green build	New buildings with HIA green 6star rating system implemented	Tropical Green Build Network; Green Build Council of Australia; UDIA
	Health and Aged Care	The opening of 100 new aged care beds within the region with 5yrs	Tablelands Reg Council; Qld Dep of Health
	Renewable Energy – Smart Grid	Uptake of micro-hydro or solar systems implemented on local buildings/properties – new or retro-fitting Eg: 2 micro-hydros and 2MW of power by 2015	Ergon Regional renewable energy technology sales figures
World class cultural and natural heritage management	Ecotourism	3 new cultural or natural heritage programs or presentation opportunities established in Malanda Region- eg: incorporation of Indigenous cultural heritage interpretation by local people in new Visitor Centre.	Visitor Centre
		At least 1 Community project trialling Carbon sequestration / biodiversity protection or ecological services quantification or payments	WTMA / Terrain / Comm Dept of Climate Change

1 Rural Innovations

Over the past 100 years the Malanda region has based its economy on the land-based products that the area generates which are primarily dairy, cropping and forestry products. Despite the cessation of large scale logging and sawmilling after the Wet Tropics World Heritage Listing in 1988 and the de-regulation of the dairy industry in 1999, there are still significant opportunities within these and new industries by diversifying into new or niche products. The Statement of Issue, Objectives, Key Tactics, Key Messages and Opportunities for Rural Innovations are described below.

Statement of Issue

Retention and revitalisation of agricultural industries to enable local food security and economic viability of landholders

Objectives:

- Provision of support to existing conventional agricultural industries to meet the challenges of changing climate, government requirements and market conditions
- Promotion of alternative low-cost (renewable) inputs with high-value output systems (e.g. organic and biodynamic) to reduce farming costs, restore degraded agricultural landscapes and secure the economic viability of landholders
- Enhance the development of alternative crops, agricultural systems and value-adding enterprises which increase return on investment to landholders
- Increase the opportunities for field days in the region
- Development of local food supply systems which enhance nutritional values and ensure food security for the local community

Key Tactics

- Identify and collate a database of current agricultural products and markets
- Identify who is doing what in the region, what are the constraints and how they can be assisted.
- Determine the actions required to support existing products, landholders and local supply chains.
- Engage council re land use planning options.
- Commence dialogue with regional banks over purchasing options.
- Assess opportunities for participation in the “Carbon Farming Initiative”.
- Develop case studies of existing successful conventional, alternative agricultural enterprises and local supply chains which could be included in a showcasing event
- Showcase current successful conventional and alternative agricultural enterprises in agreed events e.g. Field days
- Determine any constraints to the enhancement of alternative crops, agricultural systems, value-adding enterprises and local supply chains; identify action plans to overcome these constraints; and improve take up of opportunities

Key Messages

- Southern Tablelands is a diverse region with world class agricultural land and water resources capable of producing a vast range of excellent produce
- Southern Tablelands agricultural producers are capable of responding to the challenges of a changing climate and increasing energy costs by implementing alternative low-cost input/high-value output systems

- Southern Tablelands has the potential to further diversify the agricultural products and enhance value-adding opportunities in the region

Opportunities

- Taste Paradise branding and food tourism trail. This is an evolving program that has tremendous potential to brand locally grown food and create alternative supply chains which will enable local growers to supply directly to regional outlets and local consumers (see www.tasteparadise.com.au). Opportunities exist through identification of local, regional and potentially international markets, support and marketing through Taste Paradise accreditation, branding and marketing programs and the Food Tourism Tours that have been developed.

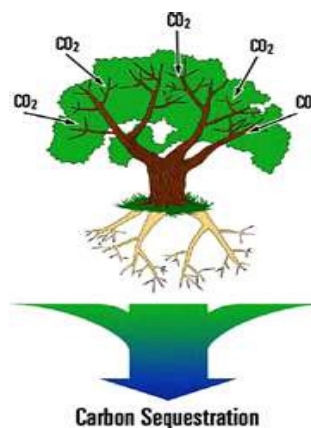
- Organic and biodynamic food innovations and support groups are extremely active across the Atherton Tablelands. Opportunities exist for conventional growers to convert to these alternative farming systems which enable high input costs such as chemical fertilisers and pesticides to be replaced with low input costs such as composting. Furthermore, organic and biodynamic products command higher prices that improve the economic viability of currently declining small and medium farm sector. Farmers could use the Rural Technology Village hub for support and marketing. (refer to [Transitional Strategy 3 – Rural Innovations](#))



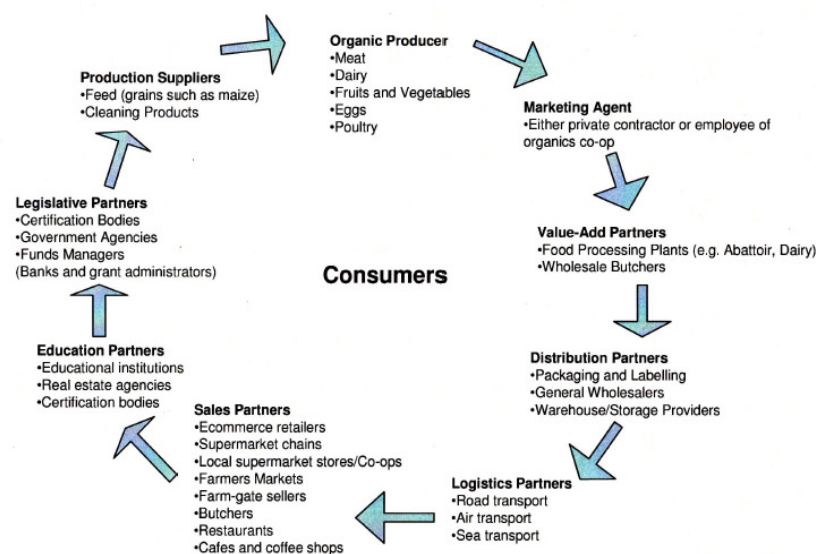
- There is a significant push from Ag Force¹ to increase the grass-fed beef market and there are inroads being made in this specialist market. This product currently commands a premium in the market place and unlike grain-fed beef has a significantly lower marbelling fat content. It is seen as a much healthier meat and sits in a complementary market to the bio-dynamic and organic market that the organic food industries are working in.
- Health tourism – increasingly tourists will choose their destination based on lifestyle choices and the opportunity to stay where organic products are grown could be a motivating factor in that decision-making - links to Voluntourism (refer to [Transitional Strategy 4 – Health, Aged Care and Ecotourism](#))
- Farm stays and ‘agricultural-tourism’ - This is a growing tourism opportunity common in Europe, and an opportunity to expand in Australia. This could be particularly attractive to the ‘Grey nomads’/‘Green Nomads’ population which already makes up a significant proportion of the tourism market. The opportunity for parking on farms is already available in the region as a result of the former Eacham Shire Council Planning Scheme.

¹ AgForce Queensland is a peak organisation representing Queensland's rural producers, which strives to ensure the long term growth, viability, competitiveness and profitability of broad acre industries of cattle, grain, sheep and wool in Queensland. Their mission statement is that: “AgForce promotes and protects the social fabric and economic prosperity of its members and rural communities in Queensland.”

