

# QRL'S INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY



# FIVE BROAD STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE IN QUEENSLAND HAVE BEEN DEFINED

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

<b>INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS ALL LEVELS AND TIERS NEEDS TO BE SUSTAINABLE AND FIT FOR PURPOSE IN AN INCREASINGLY DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>QUEENSLAND'S POPULATION IS GROWING AND THE PROVISION OF RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS TO ALIGN WITH THIS</b>	<b>PARTICIPATION FROM NON-TRADITIONAL SEGMENTS IS A KEY SOURCE OF GROWTH AND NEEDS TO BE ADEQUATELY SUPPORTED</b>	<b>CREDIBLE TALENT PATHWAYS ACROSS ALL OF QUEENSLAND ARE CRITICAL FOR THE FUTURE PIPELINE OF ELITE-LEVEL TALENT</b>	<b>COMMUNITY CLUBS NEED GREATER SUPPORT TO SECURE EXTERNAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60% of venues have playing surfaces below 'satisfactory' quality</li> <li>• 28% of surfaces do not have any surface lighting</li> <li>• Financial sustainability of Rugby League facilities is increasingly strained</li> <li>• Environmental sustainability and resilience is also becoming more important as the incidence of environmental shocks increases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QLD's population growth has outpaced the national average</li> <li>• Population and participation growth is forecast to continue across all regions</li> <li>• Many regions do not have the infrastructure capacity to support this growth</li> <li>• Future infrastructure needs to be flexible in order to attract necessary investment funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female participation has more than doubled since 2016</li> <li>• Participation in non-traditional segments, including CALD, is also growing</li> <li>• Rugby League facilities need to be inclusive and cater for the different needs of all participants, not just traditional cohorts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talent pathways that support development across all levels of competition is critical</li> <li>• Quality infrastructure is needed across all levels to support QRL's pathway models, especially in traditional talent feeder zones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community clubs have limited influence to secure infrastructure investment from external partners (e.g. government)</li> <li>• Other sports have established dedicated resources to identify funding opportunities, assist in scope definition and craft compelling funding bids</li> <li>• There is increasing competition for sports infrastructure funding</li> </ul>

**THESE FIVE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS HAVE BEEN DEFINED BASED ON THE KEY FINDINGS IN THE PREVIOUS TWO CHAPTERS OF THIS REPORT AND HAVE DIRECTLY INFORMED THE STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS OF QRL'S INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**



## › INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

# A REFRESHED QRL INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY HAS BEEN DEFINED WITH FIVE STRATEGIC PILLARS TO ADDRESS THE KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## QRL'S INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY (2022-2030)

<b>VISION:</b>	<b>ENABLE CONTINUED GROWTH IN RUGBY LEAGUE PARTICIPATION IN QUEENSLAND AT ALL LEVELS THROUGH FIT FOR PURPOSE INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES</b>				
<b>PRIORITIES:</b>	<b>SUSTAINABLY MAINTAIN EXISTING CAPACITY</b>	<b>CREATE ADDITIONAL CAPACITY</b>	<b>INCLUSIVE FACILITIES</b>	<b>CREDIBLE TALENT PATHWAYS</b>	<b>FUNDING AND INVESTMENT SUPPORT</b>
<b>INITIATIVES:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review infrastructure network to identify major gaps between demand and capacity</li> <li>2. Renew infrastructure network to address capacity gaps and to align with infrastructure guidelines</li> <li>3. Educate administrators and clubs on sustainable facility management and maintenance</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define Rugby League capacity in key growth corridors and where existing capacity is insufficient to meet demand</li> <li>2. Partner with other sports and government for 'greenfield' projects</li> <li>3. Expand capacity of existing facilities and public spaces, including schools</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish baseline inclusive facility requirements</li> <li>2. Mandate all new QRL supported developments must include gender neutral (or female) facilities</li> <li>3. Establish the 'Inclusive Facilities Fund' (IFF) as a catalyst for community investment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure a credible supply of appropriate infrastructure across all competition levels</li> <li>2. Fit for purpose facilities in major participation areas for talent pathway teams</li> <li>3. Develop a Centre of Excellence at QSAC to support development and pathways</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop detailed preferred infrastructure guidelines and criteria</li> <li>2. Establish central QRL resources (incl. People, guidelines and templates) to support infrastructure and funding</li> <li>3. Engage with government at all levels to secure additional investment funding</li> <li>4. Appoint 'Infrastructure Champions' for each major operating region</li> </ol>
<b>METRICS:</b>	# OF GUIDELINE COMPLIANT VENUES AND # OF RENEWAL PROJECTS DELIVERED	# OF NEW VENUES/FACILITIES	% OF VENUES WITH GENDER NEUTRAL FACILITIES AND \$ IN GRANTS FROM IFF	% OF PARTICIPANTS IN QLD WITHIN 400KM OF A REGIONAL LEVEL FACILITY	# OF CO-FUNDED PROJECTS IN EACH QRL REGION



