

Mount Isa City Council News



It was a great honour to help officially launch the Mount Isa Future Ready Economy Roadmap recently.

Here at Mount Isa City Council, we believe in a future made in Australia, and we think it should be made right here in Mount Isa, one of Australia's most iconic towns.

Council has brought together some of Australia's leading experts to identify and assess opportunities to create jobs and to diversify Mount Isa's economy.

Now is our time to define the next chapter in the future of Mount Isa.

Getting new major projects off the



ground can be hard, but I'm optimistic.

Major new projects in the pipeline will unlock industry development. CopperString 2032 will be a game-changer when it comes to power.

Recently, local Member Robbie Katter and I were lobbying Transport Minister Brent Mickelberg for cheaper rail options and better connectivity to the Port of Townsville.

The new State Government has told us that they support the regions and the regions are their priority. We look forward to seeing this translated into action shortly.

We have been working with our neighbouring council, Cloncurry, and the Mount Isa Water Board in advocating for North West Water. This will give us better control over our

water assets. If all of these things are achieved, it will be transformational for the whole MITEZ corridor.

Our city has a positive future, however, we all need to take immediate action. Our economy is a complex and integrated ecosystem, and now it's time for us to take bold steps towards ensuring it is strong and resilient for the future – not just for our resilience, but for the whole of the North West, and more broadly North Queensland.

Our current workforce will need to be maintained if any of this is achievable.

Roadmap for City's Future Released

Council on Friday, February 21 launched the Mount Isa Future Ready Economy Roadmap, a bold new economic vision to transform and diversify the local economy while delivering immediate jobs and long-term benefits for its residents.

Despite a rich asset base, including the North West Minerals Province's \$680 billion in known in-ground resources, many of which are key for Australia's clean energy and future-technology capabilities, Mount Isa faces significant challenges due to its remoteness and dependence on a major employer.

Up to 1200 jobs losses loom as Glencore winds down underground copper operations at Mount Isa Mines from mid-2025.

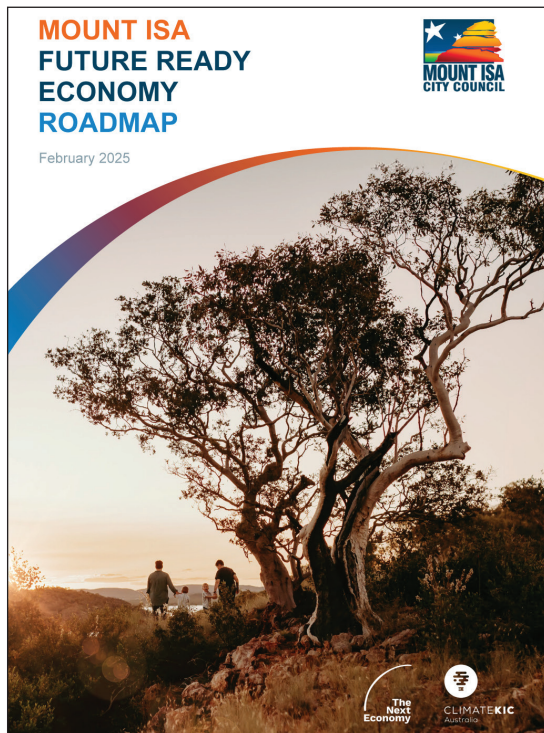
As one of the city's largest employers, this threatens a sharp decline in the city's current 19,000-strong population and its ability to remain the service centre for the North West.

The Mount Isa Future Ready Economy Roadmap presents 28 pathways and nearly 400 potential actions for local stakeholders, industry, government and community to strengthen and diversify the economy across energy, mining and minerals, transport, agriculture, and tourism.

Developed by Council with The Next Economy and Climate-KIC Australia, and with input from more than 100 industry, business, government and community contributors, the Roadmap also focuses on ways to support decarbonisation, climate adaptation, circular design, regenerative practices, and community well-being.

Key elements of the Roadmap include:

- **Supplying critical and strategic minerals** the world needs to decarbonise, leveraging Mount Isa's mining expertise and its gateway position to the North West Minerals Province, rich in cobalt, graphite, vanadium, rare earth elements and important metals such as copper;
- **Producing and storing affordable, reliable renewable energy**, particularly in innovative ways, with Council already working with Green Gravity and Glencore to explore repurposing legacy mining assets for gravitational energy storage systems;
- **Ensuring the timely completion of**



CopperString 2032 to connect Mount Isa to the national energy grid, unlocking opportunities for renewables, to decarbonise industries, and expand critical minerals mining and processing and other industries;

- **Improving transport and logistics infrastructure** as a key enabler for industry and liveability, and to mitigate risks from extreme weather events;
- **Future-proofing and growing tourism and agriculture industries;** and
- **Improving social services and community infrastructure**, including much-needed childcare facilities, affordable housing and specialist healthcare.