- Good quality agricultural land protection – through ‘green belt’ and vegetation protection.
- The designation process for ‘good quality agricultural land, should be investigated to ensure triple bottom line outcomes – real and viable incomes and lifestyles for rural landholders. An increasingly resilient and diverse agricultural industry resulting in economies of scale in transport and marketing through a communal regional support program is a likely outcome of this and the organic food movement.
- Rural regeneration may be achieved through the option to reinstate Education Officers from DPI as agriculture industry advisors – to include diversification ideas and open dialogue with investors. Much pre-existing research was conducted on alternative crops and markets by DPI when the tobacco industry phase-out occurred in early 2000’s. The focus was initially on higher return and larger scale production but many potential crops and markets were identified. The opportunity now exists to revisit those potential products – particularly high quality cabinet timbers; complementary and alternative crops to sugar cane which produce higher return from smaller crops: the QDPI “Fresh Approach” program
- There are opportunities for carbon sequestration pools (Carbon Farming Initiatives), which can be audited, quantified and marketed at a regional level, as proposed and explored by Terrain NRM during the past few years. Many farmers could exploit marginal land and aid in restoring riparian and esplanade corridors by revegetating them for sequestration purposes. Co-planting for carbon sequestration; biodiversity and habitat restoration; fire and weed control which could lead to payment for ‘ecosystem services’ provided.
- Moving to intensify the amount of food or crops the land can produce whilst minimizing use of water and chemicals is another option.. This concept elaborates upon the Organic Precinct concept feasibility study prepared for Advance Cairns and DEEDI by Outsource Management Pty in 2010. Through economies of scale and critical mass, this would be further supported by the Rural Technology Village delivering the Marketing through to Sales Partners component of the Organic Cooperative Model described below:



Partnerships that are essential to the development, sustainability and economic viability of an organic concept for the Southern Tablelands.



As identified by Outsource Management, “collaborative projects are more likely to be successful in gaining substantial government funding.”

- Additional opportunities exist in assisting farmers to diversify into, or to establish products from “fruits of the forest”.
 - These could include Biomimicry, bio-technology, new medicines from the rainforest and other micro-aspects of biology – several companies already exist. Build on their skills and innovation. Identify and source assistance to determine what else these companies need to develop and expand (such as permits, research facilities, staff, additional government funding)
 - Opportunities exist to construct and operate cold store and storage facilities – built by local companies and providing a resource for local suppliers, encouraging greater and more efficient production.
 - Value adding to these products through the facilitation of small-scale community based food security programs; small to medium scale manufacturing or processing.
 - Marketing enterprises through the Rural Technology village could include organic product marketing.
 - Box Scheme marketing and on-line delivery management programs which could lure ‘early adopter consumers’ away from supermarkets.

- There is an increasing recognition of the ability to showcase this region as the ‘food bowl’ of Australia. This serves the double benefit of addressing food security issues and highlighting that as climate change impacts on agricultural enterprises across Australia, our region will have water supplies as well as our existing soil fertility to increase the diversity and quantity of agricultural products from the region.

Opportunities have been identified by Queensland Government (DEEDI/ DPI) over the past 15 years to diversify the agricultural opportunities within the region, at various scales and to capitalise on potential impacts of climate change and the possibility for this area to be the ‘food bowl of Australia’ due to its fertile soils and abundant water. A sample of some of the diversification options is below:

BIOBASED INDUSTRIES

In a sense, farming has always been a biobased industry. The scope, nature and size of the opportunities for new biobased products and materials are rapidly expanding, as illustrated below:

Category	Examples of Products & Markets	Market Indications
Biopharmaceuticals	Vaccines, antibodies, anti-cancer agents	20% growth rate: US \$160 billion world market by 2010
Nutraceuticals	Over the counter health-care products	6.1% growth rate: US \$9.6 billion world market by 2008
Cosmeceuticals	Personal care products (skin, hair, anti-ageing)	US market alone for anti-ageing products US \$30 billion by 2009
Biofuels	Ethanol, biodiesel – in transport, farming & industrial processes	Queensland ethanol industry predicted to be worth up to A\$1.5 billion by 2010
Bioenergy	Green electricity & heating	In Australia biomass provided 64% of ‘green power’ generated in 2003/04
Biodegradable fibres	Automotive panels, housing, construction, textiles, all forms of plastics & resins reinforcement	Us fibre market = US \$1.4 billion in 2005 – 54% growth rate per annum
Biodegradable plastics	Automotive, electronics, construction, furniture	Australia alone imported A\$3 billion polymers / products in 1999
Industrial	Chemicals, paints, dyes, enzymes, solvents, inks	World enzyme market 6.6% growth rate: Estimated US \$5 billion by 2009

(Source: Adapted from Cairns 2020-2050 Business Research Manual 2005)

From: Peter Holden, DEEDI, presentation at 2010 Mareeba Economic Forum

The synergies of creating products that can be used by other industries proposed in this paper are also a great advantage that must be considered. For example: provision of food to Aged Care facilities; Farm-stay holidays entice WOOFERS to provide labour to pick organic food products; Spa and Health products and specialist jams and teas from local sources.

All of these processes support the 'slow food' and 'low-food miles' initiatives which are increasingly guiding consumer choice.



2 Education and Training including Green Collar Workforce (Green Jobs)

Jobs across the economy will change and new industries and new jobs will be created. For some workers this shift will mean learning new skills to do existing jobs in more innovative and sustainable ways. The development of this new style skills base means that while we keep an eye to the future, we also attract new investment and new industries that will be drawn to the type of employees they seek. The Statement of Issue, Objectives, Key Tactics, Key Messages and Opportunities for Green Jobs are described below.

Statement of Issue

Identification, creation, training and promotion of "green" jobs.

Objectives

- Scope out existing studies/reports
- Identify the range of Green Jobs
- Identify existing training/recognition schemes and the gaps in these schemes
- Identify business, employment and volunteering opportunities related to "green" industries
- Promote "green" business, employment and volunteering opportunities at business, school, TAFE and University events – Promote existing jobs and promote opportunities to create new jobs and identify gaps
- Facilitate the creation of local "green" initiatives, programs, businesses etc.

