



# STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

July 2019

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# Foreword from the Minister

Investment in social infrastructure is essential for the health, wellbeing and economic prosperity of our communities. It plays a pivotal role in bringing people together, developing social capital, maintaining quality of life, and developing the skills and resilience to build strong communities.

The *Strategy for Social Infrastructure* and supporting *Best Practice Guide for Social Infrastructure* seek to identify the success factors which underline successful social infrastructure. It will also help set Queensland's long-term direction for social infrastructure, focusing on the planning, design, location and use of the state's physical infrastructure to provide more efficiently and conveniently located social services.

It has been developed to take forward the intentions and direction of the *State Infrastructure Plan* and to better support the Queensland Government's existing human services network. It helps deliver the government's *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* by encouraging better use and investment in the state's social infrastructure.

Our traditional approaches to social infrastructure have served Queenslanders well over the years, however global and local trends mean we need to think differently about how we deliver, maintain and use social infrastructure.

Competing priorities and challenges also affect how state government agencies and local governments respond to designing and planning cities, towns and precincts. With governments increasingly needing to do more with scarce public resources, planning is vital in optimising social infrastructure investment.

The strategy identifies six key implementation actions to help achieve healthier outcomes in the future planning, design and provision of social infrastructure:

- champion place-specific social infrastructure investment
- establish a Social Infrastructure Ministerial Committee to prioritise social infrastructure investment
- strengthen place-specific social infrastructure planning in priority areas
- investigate a more coordinated approach to land acquisition and management to support more efficient capital investment
- strengthen the delivery role of Community Hubs and Partnerships
- pilot the success factors identified in the *Best Practice Guide for Social Infrastructure*.

By improving the way we plan social infrastructure, we can ensure that Queensland continues to build and support stronger communities, services are located in the right places and they are adaptable for future needs and purposes.



**The Honourable Cameron Dick MP**

Minister for State Development,  
Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

# Introduction

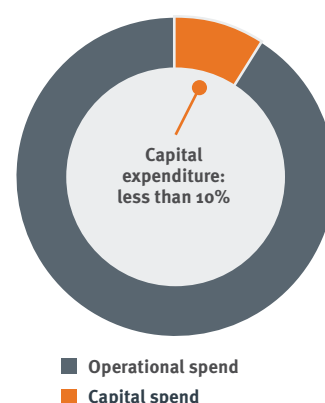
In recent years, the Queensland Government has adopted new approaches that provide social services more efficiently and conveniently, while responding to changing community needs and trends.

The *Strategy for Social Infrastructure* (the strategy) builds on these changes to encourage even greater innovation in the design, location and sharing of social infrastructure to address emerging challenges and get the best outcomes for diverse Queensland communities. While all infrastructure can provide a social benefit, this strategy is focused on social infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, fire stations and social housing.

Social infrastructure, the focus of this strategy, is just one component in the broad and complex process of human service planning which drives the need for facilities and spaces, where they are located and how they are accessed. This strategy takes effect once human service planning has determined that social infrastructure is required to support the delivery of social services and programs. As part of this, transport infrastructure plays a vital role in connecting communities and human services, and therefore needs to be considered as part of all social infrastructure planning.

Investment in social infrastructure (i.e. capital investment) is a small component of total expenditure by human service agencies (Figure 1), yet it is vitally important to support flexible operations and service provision, which respond to changing community needs.

The strategy focuses on the physical infrastructure, particularly where it is located and how it is designed, managed and used. It has been developed with regard to the *State Infrastructure Plan* directions and prioritisation framework and the social services delivered by the Queensland Government (Figure 2).



**Figure 1** Capital expenditure (excluding capital grants) as percentage of expenditure by Queensland human service agencies (data derived from *Budget Papers 2016–17*)

## What is Social Infrastructure?

While all infrastructure can provide a social benefit, this strategy is focused on the physical facilities and spaces of the following infrastructure classes from the *State Infrastructure Plan*, which include a broad range of facilities such as community hubs.



