

## **Northern Tasmania Development Corporation Tasmania's Sustainability Strategy Submission**

Why sustainability in Tasmania is critical to northern prosperity?

With an ever-changing world, we need to work together to create better solutions to ever more wicked problems we are facing, and also to aspire to achieve big audacious dreams for our future prosperity.

To do this Tasmania as a State, needs to provide regional and local communities the direction, governance and funding opportunities to be bold enough to make these positive changes.

In northern Tasmania we know we need to prioritise co-designing and implementing circular economy initiatives, explore the generation, and adoption of, alternative fuel sources, whilst ensuring the wellbeing of our environment, way of life, indigenous cultural and economic prosperity are balanced. This will require a consistent State government policy approach, with targeted, evidence-based and transparent investment (from both public and private). We will need a well-trained (skilled and unskilled) workforce of all ages, housing options to accommodate urban as well as rural communities and climate conscious infrastructure choices.

If as a State, we can achieve these things we will be a truly Sustainable Tasmania in 2050. If as a state we strive for this aspiration, then as northern Tasmania will can be bolder in how we exemplify these aspirations by enabling truly sustainable initiatives and projects that align with our vision:

Northern Tasmania is where people, ideas, businesses and industries thrive and grow.

Exerts from NTDC's strategic plan follow, accompanied by answers to the questions raised through the Discussion Paper.



# FINDING TRUE NORTH

*Navigating a sustainable future in Northern Tasmania*



## OUR VISION

**Northern Tasmania is where people, ideas, businesses and industry thrive and grow**

## OUR PURPOSE

We grow Northern Tasmania by:

- Leading regional collaboration
- Achieving regional outcomes and strategic goals
- Advocating for Northern Tasmania
- Implementing our Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS)
- Championing regional leadership and local governance
- Creating an enabling environment for communities and industry development
- Understanding that our community benefits from sustainable regional development

## OUR VALUES



**Connected**



**Clear**



**Creative**



**Curious**

## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

### Regional Development

Guide regional development in Northern Tasmania by implementing and actioning the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS).

### Regional Collaboration

Work together to agree on and achieve regional outcomes and advocate for and advance regional priorities, strategies and policies.

### Organisational Strength

Develop a robust organisation with a sustainable financial position, a nurtured team, and value for members, industry and community.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Strategic Leadership  
100% Support

Project Management  
≥ 95% OTAB

Engaged Membership  
≥ 100% Retention

Project Delivery  
≥ 12 Projects

Organisational Culture  
≥ 95% Support

Continually Improve  
≥ 80% Satisfaction

Enhanced Reputation  
≥ 85% Positive

Diversified Revenue  
> 50% Non-council

## OUR VISION

**Northern Tasmania is where people, ideas, businesses and industry thrive and grow.**

## OUR PURPOSE

We create a sustainable, resilient community for Northern Tasmanians.

We grow Northern Tasmania by:

- Leading regional collaboration
- Achieving regional outcomes and strategic goals
- Advocating for Northern Tasmania
- Leading our Regional Development Strategy implementation
- Championing regional leadership and local governance
- Creating an enabling environment for communities and industry development
- Understanding that our community benefits from sustainable regional development

We work together to make Northern Tasmania one of the world's most liveable and innovative places.

## OUR VALUES

We collaborate and succeed through collective efforts, sharing support and trust between all stakeholders. Our values guide our work so we can achieve our vision:

**Clear:** Be open, transparent and respectful, understanding that effective communication is critical.

**Curious:** Be curious, encouraging learning and continuous improvement, learning from our stories of success and failure.

**Creative:** Be receptive to new ideas, challenge the status quo, be globally competitive, and support a 'Best of Region' approach.

**Connected:** Be Tasmanian, leverage diversity and cultivate our connections with the environments and communities we work with.

## OUR STRATEGIES

We achieve our vision and purpose through our strategies:

1. **Regional Development:** Guide regional economic development in Northern Tasmania by implementing and actioning the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS).
2. **Regional Collaboration:** Work together to agree on and achieve regional outcomes, advocate for Northern Tasmanians and advance regional priorities, strategies and policies.
3. **Organisational Strength:** Develop a robust organisation that achieves a sustainable financial position and creates value for our members, industry and community.

