



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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TOWNSVILLE CITY DEAL CONTINUES TO DELIVER

The Morrison Government has today announced a \$55 million investment in two key projects as part of the transformational Townsville City Deal.

The investment will help revitalise two iconic organisations in North Queensland.

A \$40 million funding boost will help transform Reef HQ – the world’s largest living coral reef aquarium – into Australia’s national centre of excellence for tropical coral reef education, making it a premium international tourism destination as COVID-19 restrictions ease.

This funding is in addition to the \$40.1 million already provided to Reef HQ by the Government since 2019 to upgrade the facility and help boost Great Barrier Reef tourism.

The upgrade will provide visitors with a range of immersive experiences and revitalised exhibits, including educational activities, hands-on experiences, onsite diving programs, scientific demonstrations and the use of interactive technology.

The redevelopment of Reef HQ will also contribute to the revitalisation of the Townsville City Waterfront Priority Development Area, which is one of the key objectives of the City Deal.

The Morrison Government is also providing a \$15 million funding boost to the Royal Flying Doctor Service (Queensland Section), matched by a \$15 million commitment from the Queensland Government, to expand its Townsville facilities to provide important medical services across the North Queensland region.

The two projects will ensure the Commonwealth’s original \$195 million commitment to the Haughton Pipeline Stage 2 remains in Townsville, following the Queensland Government’s decision to sole-fund this project and deliver it outside the Townsville City Deal.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP:

“Today’s announcement highlights the Morrison Government’s ongoing commitment to the Townsville community to deliver targeted investment in projects that will bolster the local economy and ensure the city is positioned as a liveable, innovative and vibrant destination in Northern Australia.

“These two projects will build on some of our key achievements to date under the Deal, including the new purpose-built North Queensland Stadium, while also generating local jobs and helping to stimulate the local economy as it bounces back from the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for the Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP:

“Reef HQ plays a key role in showcasing the amazing story of the Great Barrier Reef and in helping people understand the science and management behind Australia’s \$3 billion efforts to protect its future.

“It is the education gateway to the best managed reef system in the world, which comprises more than 3,000 connected reefs across an area of 344,400 square kilometres.

“This is an investment that inspires people to explore the reef, that helps raise awareness about the ways we can all work to help Reef ecosystems, and which at the same time delivers jobs and community infrastructure for Townsville.”

Quotes attributable to Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management and Federal Member for Brisbane, the Hon Trevor Evans MP.

“Once completed, the much-loved Reef HQ project will bolster Townsville’s standing as the capital of North Queensland and will become a world-leading centre for the study and care of reef and marine life.

“The project will create up to 52 jobs during construction, as well as up to 50 additional ongoing jobs, aiding the city’s COVID recovery.

“This is in addition to over 125 new construction jobs and an estimated \$40 million injection into the local economy thanks to the RFDS investment.”

Quotes attributable to Federal Member for Herbert, Phillip Thompson MP:

“None of us ever want to have to need the services of the RFDS, but to know they’re right here on our doorstep is very positive for our region. This investment is going to be extremely important to allow them to grow to meet the health needs of the community and support the locals who work here.

“With Reef HQ we’re going to see conferences held here with visitors from out of town, marine biology students travelling in to see the exhibits, not to mention the increase in visitor numbers that we’ll see once this world-class facility is up and running again.

“These two projects were identified and backed by the local community so it’s great to be able to announce these fantastic outcomes.”

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