**Figure 2** Social infrastructure classes

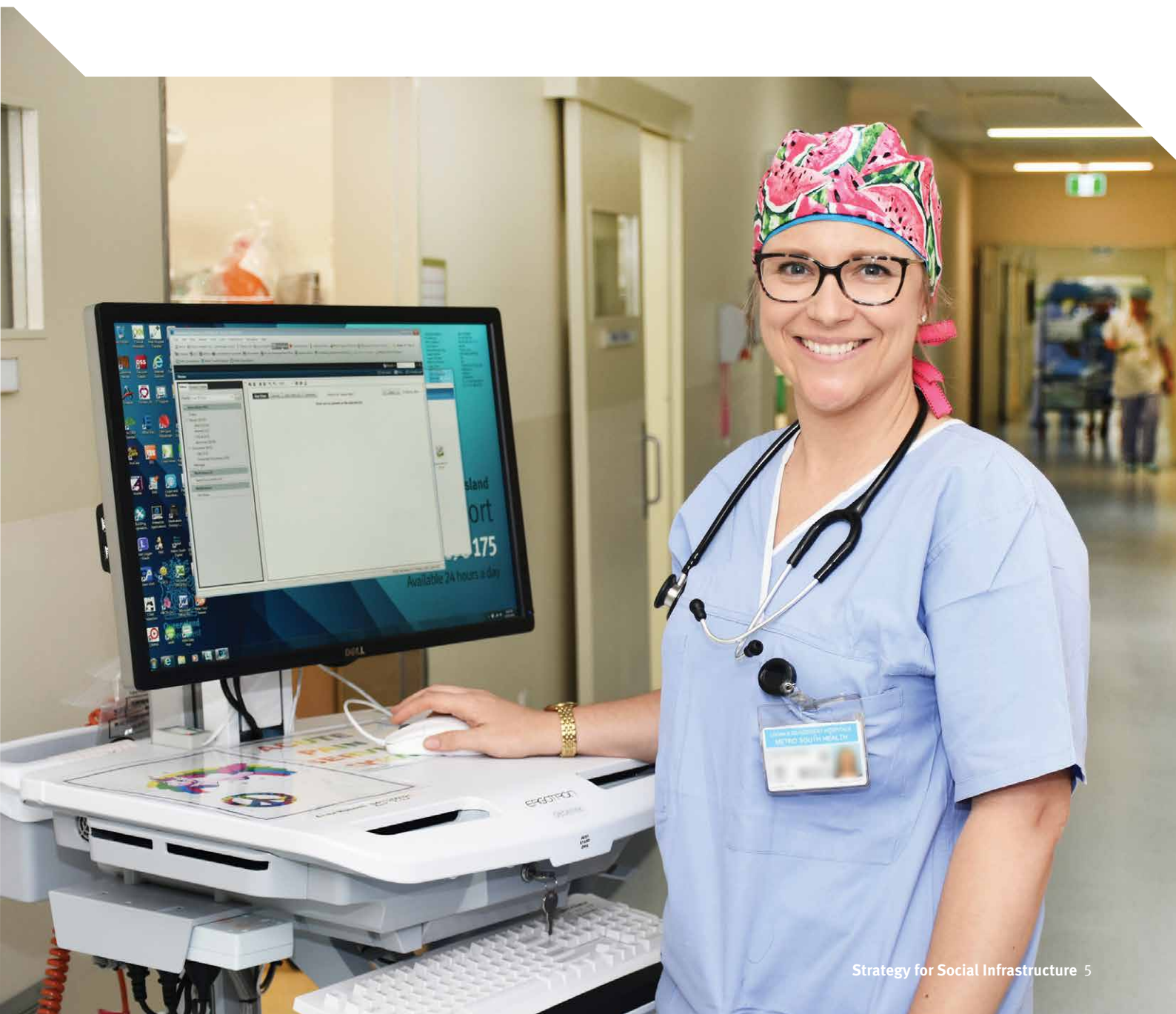


# This strategy

The strategy provides a framework for the planning, design, location and use of the state's social infrastructure. It aims to achieve more integrated, accessible, well-located, multi-functional and cost-effective social infrastructure, which requires us to:

- make better use of existing infrastructure to deliver broader services and community benefits
- use every new infrastructure investment as an opportunity to deliver more integrated outcomes for inclusive communities.

Benefits from this strategy will be more responsive social services and better investment of public resources in social infrastructure, aligning with the intended objectives of *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*. The strategy and its implementation will also contribute to other strategies and plans, including the development of the *Queensland Government Office Accommodation Strategy*.



# Implementation actions

A series of actions have been developed to take forward the strategy intent. While the strategy takes a big picture view of social infrastructure, the implementation actions are specific and practical steps that government can take to tackle competing priorities and challenges head on.

