



The  
**HILLS**  
& Districts

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*Chamber of Commerce Inc.*

# STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2022

April 2020



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# 1. The Hills Chamber at a Glance

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The Hills & Districts Chamber of Commerce Inc (The Hills Chamber) is a people-centric, values-based organisation with a mission to support its members to achieve profitable and sustainable businesses and effective not-for-profit organisations:

- through networking, information exchange and education.
- by developing apolitical, positive relationships and communications with all levels of government.
- by contributing to the wider social, health and well-being of our community.

*Photo opposite: Monthly Breakfast Meeting*



Established on the 28th July 1992, The Hills Chamber is one of the largest and most active Chambers of Commerce in Queensland, supporting members across Ferny Hills, Arana Hills, Ferny Grove, Keperra, Mitchelton and surrounding districts of North Brisbane, Australia. The Hills Chamber is affiliated with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ) and runs on a not-for-profit basis.

The Hills Chamber has tripled in size during the last three years. This rapid growth has brought increased capacity and capability to deliver

more and improved services, events and initiatives for members and the wider business community. However, it has also brought challenges in terms of increased administrative responsibilities and some of the common risks involved with many volunteer organisations, for example, the risk of burnout for members of the Executive and Sub-Committees, as they deal with the increased complexity and workload, without necessarily having the requisite supporting systems, policies, processes and resources.

**The purpose of this Strategic Business Plan is to strategically position the Chamber to:**

1. grow sustainably and successfully
  2. secure grant funding to fuel strategic initiatives and operational support and
  3. commercialise the Chamber's brand.
- while preserving the Chamber's inclusive and participatory culture.



## In a Nutshell

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<b>Years in Operation</b>	<b># Members</b>	<b># Sub-Committees</b>	<b># Members Actively Volunteering</b>	<b># Events Held 2019</b>
27	154	13	>50	>50

  

<b># Strategic Partners</b>	<b>Big Breakfast Donations</b>	<b># Schools Supported Via Commerce in Schools Program</b>	<b>Commerce in Schools Scholarships 2020 YTD</b>	<b>Cash at Bank 31/03/2020</b>
11	Over the past 8 years we have donated >\$71K to local not-for-profits	4	\$1.8K	\$29K

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## 2. Strategic Priorities

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The Hills Chamber is in a strong financial position and has a dedicated group of volunteers at the helm. Due to rapid growth and an increasingly complex environment, the Chamber now needs to adapt to a more commercial operation and ensure its viability, relevance to, and support from its members and the broader business community.

To successfully manage the increasing administrative responsibilities and governance requirements The Hills Chamber can no longer rely on volunteer support alone. Paid strategic and operational support is required to take the organisation to the next level and innovative ways of funding this support need to be sourced. The Executive has identified eight strategic priorities the Chamber will focus on during the next three years:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Foster commerce within the constituency of the Chamber and local business community  |
| 2 | Enhance business skills for local business owners  |
| 3 | Inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs   |
| 4 | Secure external funding to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• deliver additional events and projects</li><li>• fund paid strategic and operational support</li></ul> |
| 5 | Raise funds for local not-for-profits  |
| 6 | Reduce administrative burden on overstretched volunteers   |
| 7 | Foster development of regional Chambers  |
| 8 | Expand the Chamber's culture of inclusiveness  |



## 3. Key Strategies

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In order to deliver on its strategic priorities, the Hills Chamber has developed key strategies from four different inter-related perspectives, which will drive implementation of key initiatives and activities over the next three years:

1

**Financial:**

Enhance financial performance and maximise use of financial resources

2

**Stakeholders/ Constituents:**

Better serve constituents and improve stakeholder experience

3

**Internal Process:**

Improve the way the Chamber functions internally

4

**Organisational Capacity:**

Develop culture, people and technology



# Balanced Scorecard Strategies



## 4. Committee Initiatives

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The Hills Chamber is one of the largest and most active Chambers of Commerce in Queensland, with 13 sub-committees managed by a dedicated group of volunteers. These committees deliver phenomenal benefits for members, stakeholders, local charities and the wider community.