# QUEENSLAND'S EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS TO BE RENEWED IN-LINE WITH AGREED GUIDELINES TO SUSTAINABLY MAINTAIN EXISTING PLAYING CAPACITY

## SUSTAINABLY MAINTAIN EXISTING CAPACITY – KEY INITIATIVES

1.1 REVIEW INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK TO IDENTIFY MAJOR GAPS BETWEEN DEMAND AND CAPACITY	1.2 RENEW INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK TO ADDRESS CAPACITY GAPS AND TO ALIGN WITH INFRASTRUCTURE GUIDELINES	1.3 EDUCATE ADMINISTRATORS AND CLUBS ON SUSTAINABLE FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE
<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets a benchmark and standard for community clubs to strive towards achieving or maintaining</li> <li>• Provides government at all levels with a point of reference to assess and prioritise Rugby League infrastructure projects, based on gap analysis against preferred guidelines</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility audit health checks have already been conducted in 2022 to establish a foundational understanding of the current infrastructure network</li> <li>• However, these may not be aligned with the latest QRL infrastructure guidelines (see 1.1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate administrators and clubs on how to have minimal, neutral or positive impact on the environment</li> </ul>
<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finalise infrastructure hierarchy tiers, including the key characteristics of each tier</li> <li>2. Develop detailed criteria and guidelines for each of the hierarchy tiers</li> <li>3. Socialise with QRL stakeholders/community clubs to capture input and feedback</li> <li>4. Finalise the guidelines and criteria and publicly announce</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compare existing state of facilities (audit health check data) against updated infrastructure hierarchy guidelines</li> <li>2. Identify information gaps and seek further information from the relevant clubs/venue management</li> <li>3. Review infrastructure within each operating area to identify gaps and weaknesses</li> <li>4. Develop a pipeline of projects to address these gaps and weaknesses, identify priority renewal projects over 2 - 3 years and support the funding delivery of these projects (see Chapter 5)</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct sustainability analysis and energy efficiency audit</li> <li>2. Educate clubs and leagues on preventative maintenance of equipment</li> <li>3. Educate clubs and leagues on recycling opportunities for assets and consumables</li> <li>4. Engage energy efficient and eco-friendly suppliers for club requirements</li> </ol>



# EXPANDING QUEENSLAND'S RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE WILL BE CRITICAL IN SUPPORTING CONTINUED GROWTH ACROSS THE STATE