The actions will help government provide better responses to social infrastructure challenges by strengthening and expanding cross-government functions. They will build upon the Government's commitment to *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland Priorities*, supporting a responsive government through more accessible, integrated and responsive social services.

## Champion

The infrastructure Minister will champion place-specific social infrastructure investment. This will see place-specific social infrastructure investment prioritised to ensure the diverse needs of communities are adequately serviced.

## Governance

A Social Infrastructure Ministerial Committee (SIMC) will be established to prioritise place-specific social infrastructure investment.

This approach will allow Ministers and Directors-General to prioritise and leverage major investments in social infrastructure in a place and may see inter-agency agreements such as shared use of facilities, partnerships for mixed use precincts or repurposing underutilised assets to deliver other essential community services.

To support the SIMC an existing cross-government forum that supports the implementation of the *State Infrastructure Plan* (SIP) will be leveraged to coordinate the implementation of this strategy.

*Pilot projects will demonstrate a variety of difference aspects to the success factors in the Best Practice Guide.*

## Next Steps:

- Establish SIMC to prioritise place-specific social infrastructure.

## Best practice pilots

Pilot projects will demonstrate a variety of different aspects to the success factors in the *Best Practice Guide for Social Infrastructure*. A pilot in Meadowbrook will explore opportunities to support the growing needs of the Logan Hospital and better use of the adjacent Loganlea TAFE, with longer-term opportunities to develop a health and education precinct. Other pilots will be confirmed through the place-specific planning implementation action.

## Next Steps:

- SIMC approve approach and governance for the Meadowbrook pilot.
- Present pilot opportunities for SIMC consideration in 2019.

## Place-specific social infrastructure planning

The Queensland Government will adopt a place-specific approach to social infrastructure planning in identified social infrastructure priority areas. Priority areas may be areas of significant infrastructure investment where multiple agencies may realise the potential to co-locate or share facilities, leverage investment or support new models of social infrastructure delivery. In addition to priority areas, Social Infrastructure Investment Strategies will be developed for appropriate Priority Development Areas (PDAs).

Through a forward-looking view of major social infrastructure investments, this coordinated, multi-agency and place-specific approach will result in better community outcomes along with more efficient use and investment in social infrastructure.

*The Queensland Government will adopt a place-specific approach to social infrastructure planning in social infrastructure priority areas.*

### Next Steps:

- Priority area opportunities are presented for SIMC consideration by mid to late 2019.
- Delivery of a Social Infrastructure Investment Strategy in nominated PDAs by late 2019.

## Strengthening coordination and delivery

The coordination and delivery role of Community Hubs and Partnerships (CHaPs) will be strengthened to coordinate selected social infrastructure priority areas and social infrastructure investment strategies for nominated PDAs. CHaPs will help position Queensland as a leader in best-practice social infrastructure by driving exemplar social infrastructure approaches such as developing and documenting evidence-based models.

CHaPs expertise will facilitate broader collaboration between human service agencies and over time mature this approach to become 'business-as-usual'. They will also continue to drive and promote better practice through support and education. By working with human service agencies, CHaPs will support adopting the success factors of the strategy's *Best Practice Guide* and undertake activities such as a national symposium.

The strategy's *Best Practice Guide* also provides a practical basis to enable further integrated thinking and innovation to meet the changing needs of Queenslanders. Human service agencies will use the guide's 'success factors' to build on their existing best practices as a part of the planning, design, location and use of social infrastructure. Building Queensland will also consider these success factors through the development of business cases for social infrastructure projects.

### Next Steps:

- Human service agencies will use the guide's success factors to support best-practice social infrastructure.
- Operationalise best practice social infrastructure in Building Queensland business cases by mid-late 2019.

## Land acquisition and management

The government will investigate a more coordinated approach to land acquisition and management that aggregates the funding of human service agencies to support more efficient capital expenditure. This investigation will explore the opportunity to acquire and manage land on behalf of human service agencies. It will consider the efficiencies, economies of scale and outcomes of better coordination in communities where land could be purchased for multiple agencies.

A more coordinated approach could enable the government to more strategically acquire land to support both the immediate and longer-term needs for community service delivery. Land acquired by individual agencies can present missed opportunities for mixed-use precincts or multi-purpose facilities supporting more convenient and integrated services.