# Addressing the Questions Asked

## Discussion paper - VISION

### **Q1 What do you hope Tasmania looks like in 2050 - our society, economy, and natural environment?**

Northern Tasmania's vision for sustainability includes priority projects which will accumulatively continue to provide sizeable and direct impacts toward the prosperity of our place, aligned to guiding principles of:

- Building prosperity;
- Improving wellbeing and social outcomes;
- Contributing to the culture of the North;
- Contributing to the health of the environment; and/or
- Contributing to the Northern Tasmania and Tasmanian Brand.

#### Society

By 2050, we have achieved enviable levels of literacy in all its forms. Be it alphabetic, numerical, digital, art, food, health and/or life-informing, literacy is the key for advancing our social prosperity. People who live in a community that values and advances literacy make better lifestyle choices, with regard to their employment, health, lifestyles and relationships.

Through enhanced health and lifestyle literacy we have embraced preventative health practices that reduce the burden upon our health system, and also improved the well-being of our community providing for better quality of life for all socio-demographic strata.

In 2050 we aren't having a debate on how inclusive and cohesive our community should be, nor how we can retain younger generations and/or attract working age cohorts. By this time, we are confident as a community that our people are willing and able to live and work in Tasmania when they prefer to. We are also confident that our people can leave for periods of their life to explore other opportunities in the knowledge they will still prefer Tasmania as a place to live later in life.

We will have explored the diversity needed with regard to the demand for new housing. Traditionally assumed to suit greenfield sprawl development of housing on edges of settlements and into productive farmland, we will have innovated and transformed our regional land use master-planning to provide a greater supply of new dwellings within existing townships.

#### Economy

By 2050 we will be enjoying the outcomes of planning and provision of appropriate locations for government investment in public transport, health, education, cultural and entertainment facilities. We will continue to operate high quality education facilities including prominent tertiary education facilities, such as University of Tasmania. Which will continue to attract international students and educators, as well as world-wide industry conferences, and can lead to the retention of, or immigration of the many nations of people, whom add to the cultural fabric of Northern Tasmania.

We will have adopted critical innovations that enable new secondary and tertiary industry sectors to thrive in regional places, in ways that add-value to primary production sectors, which will still be critical to our success as a place.

We will have accepted that work practices of old, where full time Monday to Friday jobs were seen as the ideal to aspire toward, have been replaced with more adaptive standards. These standards accommodating and celebrating work styles and patterns better suited to retaining younger people and semi-retirees in the workforce.

### Environmental

A key vision for Tasmania 2050 will be to apply a consistent approach to natural environmental management, as we build and protect a strong network of open space to advance conservation and natural cultural values, enhance urban area amenity, encourage healthy lifestyles, promoting climate change mitigation and maintaining utilitarian values.

Our view on waste generation and circular economy will be central to how we live and work. The needless consumption of plastics and excessive consumption of natural resources will be viewed poorly by the majority of community and businesses opting instead for reusables and natural fibres to replace where we can't reduce use.

By 2050 we will have gone well beyond net zero targets driven by our use of renewable energy in transport as well as industry and household consumption. By this time the majority of light and heavy vehicles will be electric and hydrogen powered respectively, and we will; have adopted of new industries with unquestionable carbon negative credentials.

### Cultural

By 2050 Tasmania has reached a consensus with our aboriginal community in accepting our true past and committing to a shared future. We use Palawa language as Tasmanians in our everyday. We willingly welcome people in language and integrate common palawa words in our general conversation. Our children learn cultural values and the significance of country in their mainstream education and share with parents who also learnt these values while growing up.

We welcome co-design and placemaking conversations with Tasmanian Aboriginal people, to a degree that we don't have to discover the significance of places by accident or after that fact of a development occurring.

## **Q2 What are the most important challenges we need to overcome to achieve your vision for Tasmania in 2050?**

### Economic and social use of environment without mismanagement

Northern Tasmania has, as does all of Tasmania, a unique Natural Environment. The region is recognised as having high environmental values and low levels of pollution that promote an association with 'purity' and 'quality' for many specialised manufacturing (food), agricultural and service industries (tourism). The region has ideal growing conditions for pasture and cropping that support adaptive, flexible agriculture and dynamic viticulture. Northern Tasmania need to maintain and retain the landscape beauty, biodiversity and natural resources we are recognised internationally for. Its natural environment and natural resources generate much of the region's wealth.

