



\$20 BILLION PROJECT BOOST

A FRESH LIST OF PROJECTS WORTH MORE THAN \$20 BILLION, HEADLINED BY THE \$8.15 BILLION AQUIS RESORT, HAS THE TROPICAL NORTH POISED TO SPRING BACK TO LIFE, WRITES NICK DALTON.

THE tropical north is poised to spring back to life with a fresh list of projects, investments and proposals cracking \$20 billion to more than \$21.5 billion.

The Cairns Chamber of Commerce also has another "unofficial" list of \$4.5 billion in proposals still to be confirmed.

The new list totals \$21.543 billion — up by nearly \$3 billion on the \$18.3 billion first list published more than six months ago.

It doesn't include plans by the new owners of the Paradise Palms Resort and Country Club to build 800 units on land surrounding the sprawling golf course at Kewarra Beach, worth about \$550 million.

The list is headlined by the still-to-be-approved \$8.15 billion Aquis mega-resort.

Chamber chief executive Deb Hancock says the latest list "certainly reinforces this position with an ever-growing list of projects and investments adding to the growth potential of our region".

"The Cairns chamber has access to vast amounts of information related to upcoming major projects and investments, and this information is of considerable value to the business community," she says.

Ms Hancock says the value of projects excluded some which remained under wraps due to a commercially sensitive and confidential nature. She said the proposals were expected to create more than 15,790 jobs during construction and more than 37,000 jobs operationally, with some projects yet to determine job numbers.

"This suite of information is not to be considered exhaustive, but includes the major

projects occurring across our region above \$5 million in value.

"The Cairns Chamber of Commerce confirmed details of projects with contributors and proponents directly," Ms Hancock says.

"Our region is an investment mecca because we have a 24-hour, seven-day, curfew-free international airport, an economy worth \$12 billion, a regional population of nearly 245,000, an economy growing by 3 per cent a year, exports of \$6.9 billion a year and more than 23,400 registered businesses employing 117,000 people.

"We have a lot to be proud of and this also makes our region a very attractive investment location."

The secondary inventory of 80 projects has not been able to be confirmed. It includes more than \$300 million of Australian capital works, including Kennedy and Captain Cook Highway projects, plus a share of \$675 million of Bruce Highway upgrades between Brisbane and Cairns, the latest stage of the Cairns southern access corridor between Robert Rd and Foster Rd (\$58 million) and the upgrade of the Peninsula Development Rd (\$210 million).

Queensland Government works of more than \$233 million include Department of Housing projects (\$72.79 million) and road works of \$16.6 million.

Most of the investments of more than \$3.9 billion is in the private sector and includes the Gasparin Group's \$700 million Half Moon Bay Cairns project of 2000 houses, boutique hotels and resorts, shopping, cafes and restaurants, Lend Lease's proposed 10,000sq m extension of the Cairns Central Shopping centre (\$100

million), Metallica Minerals' Urquhart bauxite mine, MSF Sugar's Babinda site redevelopment (\$60 million), North Queensland Bio-Energy's Ingham project (\$500 million), the Tumoulin High Rd wind farm (\$100 million), Rio Tinto's South of Embley bauxite mine (\$1.45 billion), the \$175 million Sunset Drive Inn residential development at Woree (\$175 million) and the \$500 million Wongai coking coal venture at Laura.

Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland Cairns-based president Brett Moller says there are about 3000 businesses in the Cairns region involved in the construction industry, including the majority of national construction companies that tackled significant projects.

"Major projects planned for the Cairns region presents as \$22 billion worth of investment opportunities for local operators as well as a long term boost to tourism," he says.

"At the top of the list is the Aquis Great Barrier Reef Resort. The Aquis resort is aiming to attract more than 1 million visitors per year to the Cairns region.

"Combined these projects are expected to create 17,743 jobs during construction and 36,146 operationally.

"This shows that Cairns and Far North Queensland can sustain development and investment of the highest order and can be a jobs capital for the Sunshine State.

"It has a major spin-off affect, with small businesses supplying the construction and development chain.

"This promises to provide a major boost to the local economy for decades to come."

\$22BN PROJECT LIST

- **Aquis Great Barrier Reef Resort Casino \$8.15bn** – 3750 construction jobs/20,000 operational jobs
- **Adventure Waters water theme park \$45m** – 300 construction jobs/200 operational
- **Aspial Corporation's Nova 8 commercial and residential towers \$550m** – 1000 construction jobs
- **Aumuller St upgrade (Cairns Regional Council) \$7.8m** – 88 jobs
- **C3 towers residential buildings Cairns CBD \$550m** – 340 construction
- **Carbine Tungsten Mt Carbine tungsten mine \$161m** – 125 jobs
- **Cairns Airport upgrade \$1bn**
- **Cairns Aquarium and Reef Research Centre \$50m**
- **Cairns Hospital redevelopment \$454.6m** – 2600 construction jobs
- **Cairns Private Hospital redevelopment \$20m-plus**
- **Cairns Regional Council community area projects 2015/16 \$12m**
- **Cairns Regional Council sport and recreation projects 2015/16 \$6m**
- **Cairns Regional Council transport and drainage projects 2015/16 \$23m**
- **Cairns Regional Council waste and water projects 2015/16 \$33.2m**
- **CQUniversity Cairns campus \$15m**
- **Cairns' residential land development \$150m-plus** – 300 jobs
- **City Centre Alive Shields St upgrade \$17.4m** – 70 jobs
- **Cook Shire Lyon solar storage \$75m**
- **Consolidated Tin Mining \$370m**
- **COUCH Cairns Help and Wellness Centre \$5m**
- **Ella Bay Integrated Resort \$1.8bn**
- **Etheridge Integrated Agriculture Project (sugar and cattle) \$2bn**
- **Forsyth Wind Farm (Infigen) \$150m**
- **Golden Lakes/Forrest Mountain residential development (Paradise Palms) \$122m**
- **Gulf Alumina Skardon River Bauxite Project (Weipa) \$70m**
- **Laneway Resources Agate Creek (Forsyth) \$30m**
- **Mareeba Airport upgrade \$13m**
- **Mareeba waste water treatment plant upgrade \$15m**
- **Metro Mining Bauxite Hills Project (Weipa) \$197m**
- **Mount Emerald wind farm (Walkamin) \$420m**
- **Mount Peter development (Edmonton business and industry park) \$768m**
- **Mount Peter residential development (Satterley) \$500m**
- **Rainforest Water Australia harvesting and bottling plant \$7m**
- **Peninsula Development Rd upgrade \$210m**
- **Sheraton Mirage Resort (Port Douglas) - \$200m** 150 jobs
- **The Kidston Project: Genex hydro power scheme (Kidston) \$280m**
- **The Reef Marina expansion (Port Douglas) \$6m**
- **The Precinct performing arts centre and park \$65m**
- **Tobruk Pool redevelopment \$23.3m**
- **Vital Metals Watershed tungsten project (Mt Carbine) \$140m**
- **Walker Rd Sporting and Recreation Precinct \$16m**

An artist's impression of one of the C3 23-storey towers planned for opposite the Cairns Convention Centre.
Opposite page: An artist's impression of the Nova8 towers planned by Singapore's Aspial Corporation in Spence St.