*Building Queensland will also consider these success factors through the development of business cases for social infrastructure projects.*

### Next Steps:

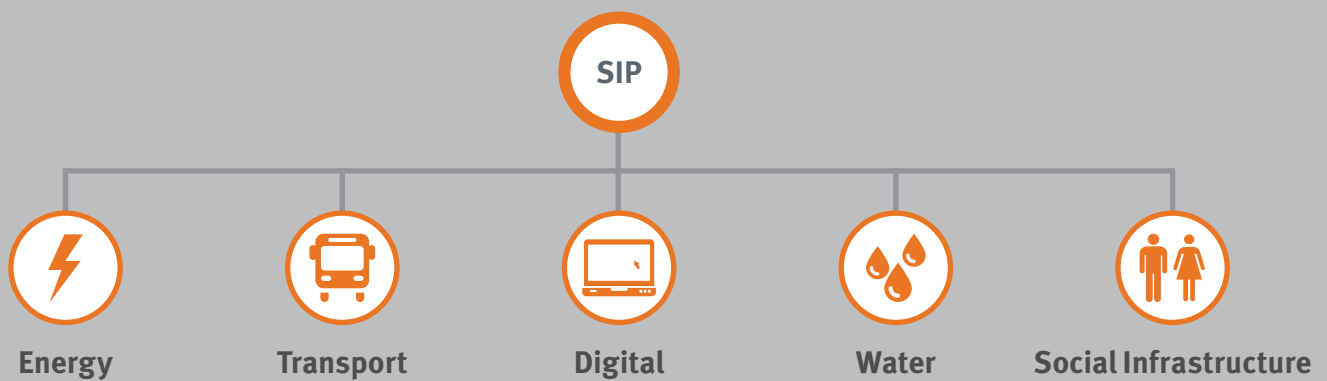
- Investigation findings considered by SIMC in 2019.

# Setting the scene

The *Strategy for Social Infrastructure* is one of the five strategic infrastructure documents highlighted in the *SIP*.

These strategic infrastructure documents are designed to provide a clear policy direction for strategic infrastructure decisions across the energy, transport, digital, water and social asset classes.

A key objective of the strategic infrastructure documents is to take forward the intentions of the SIP across each asset class. In setting the strategic direction for each asset class, these documents strive to achieve the broader social, economic and environmental outcomes sought by the Queensland Government as a whole.



## What we have heard

In developing the strategy engagement was undertaken with state human service agencies, local government, peak industry bodies and community/non-government organisations with all groups supporting the overall direction of the strategy.

Through this engagement, six common themes emerged to shape the strategy approach:

- diversifying funding
- promoting greater co-location/sharing
- encouraging collaboration and partnerships
- emphasising place-making
- effective governance
- inclusive planning.





Sunshine Coast University

## Place-specific infrastructure for different communities

Queensland is a large and diverse state with differing social infrastructure needs across urban, regional and remote areas, and within new or established communities. The most effective social infrastructure decisions apply strategies and solutions that help achieve the best possible solution for a given place, taking account of identified need and demand and informed through active community consultation.

Social infrastructure also needs to consider and respect a community's cultural identity, family structures and traditions. A place-specific response would apply in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where government works jointly with the community to inform the planning, design and delivery of social infrastructure, resulting in more effective and efficient social services.

Place-specific approaches to social infrastructure lead to co-located or multi-purpose facilities, mixed-use precincts, place-appropriate design and shared use to better respond to the unique needs of a given place.

How solutions are applied and integrated to deliver physical infrastructure responses will therefore vary across different locations, community settings and asset classes and should always be planned and delivered to contribute to whole-of-community well-being and liveability.

*The most effective social infrastructure decisions apply strategies and solutions that help achieve the best possible solution for a given place...*



# Challenges and opportunities for Queensland

While traditional approaches to social infrastructure delivery have served Queenslanders well for many decades, global and local trends require us to rethink how we deliver, maintain and use social infrastructure. At a macro level, Queensland's emerging social trends and challenges include:

- population growth and increasing density in our cities and regional centres
- changing demographics, an ageing population, smaller households and increasing levels of obesity, chronic disease and mental health issues
- responding to changing needs and community expectations with an ageing asset portfolio
- technological innovation and the changing provision of human services
- constrained fiscal environments and competition for funds
- rapid industry transformation impacting human service demand
- climate change
- emerging transport trends.

In response, state and local governments are changing how they design and plan cities, towns and precincts, to better integrate active (i.e. walking and cycling) and public transport. This in turn is encouraging the development of more mixed-use precincts, and supporting the redevelopment and renewal of older areas. More specifically, this strategy provides opportunities to tackle social infrastructure challenges through more effective social infrastructure approaches.