*Photo opposite: Friday Night Drinks*



Committee	Purpose	Key Initiatives/ Activities
<b>Advocacy</b>	Provide a voice for The Hills and wider area business owners and Chamber members to local, state, and federal governments and CCIQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chamber breakfast Red Tape Forums</li> </ul>
<b>Awards</b>	Recognise excellence in business and not-for-profits within the Hills and Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual awards event</li> </ul>
<b>Big Breakfast</b>	Market and promote the Chamber to the local Hills and District and broader community, while also raising much needed funds for local not-for-profits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Big Breakfast – the Chamber’s major fundraising event</li> </ul>
<b>Business Development (Education)</b>	Help members improve their business skills, knowledge and relationships, so they can grow their businesses more sustainably and profitably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced breakfast presentation program</li> <li>• Skills development program</li> </ul>
<b>Commerce in Schools</b>	Encourage growth, offer support, inspire and connect with local schools and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student mentoring program</li> <li>• In-class and end of year awards</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Inclusiveness</b>	Lead the way in leveraging the cultural diversity that exists within our region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage people from diverse cultural backgrounds to join the Chamber</li> </ul>
<b>The Hills Festival</b>	Create one or more events to form part of the Moreton Bay “Hills Festival”, a program of events spanning the month of May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men’s mental health event</li> <li>• Community focused initiatives</li> </ul>



Committee	Purpose	Key Initiatives/ Activities
<b>Meet the Candidates</b>	Provide a structured, balanced forum for candidates who nominate for election at local, state and federal levels of Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the Candidates Event: State Government Election</li> <li>• Meet the Candidates Event: Federal Government Election</li> <li>• Meet the Candidates Event: Local Government</li> </ul>
<b>Membership</b>	Grow membership, while continuing to engage and retain current members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership “drive”: Albany Creek, Eatons Hill and Brendale areas</li> <li>• Quarterly New Member Event</li> </ul>
<b>Public Relations</b>	Market and promote Chamber events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing resources and training to support Committees and members</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Partnerships</b>	Foster the development of regional Chambers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource sharing with regional Chambers</li> <li>• Continue our relationship with CCIQ</li> </ul>
<b>Women in Business (WIB)</b>	Provide a framework and structure for businesswomen to connect in a supportive environment, fostering opportunities for friendship, mentoring, education and business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly WIB lunches (men also welcome to attend)</li> <li>• International Women’s Day event</li> </ul>
<b>Website</b>	Encourage members to maximise their use of the Chamber website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance website usability via online website procedure manual</li> <li>• Cultivate website champions and train members</li> </ul>





*Photo above: Awards Night 2019*



## 5. Strategic Partners

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The Hills Chamber works closely and collaboratively with local, state and federal Governments, educational institutions, key industry bodies and not-for-profits to:

- advocate for and support members and the wider business community within the Hills and surrounding Districts.
- foster commerce within the constituency of the Chamber and local business community.
- enhance business skills for local business owners.
- inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs.



## Key strategic partners include:

- Moreton Bay Regional Council
- Brisbane City Council
- Moreton Bay Region Industry & Tourism
- Regional Development Australia
- CCIQ
- USC Moreton Bay Campus
- District schools:
  - Ferny Grove State High School
  - Mt Maria College Mitchelton
  - Mitchelton State High School
  - Prince of Peace Lutheran College
- Arana Leagues Club

*Photo opposite: 2017 Big Breakfast*



## 6. SWOT Analysis

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### Strengths

- Strong engagement and support from Executives and Sub-Committees
- High level of participation and contribution from members
- Diversity of members e.g. background and experience
- Size of membership
- Strong financial position
- Business skill sets of Executives and members
- Strong, collaborative relationships with stakeholders

### Weaknesses

- Diverse leadership styles within the Chamber
- Lack of clear processes in certain decision-making
- Committee governance documentation needs development
- Risks regarding reliance on the capacities and capabilities of a volunteer workforce
- Management skill sets are consistently sought-after e.g. leadership, communication, project management

### Opportunities

- Leverage technology: webcasting events and professional development subscriptions
- Form strategic alliances with start-up incubators
- Business mentoring programs: established entrepreneurs mentoring emerging entrepreneurs and vice versa
- Access grant funding to augment volunteer workforce with paid strategic and operational support
- Embrace diversity via Chamber-sponsored programs and events

### Threats

- Rapid growth and increasingly complex environment resulting in:
  - Strain on developing systems, processes and resources
  - Volunteer workforce burning out
  - Threat to inclusive and participatory culture
- Losing relevance in an increasingly virtual environment
- Younger entrepreneurs preferring more contemporary, “hipper” business tribes over traditional networks
- Start-up entrepreneurs preferring start-up incubators over Chambers of Commerce



## 7. Acknowledgements

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There are a significant number of people and organisations who have contributed to the Hills Chamber. We acknowledge:

- Past and present presidents and executive members
- Committee chairs and members
- Volunteer and commissioned staff
- Key strategic partners previously acknowledged
- Event sponsors, affiliates and venue providers
- Event organisers, speakers and facilitators
- Local media.

