

**Rockhampton Regional Council**

**Smart Regional Centre  
Strategy**

**Community Survey Summary Analysis**

# Rockhampton Regional Council Smart Regional Centre

## Community Survey Summary Analysis

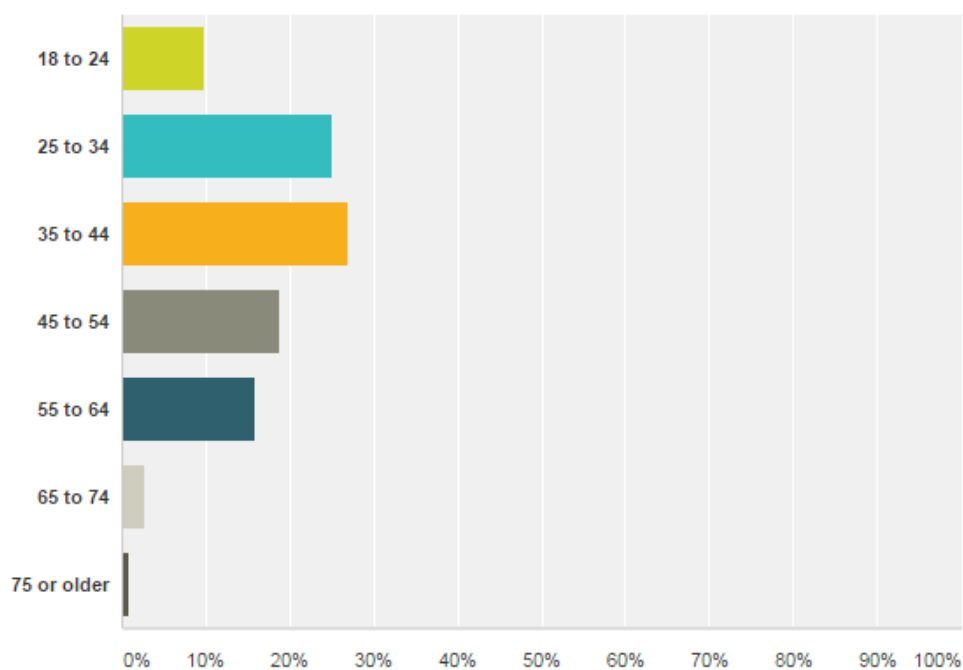
11 November 2015

### The respondents

Council has received 463 responses to the Smart Regional Centre Consultation survey.

Assuming an approximate population of the region of 80,345 people, the survey is statistically significant. We are 95% confident that the results have a margin of error of  $\pm 4.54$ .

The demographic makeup of the respondents broadly match that of the region, although there is an under sample of older residents and an equivalent oversample of younger residents.



84% of respondents identify as a local resident, while almost 13% identify as an owner of a local business. A further 3% have identified that they are responding on behalf of a local community group.

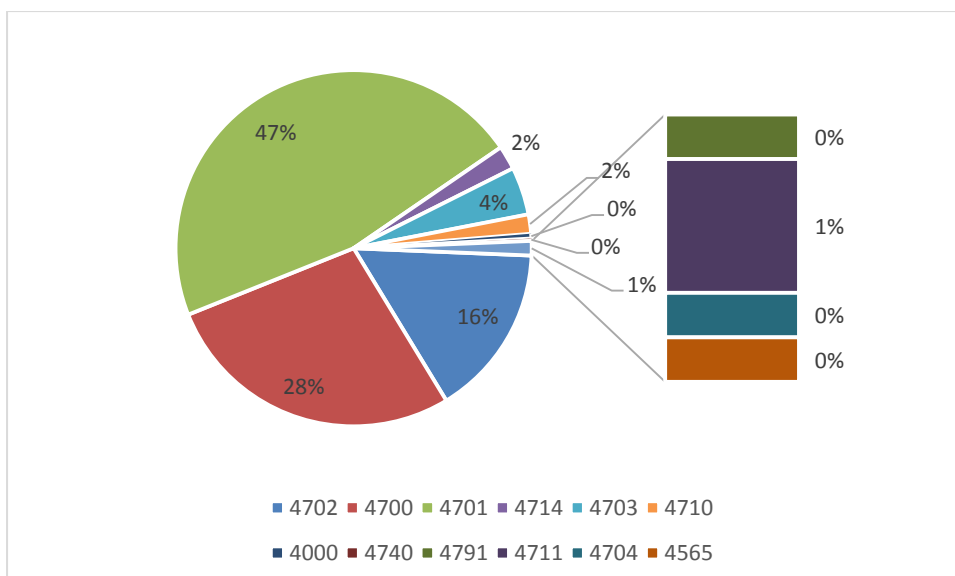
The groups which responded include:

Rockhampton Boomerang Toastmasters Club, Radio 4You, Rockhampton Relay for Life, Cancer Council Central Queensland, Catholic Diocese, Cycling clubs, Rockhampton Basketball Inc, Centre for Regional Innovation, CQU Berserker Football Club, Capricornia Chamber Of Commerce, Frenchville SS and Rockhampton Presbyterian Churches

The respondents are mainly drawn from the Region with respondents from Rockhampton constituting the largest block of responses.