## Opportunities for government

Human service providers experience a range of constraints to planning, delivering and operating social infrastructure. The Queensland Government has more than 200,000 employees delivering diverse services over a geographic area of 1,700,000 square kilometres to a population of more than five million.

With services such as education and health provided by separate specialist departments, effective cross-government systems and governance are essential to support a coordinated approach and ensure broader outcomes are not lost in the pursuit of any single outcome.

Given the collaborative and place-specific nature of this strategy, enhancing the strength and adequacy of cross-government systems and governance is critical to continued success.

The opportunities being harnessed by the Queensland Government to support best practice in social infrastructure are summarised on the following pages.

*Effective cross-government systems are essential to support a coordinated approach and ensure broader outcomes are not lost in the pursuit of any single outcome.*

## Enhanced cross-agency collaboration

Human service agencies actively work to collaborate and deliver the best outcomes and services for communities. By maximising partnering opportunities, agencies can overcome challenges to working together that may be caused by separate departmental responsibilities, funding programs and frameworks.

To support more effective human service responses and optimise collaboration opportunities, the government is adopting a place-specific approach to social infrastructure in identified priority areas. These are areas where multiple agencies have identified infrastructure needs that may realise improved social infrastructure outcomes through strategies such as co-location, sharing facilities, or coordinating delivery.

## Flexible land management

This strategy will investigate a more flexible whole-of-government approach to land acquisition and management to help maximise capital investment and foster more innovative partnerships to achieve better outcomes.

A more coordinated approach to land acquisition and management may reduce complexity in selling, transferring or managing land (including surplus and underutilised land) across government. This may also better support collaborative opportunities with private sector partners and investors, achieve more cost-effective investment, and be more adaptable to changing patterns of need in different locations over time.

## Overarching governance

Governance mechanisms across government can be enhanced through the establishment of a champion to drive a partnership-first approach to the provision of social infrastructure.

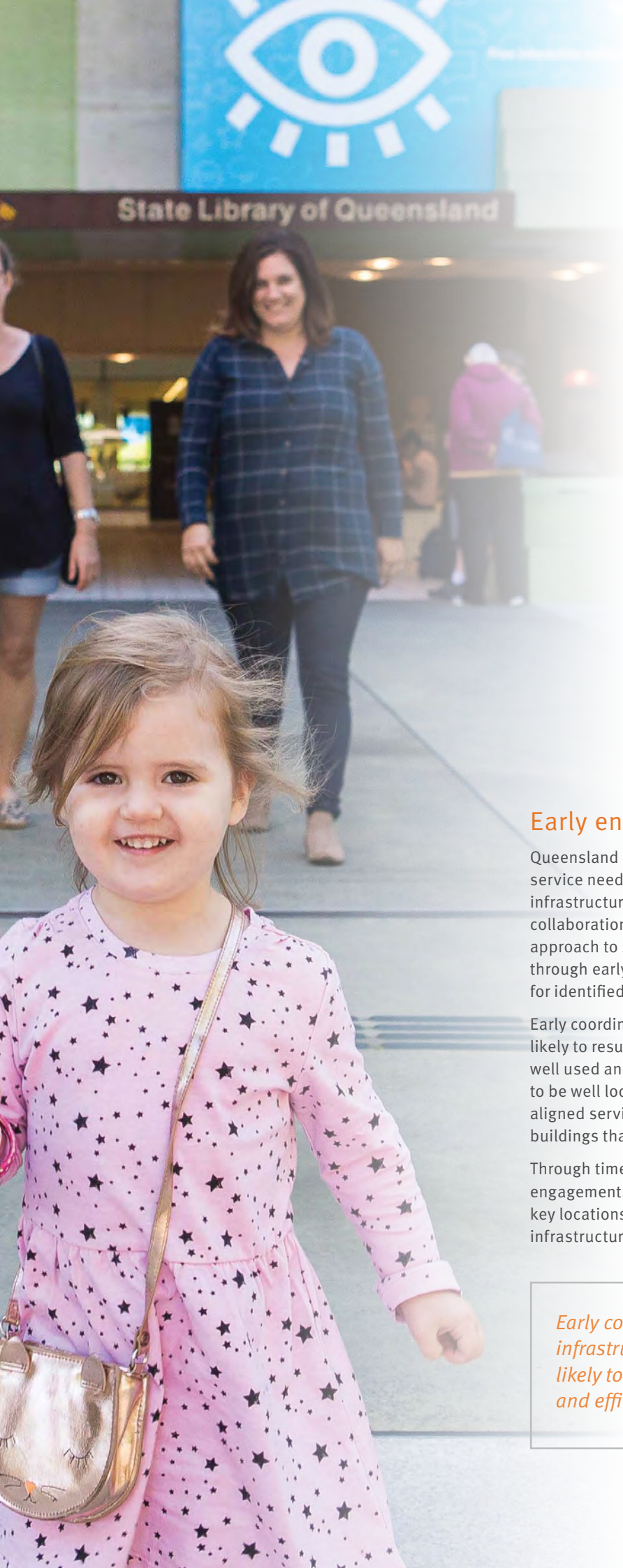
A champion is important to rally for changes to business-as-usual approaches and call for what might otherwise be lost opportunities. Establishing a champion at the most senior level of government will help drive the understanding that change is required to drive even better social infrastructure outcomes for Queensland communities.