### Reliable and consistent housing availability across all strata

Future affordable housing for all ages, stage and wages of people in Northern Tasmania need to be close to public transport, workplaces, education, community facilities and upgraded existing infrastructure. High quality and sustainable infill development can be informed by current information on the climate adaptability of an existing settlement and the infrastructure resilience to the increase in extreme weather events.

Northern Tasmania has experienced high levels of residential development over the last two years. As a result, NTDC has undertaken a residential demand and supply analysis to understand the impact that this demand has had on the supply of residential land over the medium and long term. The residential Demand and Supply Study analysis contains population projections and a projection of housing demand for the next 30 years provided at five yearly intervals and with low, medium and high growth scenarios.

The 2023 Residential Demand and Supply Study project managed by NTDC, is intended to provide an evidence base for the review of the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (NTRLUS). To overcome these challenges, the State has the opportunity to engage in a long-term collaborative partnership with and within the Regions, towards achieving a sustainable future for Tasmania.

### The value of education and literacy in all its forms

Tasmania's current literacy levels are low by any standards. Many interventions through formal education, contemporary approaches of engaging young people in alternate modes of learning and advances in adult literacy intervention have generated positive results. However, many generations of Tasmanians who have not valued education have preceded these efforts. Especially in regional places, we need to break the assumption that educational attainment results in family networks diminishing as enlightened young people leave to explore the world.

Low levels of literacy beyond alphabetic and numeric also need further investment and heightened awareness as to their impact upon social, economic and health outcomes.

### Low education/community value for waste mitigation

An example of this is within our food system. A significant segment of our community has low food literacy, an inability to safely store fresh produce and/or prepare meals. These are skills often

acquired in secondary school. A lack of these skills has been observed to directly lead to waste, as well as hunger of one in two Tasmanians. Neighbourhood houses and community groups now fill in the gaps, that formal education used to lead in, for the life skills learning of our community.

Wasted food also devalues the water needed to grow local food and the power used to store food. The food disposed of is a waste of nutrition for the health and well-being of community members, especially with lower disposable incomes or less access to affordable food, and it also becomes an accumulation issue for landfill.

The challenge is the acknowledgement that not enough people within our community value the need to reduce waste through informed consumer choices, conscious consumption and waste reuse and sensitive disposal.

#### Attitude change and technology adoption in renewable energy use.

Attitude changes in Tasmania are not always easy. For the adoption to new technologies, we are equally challenged with the cost of investing as a community with high rates of low socio-economic households, as well as the letting go of old preferences. A solid example currently is the transition to electric vehicles and/or sustainable public transport use. Tasmanians are very car dependent with high rates of secondhand vehicle purchase driven by lower household incomes. We see households and businesses that do take up electric vehicle ownership, do not replace their current petrol fueled car, but rather hold onto it, thus creating more car ownership within the footprint of one. We need education, incentive, and promotional programs, to inspire confidence to adopt EV exclusively. This also requires complete recharge infrastructure, especially in regional Tasmania, and subsidizing more advanced EV technologies to be sold in Tasmania.

#### Attitude change and acceptance of historical and current wrongs upon aboriginal community.

The recent Voice referendum where 4 in 5 Tasmanian electorates majority voted no for changes to the constitution illustrates the challenge facing us as a community regarding acceptance of our aboriginal heritage and history. To be truly sustainable and aligned with global expectations we need to address this challenge progressively through until 2050.

Matters relating to the celebration of palawa language use and broader understanding of the cultural significance of country and nature require a multi-generational communications and education program born of the patience and tolerance shown by many in the aboriginal community.

**Q1 If we streamline the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to around six sustainability topics or focus areas for Tasmania's sustainability goals, what would they be, or do you think we should simply align with the SDGs?**

Northern Tasmania has a collaborative regional focus for sustainable economic growth, in alignment with the 17 UN SDGs. The six SDGs that most relate to the region's future prosperity are:

- **Good Health & Well-being:** a significant contributor to any place's economic and social prosperity;
- **Quality Education:** growth in regional productivity and prosperity is fundamentally linked to educational outcomes;
- **Affordable & Clean Energy:** leveraging our opportunities around Tasmania's investment in renewable energy and decarbonisation;
- **Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure:** identifying and advocating for positive investment to generate better work and economic returns;
- **Sustainable Cities & Communities:** enhancing our liveability and acknowledging the role this plays in population attraction and retention;
- **Climate Action:** the common wicked problem for everyone in Tasmania to collaborate to address.