South Rockhampton	282
North Rockhampton	72
Gracemere & Surrounds	44
Capricorn Coast	38
Mount Morgan & Surrounds	9
West Rockhampton	2
Alton Downs (west of Rton)	2
Brisbane (south)	2
Glenlee (north)	2
Gogango (north)	2
Rockyview (north)	2
Glendale (north)	1
Kalapa (west of Gmere)	1
Milman (north)	1
Tewantin (south)	1

The postcode distribution also reflects this relatively concentrated nature of responses, with 75% of respondents identifying either 4700 or 4701 as their postcode.



## The results of the consultation

### The priorities of the region

The survey asked respondents about the areas which were a priorities for them. The survey found that each of the priority areas had large levels of community support, with increasing the liveability of the region marked as a priority (between 7 and 10 on a 1-10 scale) by almost 90% of respondents.

All possible responses received support by over 75% of respondents with the exception of increasing the number of businesses in the CBD (65%), better using the riverfront (66%) and increasing the resiliency of the region to natural disasters (73%.) All three of these areas represented the greatest resistance, with respondents marking them as either a 1,2 or 3 on a 10 point scale.

The riverfront redevelopment received the largest resistance with almost 12% of people marking it as not a priority.

Two of the areas with the lowest community support are geographically focussed on a small area, perhaps reflecting concern that the Council has been too focussed on that area.

### Council's role

Surveyed residents for the most part agree that Council has a role in the type of activities outlined in the Smart Regional Centre strategy.

Outside of the traditional role of Council Residents are most convinced that Council has a role in providing a safe environment for the community (90%), however the majority of the community are comfortable with Council having a responsibility to assist new local businesses (66%), and economically developing the region (76%.)

### Local challenges

The community largely agrees that unemployment is the largest challenge facing the region, followed by the livability of the region.

Each of the below responses have

Local unemployment.	70.6%
A lack of high quality internet and mobile reception.	47.4%
The under utilisation of our natural and built environment.	46.9%
Vacant shops in the CBD.	60.5%
Public safety.	42.1%
Retaining skilled people in the community.	58.1%
The livability of Rockhampton.	61.2%

There are also 57 responses which identify other priorities which are not outlined above.

The responses include housing affordability, Roads, Parking, and Culture.

### The Smart Regional Centre

Council's vision for a smart regional centre has the support of 88% of the community.

Over the course of the survey this has been as high as 95% and has slightly decreased as more responses have been received.

The largest decrease in support appears to correlate with the placement of the survey on the Region's Facebook account.

## Initiatives

The initiatives outlined in the survey do not have broad community support, this is perhaps a function of the limited community information about the use of this technology.

We would suggest that, as the vision has broad community support and the individual initiatives have yet to be adopted by the community that Council spends some time demonstrating the need

Providing beef producers with access to real-time data which may be used to identify and trace livestock and to assist in providing visibility of the entire supply chain.	43.9%
Dynamic and real-time monitoring of soil moisture and fertility which may be used to find the optimal times to plant and water crops, or move livestock.	39.4%
Real-time assessment and predictions about water levels and indicators of water quality.	55.1%
Digital signs which may be used to provide real-time safety information and/or advertise community events.	52.1%
Reinvigorating the CBD and its historic buildings by using smart technologies to enhance the visual appeal of the various laneways scattered throughout the city.	70.8%
Enabling citizens to report environmental hazards and damage to infrastructure through digital communication channels.	52.6%
Releasing appropriate council data to the private sector and community groups for their use.	50.1%

for each of these initiatives prior to announcing an investment.

## Infrastructure

Again, there is limited community understanding and inherent support for the infrastructure. We would expect this will change with greater community information.

Smart lighting on the waterfront.	49.1%
New CCTV cameras along the waterfront.	48.4%
The establishment of a Smart Hub to develop entrepreneurial businesses.	47.4%
Mentoring programs across a diverse range of industries.	43.4%
The installation of sensors collecting anonymous data about supply chains, water quality, soil fertility and other similar things.	30.7%

## Prioritisation

Even with limited community understanding of the benefits of the technology the Region agrees that Council should prioritise this activity.

75% of the community either agrees or strongly agrees with Council prioritising this activity.

Those who disagreed with the prioritisation picked a large number of other priorities including roads, the pound, parking, beautification, traffic lights and reopening Kershaw Gardens.

## Advantages of the region

The community sees Rockhampton's place as a service centre for Central Queensland as its greatest advantage and agrees that the natural environment and the area's liveability is an advantage, but broadly disagrees that the region had a diverse economy.

## Conclusion

In a statistically valid survey the vast majority of residents express support for the Smart Regional Centre concept and the majority of the community agrees that this is the type of activity Council should be involved in.

The drivers for the plan are also well supported with the region broadly in agreement about the need to support new local businesses, keep younger residents in the region and support the region's liveability as well as the pressing nature of local unemployment.

However the component parts, particularly the use of the sensors and their installation around the region, were not well supported. We would suggest this is due to limited information about their costs and benefits. Interestingly the section in which citizens were asked to identify an initiative they would prefer Council to support, respondents largely identified areas in which the technology could be used.

As a result we would recommend with pursuing the strategy, using the drivers with the most community support prominently in the rhetoric surrounding the launch.

We would also recommend a continuous string of positive announcements around the implementation of the strategy to build community support for some of the less well understood aspects.