The implementation of this strategy establishes a place-specific social infrastructure champion in the Infrastructure Minister and a Social Infrastructure Ministerial Committee (SIMC) to prioritise place-specific social infrastructure investment.

*Human service agencies actively work to collaborate and deliver the best outcomes and services for communities.*

*Establishing a champion at the most senior level of government will help drive the understanding that change is required to drive even better social infrastructure outcomes...*





## Early engagement in strategic planning

Queensland human service agencies carefully plan for changing service needs in communities. They recognise that effective infrastructure planning relies on early engagement and ongoing collaboration across providers. The adoption of a place-specific approach to social infrastructure planning will improve this through early engagement and coordinated strategic planning for identified priority areas.

Early coordination of strategic planning among providers is likely to result in social infrastructure that is more connected, well used and efficient. Consequently, services are more likely to be well located in relation to transport, situated alongside aligned services, or co-located in flexible, future-focused buildings that provide a range of human services.

Through timely strategic planning informed by early engagement, the costs to obtain land may be reduced, and key locations can be secured early enough to deliver social infrastructure in the right places and in the most effective way.

*Early coordination of strategic social infrastructure planning among providers is likely to result in more connected, well used and efficient infrastructure.*



# Building on success

Human service agencies both in Queensland and across Australia are adapting to challenges and solving problems in new and innovative ways. In preparing this strategy, key success factors have been identified that can be effectively applied in a range of situations.

This aim of the strategy can be achieved by considering opportunities for integration in all planning decisions and actively seeking out opportunities for cooperation and partnerships with complementary parties.

Putting this into practice, seven common success factors used by practitioners to achieve positive place-specific outcomes are presented in a separate *Best Practice Guide for Social Infrastructure* that complements this strategy. When coupled with active community consultation and participation, the success factors will help to drive successful social infrastructure.

## Success factors for successful social infrastructure

### 1 Planning for the future

Identifying and protecting effective locations and ways to deliver social infrastructure to meet future community needs.

### 2 Exploring the best mix of approaches

Using combined government, community and private sector management and implementation to deliver the best mix of physical infrastructure and non-physical systems and services.

### 3 Encouraging partnerships through co-location

Planning, designing and locating social infrastructure to facilitate effective partnerships with complementary infrastructure and service providers.

### 4 Locating for access and convenience

Ensuring access to social infrastructure is convenient, easy and affordable for users.

### 5 Repurposing for the community

Maximising the use of existing well-located physical infrastructure, including re-use, to meet evolving community needs.

### 6 Sharing and integrating facilities

Encouraging shared use and management of facilities across government, market and community providers, covering a range of social functions and uses.

### 7 Designing for adaptability

Ensuring social infrastructure is, by design and management, appropriately flexible to grow and adapt to evolving needs.

## Measuring performance

A set of indicators has been developed to measure and monitor the progress and success through the implementation and delivery of this strategy. These are designed to support accountability and transparency with a clear understanding that allows for a responsive and adaptive approach through implementation.

The indicators are:

- Successful delivery of the strategy's implementation actions.
- Satisfaction within Queensland Government with collaboration in social infrastructure planning.
- The number of social infrastructure priority area opportunities identified and progressed.

Performance against these indicators will be reported through annual updates of the SIP. The indicators may be revised as the implementation progresses to ensure that they continue to provide effective measurement of performance towards the strategy's objectives.



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