


Building our Regions

Revitalisation of the Collinsville Showgrounds

 Funding*	
Total project cost	\$508,000
BoR funding	\$254,000
Council funding	\$254,000

Sometimes called “Grey Nomads”, motorhome travellers are becoming known as “high rollers” in towns like Collinsville, located around 80km south-west of Bowen, on the northern end of the Bowen Basin coal field.

Once a booming mining town, Collinsville has felt the repercussions of a decrease in economic activity and has seen its population decrease to around 1,500 people.

And that’s where the high rollers come in. With an estimated average spend of \$100 per night, motorhome—or RV travellers—are providing a vital injection to the Collinsville economy and a boost to struggling local businesses.

The Whitsunday Regional Council identified this economic opportunity and sought to improve Collinsville’s RV facilities by upgrading the local showgrounds.

The Collinsville Showgrounds precinct is a key community infrastructure asset centrally located in the town and home to a variety of community clubs and facilities, as well as annual events.

The Showgrounds are also a popular destination for drive tourism, with Collinsville officially declared by the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia as an “RV Friendly Town” in January 2016.

Collinsville plans to capitalise on this through the showgrounds upgrade, as part of a longer-term Showgrounds Precinct Master Plan.

Stage one of the master plan is funded in partnership with the Queensland Government through the Building our Regions program. This includes a 2,000 square metre hardstand area, fencing, upgraded site services and beautification works to the existing RV park area. It also includes signage, potable water reticulation, picnic shelters, tables and a new amenities block with toilets and showers.



New RV facilities at the Collinsville Showgrounds



For RV travellers, clean and comfortable facilities can make the difference between driving by and staying an extra night. The upgrade introduces interpretative signage to encourage visitors to patronise local businesses.

The project also includes detailed design and planning of an indoor multi-sports facility and grandstand seating, to be built at a later date.



Interstate travellers at the Collinsville Showgrounds. Photo credit: ABC Tropical North.

The project is expected to generate eight full time equivalent jobs, with grader operators, surveyors and planners preparing the site ahead of construction. Once complete, the project will support three full-time workers involved with maintaining the facilities and landscaping.

With the number of RV travellers expected to increase by more than 60 per cent over the next decade, Collinsville is well positioned to benefit from that market growth.

So too are local businesses like the Collinsville Workers' Club, across the road from the showgrounds, food retailers and local beautician Leesa Greene who—inspired by her customer's travel tales—has bought herself a van to convert to a camper.

"I've been in business for 11 years and have seen things come and go," she said. "The downturn was pretty tough financially, so a project like this is really beneficial for local businesses."

It's also added to local pride.

"I can see myself how the facilities have improved and it's great to think that it will bring more people to get to know Collinsville."

One recent visitor to Collinsville, experienced traveller Rosemary Robinson, said she enjoyed the town's "vibe" and learning about its mining history so much during her stay that she stayed an extra night.

"A great way to support this community is by staying at the excellent RV stopover they have created," Rosemary said.

"Collinsville is more than an 'overnighter' if you're travelling through this area," Rosemary told other travellers on her 'Snail Trail' travel blog.

* Funding amounts referenced are as approved.