The Roadmap showcases Council's existing commitment to economic development, such as the establishment of The Australian Critical Minerals Industrial Precinct, the Critical Minerals and Rare

Earth Elements Research Centre with the University of Queensland, and a battery anode material facility for graphite production. However, Mount Isa can't do it alone.

Council is calling on the Queensland and Australian governments to back Mount Isa's future – and its significant contribution to the economy as Australia decarbonises – with multi-billion-dollar investment and tailored coordination and support.

Mount Isa Mayor Peta MacRae said: "The pending closure of Glencore's underground operations is a huge loss for Mount Isa, but when one door closes, many more are opening to protect our workforce and build the industries, infrastructure and services we need for the future.

"We have a strong economic vision and plan. Council is already working with partners to unlock opportunities in new technologies and services.

"However, bold assistance from the state and federal governments is needed for Mount Isa to remain a great place to live, work and do business."

Council CEO Tim Rose said: "Mount Isa is very rich in critical minerals and rare earths, yet we face challenges with remoteness and huge costs for power and transport.

"It's time to embrace new technologies to generate low-cost and clean power so our mining sector keeps running and we can keep the lights on in our communities.

"With global uncertainty and the challenging nature of mining, Mount Isa offers an ideal location to de-risk and unlock the critical and rare earth minerals the world needs to decarbonise while adding value to our region. With the right investment and support, we can unlock further investment and keep punching above our weight for the national economy."

Liz Webb, The Next Economy COO and project lead, said: "Business-as-usual economic development is no longer enough for historic mining regions like Mount Isa, grappling with major industrial upheaval taking a heavy toll on local workforces and economies. The Roadmap is the exact sort of initiative the Future Made in Australia bill is designed to support. New industry development is complex and takes time."



Upgrade of Footpaths

The Fourth Avenue footpath upgrade works are set to start on Friday, March 7, with an anticipated completion date of Saturday, May 31.

Principal contractor Auzscot Constructions will carry out the works during daylight hours – inclusive of weekends – to reduce the construction period.

The works will widen Fourth Avenue's eastern footpaths from

Twenty-Third Avenue to Nineteenth Avenue.

Works will include traffic management, concrete demolition and reconstruction, construction of new median islands for the eastern intersection with Nineteenth Avenue, and line marking.

Council thanks residents for their patience and understanding while the works are underway.

First Batch of Recyclables Goes Through Material Recovery Facility

Council's Material Recovery Facility (MRF) kicked off its wet-commissioning phase in late February, with the first batch of recyclable materials being processed, sorted, and baled.

At this stage, the system can process 1 tonne of materials per hour, however Council is looking at increasing that to 3 tonnes per hour.

Council's Recycling Coordinator Richard Auld (pictured) said the wet-commissioning phase took about a week-and-a-half and enabled Waste Management Facility staff to fine-tune the system and carry out checks while it processed residential recyclables.

Each day, garbage trucks deliver the recyclables, which go through a pre-sort process via conveyor belt, where staff remove potentially dangerous items – including batteries, smartphones and tablets, fuel cans, and paint tins.

The accepted items then go through a trommel – a large cylinder with different-sized holes – which sorts them by size, dropping them into various chutes.

A large magnet separates aluminium and steel items (drink and food containers) and diverts them to dedicated chutes.



Paper and cardboard items are also separated.

Sophisticated cameras and computers can quickly and accurately identify plastic containers by type as they go past on a conveyor belt, and they are separated accordingly into relevant chutes. Once a sufficient amount of recyclable materials including paper, cardboard, and plastics is collected, it's removed from its chute and compressed in a baler to await transport to recycling centres.

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News In Brief

- **The stormwater channel between Rebecca Street and Enid Street in Mornington will soon be rehabilitated, after Council resolved to award a contract to civil concrete specialists Black Form Contracting. The \$180,890 contract will involve the manufacture and installation of 15 concrete stormwater channel lids, which when installed will also serve as a footpath. The decision was made at Council's February Ordinary Meeting on Wednesday, February 26. The repairs are required due to the collapse of the existing lids between Enid Street and Rebecca Street in October 2023, which necessitated the closure of the footpath and barricades of the area being installed, with temporary lids put in place.**

- Council recently provided training for outdoor and indoor staff on UV radiation and heat stress. Outdoor workers are exposed to five to 10 times more UV radiation than indoor workers, increasing their risk of developing skin cancer. The Queensland Government subsidised the cost of the training – which was delivered by Danger Sun Overhead (DSO) – as part of the Skin Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Project 2022-2026. Mount Isa has high to dangerous UV levels all year round and heat stress is a constant threat to worker health and safety. Council has trialled, and is now purchasing, a broad range of body-cooling products for their outdoor staff. Queensland Health and DSO recommend all people check their skin regularly, and if changes are noticed, talk to your GP.