Key Tactics

- Agree on a definition of a "green job"
- Identify and collate all current and possible options for "green" jobs in the region e.g. environmental scientists, renewable energy design and installation, alternative building material manufacturing and construction, energy, water and waste auditors, biologists, zoologists, botanists, environmental engineers, carbon traders, revegetation workers, writers, artists, architects, photographers etc. Austropex database for easy sourcing
- Link to tourism and eco-business opportunities highlighted within the other strategies

- Determine event opportunities for promoting “green” jobs through the local chambers of commerce, high schools, TAFEs and Universities
- Lobby state and federal governments on making work and labour market programs more logical and practical.
- Develop case studies of existing successful “green” businesses and employees which could be included in a showcase event
- Sustainable building products register
- Showcase current successful “green” businesses and employees at an agreed event, or make a Calendar of Opportunities
- Determine any constraints to the establishment of “green” jobs and identify action plans to overcome these constraints

Key Messages

- Southern Tablelands is a region with an abundance of businesses, employees and community groups participating in the “green” job market
- Southern Tablelands has the ability to attract and retain a diverse range of participants in the “green” job market
- Southern Tablelands has the potential to provide employment, training, mentoring and volunteering opportunities for locals and visitors to participate in the “green” job market



Opportunities

The Tablelands Industry Workforce group in conjunction with the Far North Queensland Skills Formation Strategy is working to deliver a flexible FNQ based workforce to support the growth of Industries and Businesses in the region. For Malanda and the Southern Tablelands community this could be though building a stronger brand, whilst helping develop an understanding of supply and demand. There are many people living in the area that would like to work within the Mining, Renewable Energies, Health or emerging agricultural fields but without this sort of group building partnerships and pathways between the stakeholders and the workforce it is very difficult for most people to know where to start.

- Moving to a low carbon, resource efficient economies will change the way that we work, live and do business. The green economy will provide opportunities for new skills and work in the Malanda region and works in harmony with all the other Transitional Strategies. Opportunities to develop International education/agricultural facilities in particular cover all aspects of strategies proposed in this paper.
- Specialised accommodation would need to be built and operated for study groups. This offers opportunities for builders; operators of such facilities; providers of food and cleaning services; transport operators as well as teachers.
- Education courses could include – sustainability education – or holistic approaches to other more traditional courses, as well as the region’s specialty areas – natural heritage management and language education.

There is already an identified need for a Green Collar workforce, but also a recognised need for additional health and aged care workers. Health care as an expanding market in the region is a guaranteed and growing industry into the foreseeable future. Opportunities also exist with a sustainability and tourism focus for ‘alternative’ medicine, therapy and treatment skills.

[See Transitional Strategy 4 - Health , Aged Care and Ecotourism](#)

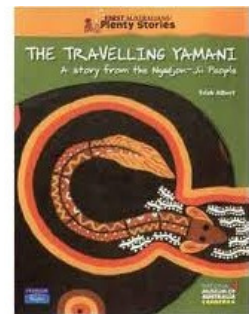


Potential Green Collar Jobs identified include:

- Carbon sequestration software programmers, reporting of greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency opportunities auditing, environmental and new urban design planners , water management professionals, environmental approvals and carbon capture specialists.
- There is a key need for interpretation and education/promotion – telling the community, visitors and the world of the innovations and direction taken here.

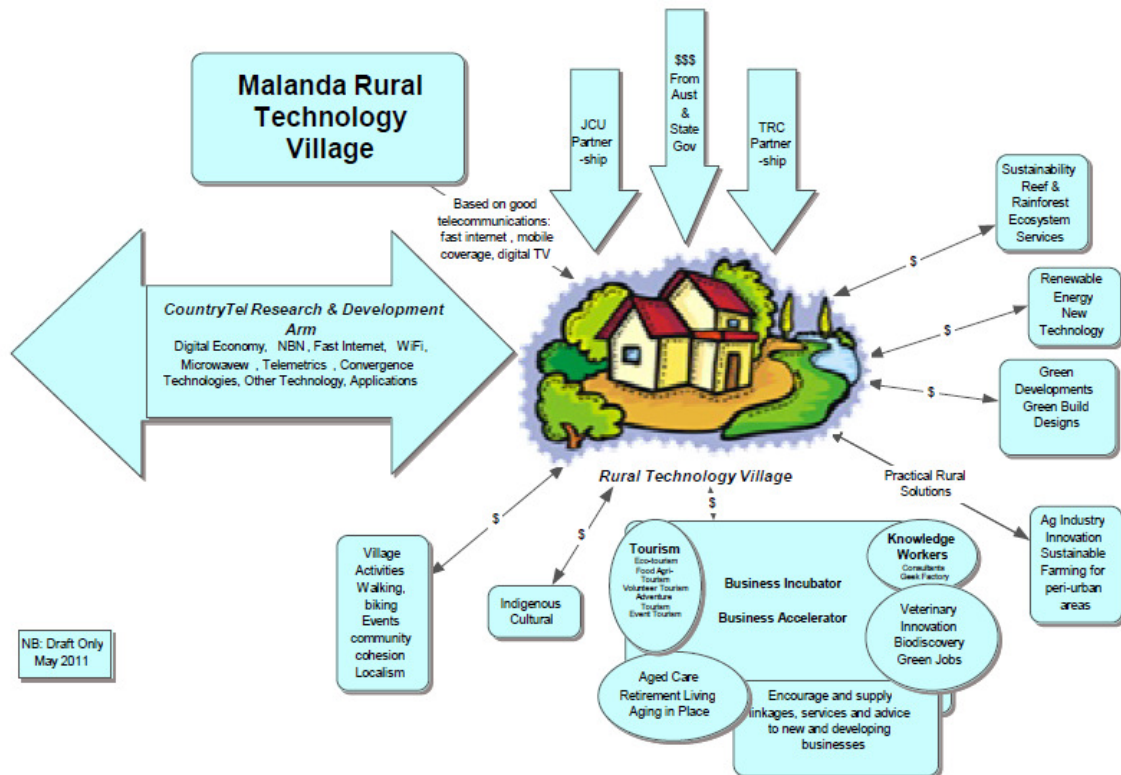
Indigenous Cultural tourism opportunities could be expanded. Malanda has a long history of indigenous cultural heritage tourism. From the 1930’s the “Malanda Jungle” tourist venture was established by James English and included “a guided tour with performances by local *Ngadjon* men, conducted in 26 acres of remnant rainforest. The Malanda Jungle displayed a range of natural and cultural history exhibits that included aviaries, penned marsupials, and exotic ferns, as well as boomerang and spear throwing, and tree climbing exhibitions by *Ngadjonji* . The Jungle housed a large collection of Aboriginal artefacts and a *Ngadjon* village was constructed in a clearing within the rainforest.

Today, *Ngadjonji* guides work with the Malanda Tourist Information Centre to provide cultural and natural science tours at Malanda Falls. The Malanda Visitor Centre, until it burned down in 2010, functioned as a local history museum with a section devoted to the *Ngadjonji*, the local Aboriginal people. It is planned that when rebuilt the facility will again house this cultural display and be the hub for Green Job opportunities associated with the entire Riverine Precinct along the Johnstone River at Malanda.



3 Rural Technology Village

A rural incubator program, like the Rural Technology Village (RTV) model, acts like an incubator for specific products and technologies recognised as having potential in rural areas. It stems from an innovative strategy developed for rural communities to enable them to benefit from the knowledge economy. The RTV model has developed from an established two-way relationship between economic development and growth and increased telecommunications infrastructure investment within rural communities.



The Statement of Issue, Objectives, Key Tactics, Key Messages and Opportunities for Rural Technology Village are described below.

Statement of Issue

Implementation and utilisation of high speed internet connections to enhance local business opportunities and community services.

