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## **DESIGNERS APPOINTED FOR CBD UPGRADE**

A crucial element to the CBD revitalisation project was finalised this week with Council appointing design studio HASSELL to undertake the design work associated with the \$16 million upgrade.

HASSELL was one of three design consultants shortlisted to tender for design of the CBD revitalisation.

The design contract awarded to HASSELL Limited is valued at \$1.589 million.

Chair of the CBD Reference Group, Cr Helen Blackburn, said HASSELL had provided an extremely engaging proposal, including visual storyboards and an enthusiastic articulation of our vision.

“For the revitalisation we have the vision, we have the project, we have the funding and now with HASSELL as our partner, we have an innovative design that is uniquely Bundaberg. All that remains is the physical construction and what a journey that will provide for our community.

“The CBD last underwent major improvements in the 1990’s which did achieve its aim of providing connectivity to shopping areas adjacent to the main street.

“Quite obviously that project is now dated and Council has adopted a vision to create “the most vibrant CBD in regional Queensland,” said Cr Blackburn.

A spokesperson for HASSELL said the company was excited by the prospect of engaging in design work that would provide a positive impact for the residents of the region and the businesses located in the CBD.

“We are truly excited to have been successful on this project. Council set us a challenge not just in terms of the city’s design requirements but also in the manner in which the project was offered to market. The interactive process and the HASSELL design that got us to this successful starting point is a credit to Council. We firmly believe that the level of involvement and the passion of the Community Reference Group has translated into a design that will provide a vibrant CBD Main Street.”

“The design process can commence immediately. The significance of this opportunity demanded that the HASSELL team developed a strong project plan that was not only creative but fundamentally underpinned by forward construction thinking.”

“We can confidently say that the design for the Bundaberg CBD will provide a range of engaging new civic spaces and a more comfortable streetscape for traders and the Bundaberg community. The design will showcase and celebrate local heritage whilst introducing contemporary design elements that are respectful and will become the enduring heritage of our future.”

Mayor Jack Dempsey said there were key elements attached to the CBD revitalisation:

- continues to be a key driver in the region’s economy, being the commercial hub of the Wide Bay-Burnett region;
- provides a diverse range of services, attractive public spaces for residents and visitors, and a range of accommodation and residential living options;
- supports further growth in the food and beverage service industry and a ‘paddock to plate’ culture that underscores the region’s status as Australia’s food bowl; and
- celebrates its riverside setting and maintains a sub-tropical, regional town centre character and atmosphere enriched by a mix of historical and contemporary buildings and spaces.

Mayor Dempsey said that to achieve these goals HASSELL proposed the creation of several precincts within the CBD which celebrated Bundaberg's history, its future vision and the desire for a community and business space that had longevity and reflected the character of the region.

"Each experience is inspired by the history of the CBD and responds to Bundaberg Region's climate, biodiversity and community needs and will change the way residents, workers and tourists experience the CBD.

"It will support increased business footfall, encourage people to stay that little bit longer and provide a uniquely Bundaberg experience for a new generation of investment."

The Mayor said the designers had identified the iconic nature and heritage aspects that prevail in the main street area and want to incorporate these as design elements.

"There are many engaging design characteristics around the revitalisation including a significant uplift in public space. The HASSELL design encourages and provides for meaningful engagement with the main street cenotaph and we are sure this celebration of our heritage will be a much loved design feature by locals and residents alike.

"I am looking forward to the connectivity the proposal can create between a vibrant CBD and the incredibly beautiful and underutilised asset of the Burnett River," said Mayor Dempsey.

With the design concepts currently underway, work is expected to commence around March next year and be completed in early 2019.

#### **MEDIA ENQUIRIES:**

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