## CREATE ADDITIONAL CAPACITY – KEY INITIATIVES

2.1 DEFINE RUGBY LEAGUE CAPACITY IN KEY GROWTH CORRIDORS AND WHERE EXISTING CAPACITY IS INSUFFICIENT FOR DEMAND	2.2 PARTNER WITH OTHER SPORTS AND GOVERNMENT FOR 'GREENFIELD' PROJECTS	2.3 EXPAND THE CAPACITY OF EXISTING FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SPACES, INCLUDING SCHOOLS
<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth corridors represent incremental population that could be Rugby League participants</li> <li>• There are existing areas where current infrastructure is insufficient to meet demand</li> <li>• Growing infrastructure in these areas will encourage participation, establishing Rugby League's presence in new areas</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governments of all levels are increasingly seeking greater 'bang for their buck' from sports and recreational investment</li> <li>• Declining greenspace availability is also forcing many sports and activities to share facilities and venues</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population and Rugby League participation is forecast to increase in all operating areas</li> <li>• Growing the capacity of existing facilities will be needed (alongside new facilities) to be able to support this growth</li> </ul>
<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify key growth corridors and areas of insufficient capacity to prioritise based on participation potential</li> <li>2. Engage with local governments and land developers to identify infrastructure opportunities</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a review of potential partners and identify 'high alignment' partners</li> <li>2. Engage with schools to identify alignment areas &amp; infrastructure development opportunities</li> <li>3. Establish partnerships with governing bodies (or individual deliverers) of potential partners to understand how to partner for mutual success</li> <li>4. Incorporate co-location into future priority projects in line with agreed partnerships</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify existing facilities that have potential for expansion in participation (e.g. no lights, no female changerooms) in-line with growing demand areas</li> <li>2. Engage with various funding partners to secure funding and investment to support the associated projects</li> </ol>



# INCLUSIVE FACILITIES WILL BE A PRIORITY FOR FUTURE RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND INVESTMENTS

## INCLUSIVE FACILITIES – KEY INITIATIVES

3.1 ESTABLISH BASELINE INCLUSIVE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS	3.2 MANDATE ALL NEW QRL SUPPORTED DEVELOPMENTS MUST INCLUDE GENDER NEUTRAL (OR FEMALE) FACILITIES	3.3 ESTABLISH AN 'INCLUSIVE FACILITIES FUND' AS A CATALYST FOR COMMUNITY INVESTMENT
<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rugby League infrastructure needs to be inclusive to cater for growing participant segments (e.g. females, CALD, all abilities)</li> <li>QRL stands to 'miss out' on the growth in these segments if it does not move to better support them</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing a mandate across all new projects to ensure this is not neglected during project scoping and design</li> <li>A public mandate also positions QRL as a leader in this space, positioning it well for future funding opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many facilities are only lacking inclusive participant facilities, rather than wholesale redevelopment/ upgrades</li> <li>Establishing a merit-based fund for these types of projects (where external funding cannot be secured) will help ensure these investments are made across QLD</li> </ul>
<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define 'inclusive facilities' guidelines to guide future infrastructure projects</li> <li>Socialise these guidelines with key stakeholders to generate buy-in</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Announce the mandate for all QRL supported developments</li> <li>Develop a consistent QRL design for gender neutral (or female) change facilities for players and officials for all new developments</li> <li>Circulate guidelines to community clubs and local councils to guide future design</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantify the gap in inclusive facilities across the Rugby League network</li> <li>Estimate the number of projects that would not be a priority for external funding partners</li> <li>Secure funding (internal or external) to address this gap over the next 3 years</li> </ol>



# RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS TO SUPPORT CREDIBLE TALENT PATHWAYS TO ENSURE THE LONG-TERM SUCCESS OF RUGBY LEAGUE