Objectives

- Access to high speed internet connections for local businesses and community service providers
- Enhanced utilisation of high speed internet by local businesses and community service providers
- Development of an independent income stream to enabled matched funding processes
- Investment from a Telco/ corporation for partnership with the community element of the RTV

Key Tactics

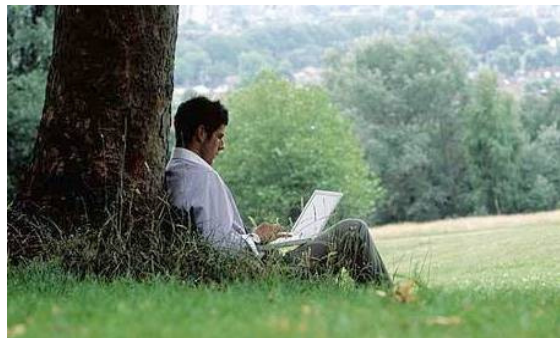
- Collate types of services (e.g. ADSL 1, ADSL 2, Satellite), areas serviced and available service providers
- Collate utilisation data for current services and identify gaps
- Work with JCU to develop innovative technology to use in conjunction with the NBN
- Collate a list of the High Post Graduate / Knowledge Workers in the region
- Identify leverage opportunities with Telco, NBN and RDA
- Determine the strategies for addressing the gaps in access and utilisation of high speed internet
- Develop case studies of existing successful local businesses and service providers utilising the internet which could be included in a showcase event, Showcase current successful access and utilisation of internet at an agreed event as massive marketing potential for investors
- Develop a strategy, based on needs and opportunities to encourage fast tracking of the NBN network to the Southern Tablelands
- Business incubator

Key Messages

- Southern Tablelands is a region utilising high speed internet connections for business and community services
- Southern Tablelands business opportunities and community services would be significantly enhanced by the timely provision of the NBN network
- Southern Tablelands has the potential to become the hub for knowledge based industries which are a key element to the revitalisation of the region

Opportunities

The technological revolution, defined here as increased access to and use of the Internet, has transformed the way most companies now do business. Businesses are finding that they are no longer constrained by geographic location. Through e-commerce, they are afforded access to a full range of market opportunities, from a local to international level.



For rural entrepreneurs and small business owners, however, this internet revolution represents a double-edged sword. While rural businesses can access new markets and serve new customers through the effective use of e-commerce, doing so will thrust them into a whole new marketplace. They will experience increased competition from firms and well-established giants, like Amazon.com, that come from well outside of their normal market reach. However, in this new competitive e-environment, rural entrepreneurs who adopt innovative and informed e-marketing strategies will remain distinct and profitable. The essence of success for the rural business will be ensuring that they market and sell quality and where possible unique products accompanied by that maxim of 'great small town service'. The aspects which make any successful business: high quality, responsive, timely and value for money, niche products, well-made, from renewable or sustainable sources and with great customer service and feedback will enhance the success rate of any of these businesses. This is a link to case studies from the US as part of the Rural Technology initiative commissioned through the Clemson Institute in South Carolina.

<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/112894/2/E-Commerce%20Project.pdf>

Aspects of the Rural Technology Village Infrastructure can include:

- Storefront incubators – located in a rural community and staffed by community members and/or local economic development agency staff. This could be located in the new Visitor Information Centre in Malanda or the old Malanda Dairy Factory with potential to eventually be housed, along with a flexible education node, in a purpose built centre at Malanda North. This would ideally contain Wi-Fi access; hot desks; a conference room with teleconference facilities and on-line knowledgeable staff to guide – linked to a central support centre – potentially an Ecohub at JCU.
- Centre for training and program services for community consultants to aid in development of companies - DEEDI or TRC funded support for a business development educator or support officer. Market analysis, patent reviews, company formation, seed fund sourcing are some of the services that could be provided for budding regional entrepreneurs.
- Innovation network – potentially request use of Clemson University designed software: consulting and web-services to link entrepreneurs with access to service providers and intellectual property resources. Note that the program incorporates materials and services from state, federal and local existing entrepreneurial support programs as well as materials specifically designed for rural applications.

One of the reasons young people are said to be leaving the region is lack of social opportunities. Increasingly the ‘social’ activities of young people are built around access to the internet, and the opportunities provided by embracing a ‘technology village’ concept include universal but safe access to social media, and the opportunity to access and project national or international events, like music concerts onto the local theatre screens or use the technology for inter-active experiences.

Both the RDA and the Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) support the concept of the RTV in the context of a timely NBN roll-out.

With the aid of state and local government assistance, the Sustainable Malanda group could monitor when tenders are available to satellite companies including the pre-NBN co-satellite offerings and then start lobbying to be a part of the process.

Proposed process:

Expressions of Interest from the community are sought on what businesses they would like to run

- List of prompts to consider from community engagement session list.

Pick top 5 or 6 options – consultant to review options and help identify chances of success – business plan, funding sources, market, competition, barriers to entering market, training/re-training required

Establish mentoring program to work people through that process

- Need to get funding support to ‘feed’ these people during the start-up and establishment – seed funding and dole payments from government; “Angel investors” and others with an altruistic reason for being involved... this would also include those who would volunteer their time to present some of the training or mentoring as their contribution.
- Need to have government department support to ‘streamline’/ facilitate approvals for licences, permits, patents etc. (link to TRC and their processes)
- Identify local site for business to establish a ‘shop-front’ – engage with real-estate agents and landholders of existing empty premises or sites who wish to be a part of the process to ease into rental agreements. (a discounted rent is better than no rent at all.)

- Create marketing logo or similar – “ I’m a part of the Rural Tech Village project” or “I support the Rural Tech Village project”, “I’m helping to DRIVE our community to a greener future” = stickers for shop fronts etc.
 - Have an engagement process running so that at the launch of the project you can recognise and celebrate the supporters as well as the participants. It will breed a sense of belonging and ownership. Opportunity each month to ‘showcase’ alternatively a partner or a supporter.
- Establish an ongoing training calendar – first brainstorm the IT and other business gaps to create the ‘syllabus’, then after each session ask participants to identify their own ‘gaps’ or ‘desired learnings’ and deliver those over the next 12 months: recognise where the idea came from = “from a request by “; sponsored by (who may help pay for transport, time, accommodation, subsidise meals etc for the consultant or the participants).. some element of user –pays, but initially subsidised by government as part of the re-training and revitalisation project.

The Calendar could include:

- Engaging with this project – its benefits and your role and responsibilities: working together for the greater good
- Use the computer and the internet
- Etax and electronic banking
- Software packages for business and how to use them: MYOB; Quicken; ... ATO book-keeping essentials (any other freebies?)
- Web-page design and management – maximising effectiveness; and keeping it up to date
- Other electronic marketing options – “Facebook”; “twitter”; “Linkedin”; Webinars, ...
- Sustainability statements and how to develop them
- Management systems and how to customise them to your needs
- Energy efficiency and how to reduce your costs whilst maximising the customer and staff engagement
- Internet sales and marketing – ‘things to know and to pitfalls to avoid’
- Business establishment and business planning
- Capital raising and JV partnerships
- Protecting your IP
- Succession planning
- Networking – maximising success and identifying your responsibilities to your ‘network’
- Apprenticeships, mentoring and other staff attraction and retention processes
- Linking to, being a part of, the Angel network – roles and responsibilities
- Specialist education options/lectures: arts, agriculture, literature, mathematics, science (that school students and the community can link into)
- learning from experts and groups doing similar ‘transitions’ into a more resilient future



This calendar in itself becomes a product that the community could offer online to other individuals and communities around Australia and the region. There is a growing demand for relevant well-produced online training and information and the technology village and the products it develops locally becomes another commercial asset to the region.

