

The Chronicle, Friday May 20 2005

\$50m project to double harbour

Super yachts and cruise ships would set a course for the Fraser Coast if a Hervey Bay proposal succeeds in more than doubling the size of the boat harbour and extending the Urangan pier back to its original length.

The \$50 million proposal has been discussed for some months by a group that includes Urangan Fisheries' Nick Schulz and Great Sandy Strait Marina manager and boat broker Brian McKay.

It has gained strong support from the Member for Hervey Bay, Andrew McNamara, and has caught the imagination of Premier Peter Beattie.

Mr McKay said it had the potential to bring millions of dollars into the region and provide hundreds of extra jobs.

It would also have enormous synergy with Maryborough's marine park precinct being planned for the Mary river.

To push the project further, the former harbour committee that oversaw the building of the silt retention basins at the harbour will be re-formed.

That will be followed by a feasibility study to gauge the project's financial viability.

Mr McKay said capital for the project would be sought from the private sector, "maybe someone like Macquarie Bank".

"This is being put together for the benefit and the income and the growth of Hervey Bay," Mr McKay said.

Hervey Bay MLA Andrew NcNamara supports the proposal and has been talking with Mr Schulz and Mr McKay.

"There is no question that this will be a major expansion of our marine transport capacity. It is Hervey Bay's future and I think that's where we need to go."