## CREDIBLE TALENT PATHWAYS – KEY INITIATIVES

4.1 ENSURE A CREDIBLE SUPPLY OF APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS ALL COMPETITION LEVELS	4.2 FIT FOR PURPOSE FACILITIES AND ACCESS TO THOSE FACILITIES IN MAJOR PARTICIPATION AREAS FOR TALENT PATHWAY TEAMS	4.3 DEVELOP A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AT QSAC TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT AND PATHWAYS
<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select appropriate facilities to provide talent pathway access (not all Rugby League facilities should require this).</li> <li>• Talented athletes should be provided every opportunity to optimise their Rugby League playing career</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each Operating Area should have a regional level facility that services their talent pathway</li> <li>• Talented athletes should be provided every opportunity to optimise their Rugby League playing career</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Centre of Excellence is a multisport approach to the utilisation of resources and assets at the Queensland Academy of Sports</li> <li>• This facility will provide the highest level of administration, player, officials, and coaching excellence in Rugby League to support QLD's communities to continue to grow the game</li> </ul>
<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand talent pathway facility requirements across each operating area</li> <li>2. Ensure access to existing facilities for talent pathway teams</li> <li>3. Ensure access to new facilities for talent pathway teams</li> <li>4. Ensure talent pathway outcomes are considered for all new infrastructure projects</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop preferred location for regional level facilities in all operating areas that will service talent pathway participants and teams</li> <li>2. Develop preferred facility guidelines for these facilities</li> <li>3. Liaise with Local and State Government to develop funding program</li> <li>4. Ensure appropriate tenure arrangements are negotiated to deliver access for talent pathway teams and other Rugby League users.</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feasibility and scoping ongoing with Queensland Government, Stadiums Queensland and QSAC</li> <li>2. The QRL will work with State and Federal Government to secure funding for the project, estimated \$35 million project budget</li> </ol>





# ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND INVESTMENT SUPPORT WILL BE PROVIDED TO COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBS ACROSS QUEENSLAND

## FUNDING AND INVESTMENT SUPPORT – KEY INITIATIVES

5.1 DEVELOP DETAILED PREFERRED INFRASTRUCTURE GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA	5.2 ESTABLISH CENTRAL QRL RESOURCES (INCL. PEOPLE AND TEMPLATES) TO SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND FUNDING	5.3 ENGAGE WITH GOVERNMENT TO SECURE ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT FUNDING	5.4 APPOINT 'INFRASTRUCTURE CHAMPIONS' FOR EACH MAJOR OPERATING REGION
<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets a benchmark and standard for community clubs to strive towards achieving or maintaining</li> <li>• Provides government at all levels with a point of reference to assess and prioritise Rugby League infrastructure projects, based on gap analysis against preferred guidelines</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community clubs often lack the capability and time to adequately identify and secure investment funding</li> <li>• Centralised support, including people and templates, will address this gap and ensure there is a baseline level of capability across QRL's 10 operating areas</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other sports have established dedicated teams to engage with government to advocate for infrastructure funding</li> <li>• QRL needs to ensure it remains in touch with its competitors and 'top of mind' in sport infrastructure funding decisions</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important for the QRL to be accountable for the delivery of the Infrastructure Strategy and the 'feature'/priority projects</li> <li>• 'Infrastructure Champions' for each operating region will be appointed to support this responsibility, with KPIs associated with the delivery of the Strategy</li> </ul>
<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finalise the infrastructure hierarchy tiers, including the key characteristics of each tier</li> <li>2. Develop detailed criteria and guidelines for each of the hierarchy tiers</li> <li>3. Socialise with QRL stakeholders and community clubs to capture input and feedback</li> <li>4. Finalise the guidelines and criteria and publicly announce</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish resources that are responsible for providing expertise/ networks and otherwise supporting infrastructure funding bids/activities</li> <li>2. Develop a set of standard funding documents and other templates for the team and community clubs</li> <li>3. Promote these resources to be used by community clubs to support future funding bids</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Align government relations role (likely within the new central infrastructure resources; see 5.2)</li> <li>2. Present QRL's Infrastructure Strategy to government to generate buy in and raise priority projects</li> <li>3. Maintain ongoing engagement with government at all levels.</li> </ol>	<p><b>KEY ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appoint one 'Infrastructure Champion' for each operating region</li> <li>2. Define KPIs associated with supporting the delivery of the QRLIS</li> <li>3. Establish a recurring statewide Infrastructure meeting cadence to monitor delivery, grow the networks of relationships and pass on advice and lessons learned</li> </ol>