- Source, develop, upload and maintain the IT resources that will support new or small businesses across the region:
 - Key documentation templates

- business plan; management systems; reporting to government or community; incident management; recruitment and HR paperwork
- bulk licenced (or free) IT products? Business tools – word; excel; powerpoint; MYOB or similar
- library of resources (or links to latest) – University research; ISO systems and other industry codes or standards; best practice examples within business or industry; legislation – including permits and licences explained
- links to local, regional, state and national information on:
 - business expertise
 - funding – banks and grants
 - training
 - legal advice
 - recruitment and HR specialists
 - equipment and technology suppliers

The calendar could be linked to the ‘events’ and celebrations calendar:

- tree planting events,
- a community garden,
- a farmers market,
- carpooling or car sharing scheme,
- carbon trading or offset scheme,
- a slow food festival and low-carbon miles support celebration
- new technology day – showcase of new sustainable technologies – solar, wind, micro-hydro, biomass, biodiesel
- spotlight on local innovations and successes and new projects – include local school children and aged-facility residents in special categories: children; aging population; disabled population innovations; indigenous activities
- energy efficiency awareness day – waste reduction, water use reduction, energy use reduction
- annual opportunity and local synergy identification day – what else could we do; who could work with who... ‘one man’s trash is another man’s treasure’ brainstorming... what information or research do we need done either locally or by JCU to facilitate our progress (CRC concept)
- well-ness and well-being opportunities – locally produced health and beauty products
- alternative or combined land-use opportunities showcase: e.g.: use of dairy cow faeces for organic fertiliser; planting of stream edges for sequestration and bank-stabilisation; dam stocking with fish or red-claw; ...
- progress and reporting (celebrating success) day: progress on KPI’s; on the energy descent action plan – reducing energy, waste and water use or alternative /renewable energy initiatives installed/generated.
- Brainstorm local skills matrix and expertise within the local community and the region
- Feedback from each of the six ‘pillar’ groups on their achievements

The other 5 key Transitional Strategies have elements which facilitate increased success based on delivery of the RTV. They have been identified throughout this document.

Of significance however, is the potential for selected rural oriented and agricultural related technologies. The rural technology village approach recognizes that not all technologies are suited for new company rural development. However, in select technologies, the rural environment can be an enhancement or advantage in the development of new companies including agricultural biotechnology, renewable energy, environmental systems and products, nutraceuticals, advanced

food processing, water conservation/ purification technologies and other technologies related to agricultural and the forestry industries. These core technologies are key components to producing new products for emerging international and domestic markets. This model brings the intellectual property and the resources to the entrepreneur in technologies and businesses well suited for rural community development.

4 Health, Aged Care and Ecotourism

The demographics of the Tablelands region indicate a growing need for health services and care provision for an aging population. Many opportunities have been identified which leverage off the existing aged care facility on the outskirts of Malanda. Furthermore the excellent standard of the surrounding natural environment provides many opportunities for healthy lifestyle and ecotourism activities and business ventures. The Statement of Issue, Objectives, Key Tactics, Key Messages and Opportunities for healthy lifestyle including ecotourism and aged care are described below.

Statement of Issue

Developing and promoting healthy creative lifestyle activities and aged care facilities as local alternative employment opportunities

Objectives:

- Promotion and expansion of self-development and relaxation activities for locals and tourists e.g. yoga, massage, beauty treatments, spas, cooking schools, farm stays, art, cultural and healthy mind activities
- Promotion and expansion of arts and cultural activities for locals and tourists e.g. painting, sculpture, theatre, film etc
- Showcasing and further development of extreme sports and environmental tourism for locals and tourists e.g. cycling, mountain biking, hiking, abseiling, rock climbing, hang-gliding, walking, skate boarding
- Integration of aging requirements into community planning that enables the incorporation of local employment opportunities into the various stages of care e.g. independent retirees through to palliative care

Key Tactics

- Collate a list of local people and businesses involved in self-development/relaxation, arts/culture, extreme sports and aging sectors
- Collate criteria for success from other regional locations e.g. Byron Bay, Maleny, Daylesford
- Determine who might be interested in working collaboratively to address the agreed objectives (e.g. TTNQ, TTT and Art/Culture Organisations etc.)
- Develop a database of all activities and identify gaps
- Collaboration with stakeholders, research further the gaps and opportunities
- Develop case studies of existing successful local businesses, groups and artists which could be included in a showcasing event
- Showcase current successful opportunities at an agreed event
- Implementation of new opportunities

Key Messages

- Southern Tablelands is a showcase for healthy living activities including yoga, massage, beauty treatments, spas, cooking schools and farm stays
- Southern Tablelands has a diverse range of artist and cultural talent which is recognised internationally

- Southern Tablelands has a range of existing extreme sporting activities and events including cycling , mountain biking, hiking, abseiling, rock climbing, hang gliding
- Southern Tablelands presents opportunities for retirees to transition gracefully into care facilities with country hospitality and expert medical attention

Opportunities

Health and Aged Care Opportunities

To complement the existing Ozcare facility, it is recommended to seek funding and partners to construct and operate a Progressive/staged aged care facilities/housing.



This could comprise a Retirement village providing transitional living, with the potential to feed into the existing aged care facility. The documented regional need for aged care is not only increasing but is as yet, unmet by the community or the health industry. This proposal will need to rely on ongoing government funding to ensure quality of care and business viability well into the foreseeable future.

Target provision for Residential Aged Care Accommodation and Support Services for people aged 70 years and over in the Tablelands Regional Council Area, 2011 - 2026

Projection Year	Projected Population aged over 70yrs	Residential aged care packages to be provided (ex. Indigenous)	Total CACP to be provided (ex. Indigenous)	Total EACH packages to be provided
2011	5,552	488	117	22
2016	7,199	633	151	29
2021	8,953	786	188	36
2026	10,685	940	224	43

based on medium series projections PIFU 2008 using ERP 2006p and Commonwealth planning ratios (AIHW, 2008).

To aid in making the lives of our aging population more comfortable and enjoyable there will be an increased demand for many existing service professions, which can be undertaken by young and older citizens over time. These will include but not be limited to hairdressers, manicurists, gardeners, cooks, cleaners, rehabilitation and mobility specialists; eyesight, hearing and mobility specialists, and many more. Gardeners have a large potential role in aiding the residents to manage on-site gardens which could provide food, honey and flowers to the facility. The health benefits of having such gardens are well documented.

- Grey nomads (Green Nomads) parking on farms – approved in Eacham Planning Scheme. www.volunteeringaustralia.org identifies how Grey nomads potentially add many dollars to regional communities and increasingly being encouraged to tour regional Australia and volunteer their services whilst in the area.