The final goal *Partnerships for our Goals* we feel is central to the success of all SDGs.



## **Q2 In what areas of sustainability do you think Tasmania is doing well, and are there other priorities where we could do better?**

Tasmania promotes and protects its unique environmental assets and values and seeks to strengthen strategic support for the development of renewable energy infrastructure; to enable opportunities for renewable energy production including wind, geothermal, tidal, and wave energy.

### Socially

Regional Tasmania has a real strength in being close-knit and cohesive. As much as we are faced with official statistics that reflect poor health, welfare, crime, and other outcomes, collectively as a community we are very well networked, sharing, and excellent problem solvers when faced with common goals and dilemmas. Our urban communities are embracing the fullest range of social enterprises and supports, acknowledging and responding to issues such as homelessness, inclusivity and literacy, whilst actively seeking solutions to address these wicked problems.

Brand Tasmania has defined a unifying position of 'Be Tasmanian' which over the last 5 or more years has galvanised pride in being from our island State, debunking the cultural cringe previously associated with being Tasmanian. This overt pride is a untapped motivation for us to address many of the sustainability challenges faces us into the future.

### Economically

Industries that rely directly on the natural environment are significant in the Northern Tasmanian economy. Many are small businesses serviced by local suppliers and have scope for expansion and innovation. Northern Tasmania has a wide and diverse industry base with competitive business costs, attractive to international and national companies; a skilled and stable workforce attracted by diverse job opportunities and extensive cultural and recreational activities; and a state-wide transport and distribution hub noting that Launceston is less than three hours' drive to all parts of Tasmania.

Northern Tasmania has emerged as a business hub and the centre for a growing regional population based on its economic, competitive and natural advantages. The region has an abundance of natural resources including a mild temperate climate, reliable rainfall, clean air, rich fertile soils and an unspoilt natural environment. Northern Tasmania has the aspiration to retain and maintain a pleasant climate with planning and policy to address the impacts of climate change, as the region offers an attractive destination from harsher climates, and significant opportunities for industry and agricultural land uses that depend on reliable water and/or stable weather patterns. Renewable energy options include substantial wind energy generation opportunities in the northeast and Furneaux Group as well as tidal and wave energy.

The basis of the regional economy has shifted, with greater emphasis observed on the tertiary and service sector (business, financial services, retail, education, health, tourism), and small and medium sized enterprises for employment. Launceston's role as a regional service centre for education, health, finance and business attributes has grown. However, the Workforce, Labour Supply and Skills Shortages Without intervention Northern Tasmania will struggle to meet demands for a skilled workforce across key professions and occupations.

Currently local and regional training and education are not closely linked to identified future labour force needs. There is a need to lift the regional profile and significance of education, higher education and skills training. Education and training investment has potential to help drive the economy. Traditional industries may offer fewer new jobs in the long term. Future jobs will need a better skilled and trained workforce. However, a better educated/skilled workforce may be attracted to jobs outside the region.

#### Environmentally

One of our greatest legacies as a State is being the birthplace of the Greens movement in Australia. We have UNESCO listed wilderness areas, which form part of protected landscape enviable by many places in the world. We actively lobby for and secure means to protect endangered wildlife and challenge any development of land or place which is deemed unworthy of Tasmanian environmental standards.

We have rural landowners who have assumed multi-generational custodianship of privately owned grazing and bush land, and through careful, respectful management sustain this traditional of care.

#### Culturally

Although the Tasmanian aboriginal community has been brutalised over the last two hundred or so years, their strength, patience and wisdom has sustained. These attributes we many only now as a community be valuing openly, but progress is being made. What we are doing well is as a broader community we are trying to bridge the divide European settlement has created. But we are yet to have many wins in this area that we can celebrate as progress achieved.

### **Contact us for further information**

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