- Mens' Shed and other adjuncts to Ozcare or Malanda town itself which require space may find adequate land available on the Malanda North site as it develops - MensShed.org

With an increasing but aging Australian and international population who chooses their home and workplace based on lifestyle and sustainability principles, the destination of Malanda and the southern Tablelands becomes an increasingly attractive 'tree change' destination. In a world where access to clean air, sufficient water and a peaceful, safe living space become more desirable and prized attributes that feed into that choice, this locality has a plethora of unique assets which it can promote to attract the right sort of residents and investors. By implementing, and promoting, the pillars of opportunity that are identified below, Malanda and the southern Tablelands are placed in an ideal position to capitalise on their unique destination and the social and natural values that surround them.

Tablelands Regional Council suggests that for people coming to the region "Census data and anecdotal evidence suggest the following:

- young families seeking cheaper housing and living costs, smaller schools for their children and a healthier environment than the city to bring up children. Some move permanently, others plan to return to cities once their children reach a certain age
- independent professional contractors or consultants - can live anywhere with internet and choose Tablelands for rural relaxed lifestyle and environment
- grey nomads - long stay tourists (temporary residents)
- fruit pickers (temporary residents)
- retirees seeking quiet lifestyle, company of fellow retirees and lower cost of living

Groups of people leaving the Tablelands tend to be:

- young aged 16-24 seeking higher education and vocational training, work opportunities and a more vibrant urban lifestyle.
- people aged 75 - 84 years, most likely to access health and aged care services.

The strategies identified in this paper focus on addressing these measures, through the six pillars that will drive the recovery and consolidation of the Malanda and southern Tablelands community.

Sports, and particularly Extreme Sports Tourism Opportunities

- Cycle tours/ walking tours...low impact & a growth segment, particularly attractive to European tourists and the increasingly popular mountain bike riding – both recreational and competitions.
- NZ 'Hubs and Links' model where they transformed & connected rural communities through a cycle/walking tourism model.
- Zipline – low impact recreation that are starting in Oz & looking for sites
- Potentially labelling for eco/sustainable adrenaline activities – green extreme, eco extreme with sustainable inputs either side of activities – food, transport, accommodation.



Tablelands Futures Corporation Inc. has a vision and a plan to make Tropical North Queensland, in particular the Atherton Tableland, the premier mountain bike destination in Australia and an internationally recognised world class facility.

The project is based on a ‘Hubs and Links’ model that is an extension of similar national and international developments particularly in Scotland, Wales and New Zealand.

The plan is to develop a series of purpose built, International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) standard mountain bike trails centred on communities (HUBS) across the Tableland. Existing trails and minor roads (LINKS) will connect one community centre to another across the Tablelands and down to coastal centres.

Each of the hubs will be based around an existing community centre and will provide business opportunities for bike friendly infrastructure such as accommodation, catering, transport and hire centres as well as access to the links to other centres. Trails at these hubs will be deliberately planned, designed, constructed, mapped, signposted and advertised.

There are already hundreds of kilometres of walking and other trails in existence, many of which were identified in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Walking Tracks Strategy, however to be included in this project all tracks and trails will require mapping; determination for suitability and in some instances remediation to meet project and IMBA standards. A number of these trails will be multi-purpose, accommodating not only mountain biking, but also allow access for walking, horse riding, orienteering and other activities.

Eco and Voluntourism Opportunities

The market is described as allowing travellers to enjoy the wonders of the destination while helping local communities and preserving the environment by participating in unique experiences, such as volunteering in orphanages or schools, rescuing and rehabilitating wildlife and participating in local environmental protection activities like tree planting and weed management. There can be different levels of commitment, across all age groups that have the potential and the interest. Indeed the mass market also has potential for philanthropic travel, with short volunteer activities built into in holiday packages as well as focused volunteer holidays.

TNQ is well positioned to offer a range of programs that could appeal; including preservation of the reef and rainforest or working with indigenous communities. Examples could include platypus and tree kangaroo preservation programs in the Tablelands or involvement in Catchment Management or Conservation Volunteers type programs such as the Green Corridor Project. All of this would be compatible with the traditional focus on the reef and rainforest protection inherent in World Heritage listing and the various research and protection programs which already exist in these World Heritage areas.



Self-development Tourism Opportunities

A new niche tourism and lifestyle opportunity has been identified as those provide by yoga or other spiritual retreats and spas. These, linked to sustainable venues and slow or organic local food experiences round off the concept of ‘self-development’ tourism, where one learns and shares whilst on holiday – contributing something back to the community they are staying in whilst learning more about it and themselves.

A number of boutique B&B experiences already exist in the region, with owners offering 4-star and above experiences, offering local food whilst offsetting their experience through tree-planting and other volunteering experiences. The experience of these providers and the opportunities available will only be complemented by sharing and learning from each other, to get better outcomes for all.



Other Niche Tourism Opportunities

- Some potential for military tourism as part of broader Tablelands initiative – linking to the combined Australian-American training zone that existed across the Tablelands preparing troops for battle in South-East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region and centred on Rocky Creek Memorial.
- Walmsley’s Dairy Farm – accommodation just out of town suitable for Farm-stay, conferences and centrally located to Malanda and all its facilities.
- Environmental / Educative Tourism – tying in with the School for Field Studies and the University of the Third Age; the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre, James Cook University and other educational institutions. Programs that exist or new ones could be built, utilising site visits and virtual visit technology (via the RTV hub) through on-line courses to learn about this area; to remotely monitor the condition of the environment and its response to changing conditions; and to aid in the ‘promotion of World Heritage Values’ in support of the key goals of Wet Tropics Management Authority.
- Tourism to support or complement the Rainforest Dreaming guided walks through the adjacent Malanda Falls Conservation Park with Ngadjon-jii elder Ernie Raymont and his family. Research indicates an increasing demand for culturally-based and relevant tourism opportunities, which could be capitalised upon through support in other business skills and promotion throughout the resources of this program. See [Transitional Strategy 2: Education and Training](#)
- A very strong network of artists & expert naturalists in the area that are not being accessed, promoted or recognised for the linking experiences that they provide.

5 Renewable Energy Incorporating Smart-grid Principles

Energy Incorporating Smart-Grid Principles

Regional resilience through the generation of 100% of the regions energy needs from renewable sources and showcasing what can be done at a community scale



A desired goal for regional resilience would be the generation of 100% of the region's energy needs from renewable sources and showcasing what can be done at a community scale.

There are opportunities in wind, solar and micro-hydro which could be implemented in and around Malanda and the Southern Tablelands. The Statement of Issue, Objectives, Key Tactics, Key Messages and Opportunities for renewable energy are described below.

Statement of Issue

Showcasing and utilising renewable energy systems to reduce dependency on increasingly expensive grid-supplied electricity.

Objectives:

- Construction of a micro - hydro system at Malanda Falls to supply electricity back into the grid
- Connection of wind and solar powered electricity generation systems throughout the region to minimise dependency on grid electricity
- Creation of alternative energy related employment opportunities in the local area e.g. energy audits/carbon accounting, design and installation of systems

Key Tactics

- Collate a list of local people involved in renewable energy systems across Southern Tablelands
- Collate a list of renewable energy opportunities in the local area
- Determine who might be interested in working collaboratively to address the agreed objectives
- Develop case studies of existing successful local renewable energy installations which could be included in a showcasing event
- Develop feasibility studies for mini-hydro opportunities

- Showcase current renewable energy systems in the next “Sustainable House Day” – September 2012 and/or DRiVe Expo/Festival 2012

Key Messages

- Southern Tablelands is a showcase for renewable energy systems which feed into the grid and minimise dependency on the increasing cost of energy
- Southern Tablelands has a range of existing successful renewable energy installations which reduce our region’s dependency on increasingly expensive fossil fuels
- Southern Tablelands has a range of local businesses with the knowledge and experience to efficiently install renewable energy system to reduce electricity costs

Opportunities

Encourage further alternative power generation into existing grid. Windy Hill currently generates 12MW of power and the proposed Windy Hill2; High Road and Mt Emerald Wind farms would complement these by adding the following:

Wind Farm	Power Generation	Anticipated Operational Date	Proponent
High Road, Atherton Tablelands	40MW	September 2013	Ratch Australia
Mount Emerald, Atherton Tablelands	220MW	December 2014	JV - Ratch Australia and Port Bajool
Windy Hill II (Upgrade to Windy Hill), Atherton Tablelands	24MW	2015/2016	Ratch Australia
Archer Point, Cooktown	120-220MW	Unknown	Unknown

- There is potential to make Malanda a trial village for the PolePower concept (image above at right). Ergon are supervising the trials for “PolePower” (www.polepower.biz) and would need to be engaged in this process. Essentially the process entails a solar panel on each power pole around town, with a micro inverter, all linked to the grid. Evolve Energy, the creators of the PolePower product, have just commenced local assembly of smart grid enabled AC solar modules. They are diversifying the product into roof and ground mounted versions based on the existing PolePower product and provides flexibility for application. There may be an opportunity to support and even provide a site to manufacture Evolve Energy products at the Malanda industrial area.
- Additional uptake of solar generation – would be through additional installation of PV and solar hot water systems on all new developments, and retro-fitted to existing buildings where possible. A local example for new building uptake of renewables in general is in the planning stages, Malanda North, which will covenant a high level of renewable energy generation. Further details are included in the detailed Concepts report at www.malandanorth.com.
- Due to the regular high rainfall experienced in the Malanda area, there would be multiple opportunities to implement Micro-hydro technology. Likely sites include Malanda and Glen Allyn Falls. Many others could be available on private land depending on the fall and flow of the streams. In identifying likely sites, it would be worth exploring the potential to establish/consider pump storage facility which would allow multiple re-use of water to generate energy.
- Maximise returns on any investment by focussing an education campaign within the local community on becoming as sustainable as possible: combine Climate Smart energy

efficiency, water and waste efficiency programs with other locally generated relevant programs and roll them out through a community and school awareness program. This could be generated with support from the Green-Build network and locally businesses specialising in energy and eco-efficiency auditing.

- Build on the DEEDI survey, discussed below, and the Green Build Network database of suppliers and manufacturers of low energy / sustainable products in the region. Promote their support locally. This database could be housed at the RTV Visitor Information Centre.
- Have the RTV be a source of information on subsidies and other government programs that will maximise uptake and returns and minimise failure of these incentive programs.

In exploring options to engage on a Macro and Micro level with the power produced in the region, there are a number of questions which need to be answered:

- What are the legislative or mechanical blocks to that process? Discuss with local and state government and with Ergon Energy.
- Consider entering into discussions with Telstra about basing a cloud database in the region, possibly near Mt Emerald, powered by the wind farm. This could be a very valuable asset to the region and a great communications marketing tool. Every business having its own server consumes significant quantities of power and if we could encourage local businesses to see this as their own asset could validate the provision of data security for the region.

6 Built Environment including Green Build



Malanda and the surrounding area has the opportunity of showcasing how housing and the built environment can be integrated into, and minimise impact upon, the natural environment – through appropriate planning, construction and operation, and development of the optimum integrated sustainable community. DEEDI is currently undertaking a regional survey that is looking to audit how many Green Build businesses and projects there are in the region (the audit is from Townsville to Cairns). This will give Malanda the opportunity to have a well-researched snapshot of who is working in this field. The State Government has identified the Built Environment, incorporating Green Build Sustainable principles, as one of the cornerstone opportunities for Queensland. The Statement of Issue, Objectives, Key Tactics, Key Messages and Opportunities for Green Build are described below.

Statement of Issue

Transitioning a 20th Century built environment into a more sustainable built form suitable for the future.

Objectives:

- Lobbying (local/regional) to incorporate the principles and values of sustainability in built form including from planning/subdivision stage

- Showcasing and demonstrating design which minimises impacts on the surrounding natural environment and promotes construction methodologies which are adapted to our tropical climate and resilient in the face of predicted change
- Research and development of locally designed and manufactured products into new innovative buildings
- Influence, promote and educate about design and products which are sustainable and demonstrate triple bottom line principles

Key Tactics

- Collate a list of local people involved in innovative design, construction and manufacturing; include all Southern Tablelands
- Collate relevant examples of innovative designs and construction materials from our region, other areas in Australia or internationally. Link into concepts such as “Village Well” (www.villagewell.org) or “The Seaside Institute” (www.seasideinstitute.org) which expound a new concept of harmonious village living integrating work, entertainment, education and lifestyle in balance.
- Determine who might be interested in working collaboratively and identify business opportunities
- Identify existing innovative buildings and buildings with innovative features
- Develop business plans for design and manufacturing opportunities which could be showcased regionally and internationally
- Build a sustainable “Green Build” show home or multifunctional home/home business
- Include current innovative buildings in the next “Sustainable House Day” – September 2012 and DRiVe Expo/Festival 2012.

Key Messages

- Southern Tablelands is a showcase for buildings which minimise environmental impacts and are adapted to a changing tropical climate, increasing energy costs and enhanced liveability
- Southern Tablelands has a wealth of experienced designers who can create exceptional and innovative plans suitable for changing tropical climates and increasing energy costs
- Southern Tablelands has local manufacturers with “green” products that will reduce energy requirements and strengthen buildings. Using low carbon footprint building materials will take embodied energy and life cost into consideration and increase wet tropics liveability

Opportunities

In the Malanda area the key project which is “shovel ready” and will be incorporating Green Build concepts is the new Malanda Visitor Information Centre (VIC) which will replace the previous centre. The Tablelands Regional Council has secured over \$1million to replace the building and incorporate innovative interpretations of the natural and cultural features of the region.



There are two other projects that could advance to a “shovel ready” stage. The first is the [Malanda North](http://www.malandanorth.com/) project whose goal is to create an integrated neighbourhood based on triple bottom line principles, adding to the town, rather than competing with the existing township. See www.malandanorth.com/ for full documentation of project goals as a part of the detailed Concepts report.

Significant time, resources and energy have been invested to identify the best way to develop the site along world's best practice lines for sustainable development. At the time of inception the aspirations of Malanda North were visionary and outside the norm for this region. With the recent economic turmoil in global markets and subsequent sharp focus on sustainability the goals of the project have now become mainstream and align with government, industry and market expectations. Malanda North goals basically incorporate parts of each of the six Transitional Strategies identified here.

The second is the Aged Care facility that has been identified at [Transitional Strategy 4 Health, Aged Care and Ecotourism](#). Expansion of facilities for retirees and for the aged near the existing OzCare facility could create synergies. The provision of more and more varied forms of post-retirement options is recognised as an urgent priority.

7 Other ideas outside the six Transitional Strategies

- A paid position for someone/group to market & promote Malanda and District. This position should be funded by a combination of state and local government plus local businesses support – just as [“Tasmania Temptations”](#) promoted their state, we need a ‘Tablelands Temptations’ organisation.
- Marketing of the region would include the opportunities identified in this report, including the food trails, art/cultural trails, environmental/nature trails, farm/agricultural enterprises. There is a need to entice people to visit and stay in the region - servicing these will create jobs, businesses will strengthen or start and growth will happen.
- Explore and promote new business and funding models as well as re-vamping existing ones to ensure future success in this regional community.
- Review options for use of existing, and designation of new, Industrial Land in consultation with Tablelands Regional Council and promote to landholders and appropriate potential businesses.
- Identify empty shops and gaps in current and desired retail/commercial mix in the town, and identify where and how these might effectively be delivered so that they support each other's establishment and viability.
- Bring money from outside – ideally by population growth through migration, which can only be achieved by providing and marketing what makes Malanda an attractive place to visit and to stay.
- Focusing on mentioned projects but linking them more strongly with the natural environment and a push to promote this as a unique & interesting part of Australia.



Summary

The main message from the Scoping Document is that the keys for unlocking Malanda’s potential already exist and the strategies presented here show how we can build on that potential to optimise the economic opportunities of sustainable development based on the unique characteristics of Malanda and surrounds. Small regional communities such as Malanda or the Southern Tablelands as a whole are not just “smaller versions” of larger Australian communities. The economic structure of one regional community may differ significantly from an adjoining region. Many rural communities have historically relied almost entirely on one sector for employment, in the case of Malanda it was initially gold mining then forestry then dairy, now rural areas need to diversify if they are to flourish in the 21st Century.

A broad spectrum of stakeholders have been engaged and involved in vigorous debate to establish six key Transitional Strategies to guide the future direction of their town and region. It is only by engaging with the stakeholders themselves that a clear picture emerges and support for ideas that the community will take with them into the future can be mustered.

The town has reached a critical point in its history and is, according to all the data currently gathered, extremely well placed to draw on all of the component parts of the six Transitional Strategies, as well as synchronising with the RDA Roadmap. A number of potential indicators are described which provide a basis for verifying the success of the Transitional Strategies.

There is a need for continued financial support in the short to medium term both at a State and Federal level until new opportunities become established and viable. The Scoping Document outlines a way forward that not only offers opportunities for both external investors to become engaged and match any government funding, but also for businesses and councils adjacent to the region to seek leverage and investment opportunities with local initiatives, so that the need for government assistance will decrease over time.

While acknowledging that no two regions are the same the overall process used to develop the Transitional Strategies may offer a key to unlocking the natural capital and social wealth inherently found in our rural communities and could present other communities with a blueprint for their own rejuvenation and evolution.

It is a model that incorporates all of the future requirements of the Malanda community: efficient communication processes, renewable energy, sustainable agricultural practices, innovative industries and employment opportunities and work including jobs for the indigenous population and care and housing for the aging population. As such this process could also be used beyond our domestic boundaries by rural communities in other countries.

Malanda began in the early 20th century as a place of hardy pioneers, facing an uncertain future in an unfamiliar landscape. The Malanda of the early 21st century again faces an uncertain future and, metaphorically, an unfamiliar landscape. The world has changed. The pioneering spirit that saw Malanda founded and allowed it to flourish will see it through the transitions it is faced with today.

Appendix 1: Short history of Sustainable Malanda

2009:

TRC Town Plan Consultation Process: Local Area Reference Group (LARG) appointed.

Late 2009:

First meeting of the TRC planners with Malanda Area Reference Group (MARG):

- Peter Axford (PA)
- John Finter (JF)
- Chris Symons (CS)
- Christine Doan (CD)
- Ex-officio Rhonda Sorensen (RS)

June 2010:

First meeting with TRC planners

5th July 2011: Second meeting with TRC planners

- Two meetings with Town Planners; Several informal meetings led by PA (chair) and RS to discuss theory of town planning and practical application to Malanda town in particular
- MARG evolved idea of not being token consultation group and also becoming pro-active in working on some of the future planning of the town inspired by but not restricted to the town planning discussions

August 2010:

- Nicky Swan (NS) was invited to meet with MARG to formulate how we might create a program to attract funding to continue with our future planning

Late 2010:

- MARG became Sustainable Malanda and expanded, adding new members:
- Ray Byrnes (RB) Joe Tranter (JT), Trevor Mott (TM), Nicky Moore (NM), James Leech (JL).

Dec 2010:

- Blue Print for the Bush (B4B) funding grant applied for under auspice of Malanda COC

Jan 2011:

- Successful B4B funding >\$9500\$ for Scoping Document based on concept developed by MARG;
- Develop a Model for the Economic Revitalisation of a Rural Town through Sustainable Methodology (Triple Bottom Line)
- Second Blue Print for the Bush funding grant applied for again under auspice of Mal COC for Countrytel. Unfortunately this was unsuccessful.

March 2011:

- NS hired to facilitate process and write Scoping Document under initial successful B4B funding - steering committee formed.
- Six Transitional Strategies identified under NS facilitation and PA chairmanship.

July 2011:

- Sustainable Malanda Stakeholder Forum held.

- Begin evolution out of small brainstorming group and into broader community interaction and action focused network around the six key themes (Transitional Strategies).
- RS undertakes liaison with Rural Development Australia FNQ & TS (RDA) and James Cook University (JCU) to secure support via the RDA Roadmap and funding arrangements for NBN and Malanda Regional Technology Village Proposal. Unfortunately this proposal is unsuccessful.

August 2011:

- RDA endorses our local RDA board member, Dr Geraldine McGuire, to help steer Sustainable Malanda through RDA communication templates and guidelines in accordance with identified regional priorities.
- Meeting held to provide feedback from forum to broader interested group and to present/review draft templates.

September 2011:

- Further evolution of Sustainable Malanda to a formal sub-committee of Malanda Chamber of Commerce (CoC) being investigated with full support from Malanda CoC, Chamber of Commerce Industry Queensland (CCIQ) and RDA.
- Planning Workshop to progress work on RDA templates for six Transitional Strategies as identified for Scoping Document.
 - Minutes of these workshops in the form of Transitional Strategy Issues Management Plans v3 will be made available for reference in future workshops
 - Minutes of Meetings – retained to verify what has been discussed and not reinvent the wheel in future

October 2011:

- Scoping Document drafted and finalised for Public comment.

November 2011:

- Public Launch of Scoping Document.

December 2011:

- Preparation of Addendum on Public comments for Scoping Document.

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