



The Community Development Strategic Plan

Community Development Unit
Central, Douglas & South Teams

2011-2016





- HAMBLETON HOUSE -
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A Message from Mayor Val Schier



I am pleased to present the Cairns Regional Council Community Development Strategic Plan. Council's Community Development Unit plays a key role in building strong, cohesive and inclusive communities across our region.

This Strategic Plan outlines a number of new initiatives that will be rolled out over the next five years to foster wellbeing and safety, social inclusion and social sustainability in our diverse communities. Council's Community Development Unit worked hard to achieve the United Nations Safe Community designation for Cairns in March 2009 by improving safety in a diverse range of areas from public safety on our streets to supporting the safety of older people in their homes.

This Strategic Plan will consolidate this hard work and continue to build the reputation of Cairns as a safe and vibrant place to live. I want Cairns to strive to become Australia's pre-eminent regional city. Maintaining and improving our great lifestyle and liveability through our Community Development Unit will put us in good stead to achieve this.

Val Schier

A Message from CEO Lyn Russell



The Community Development Strategic Plan for 2011-2016 is our commitment to the community in building vibrant communities right across our region. It sets a clear and visible direction for the organisation and clearly captures the shared role between Council and its partners that will build inclusive, connected and dynamic communities across the Cairns region.

This Strategic Plan has arisen out of intensive community consultation and is a plan where the aspirations of the various communities and groups across our diverse region have been framed against concise goals, outcomes and timelines which will direct much of the work of Council's Community Development Unit over the next five years. Such a plan acts as a living, dynamic partnership between Council and the community.

The challenge for us all now lies in continuing to work together to ensure that these goals are met.

Lyn Russell

Executive Summary

The Cairns Regional Council's **Community Development Strategic Plan** focuses on the next five years from 2011 to 2016. Through this plan, the Community Development Unit will:

- Respond to social inclusion and Community Development priorities highlighted in the Council Corporate Plan
- Set clear directions as to how these priorities will be achieved, measured and monitored
- Strengthen the capacity of the Unit to better meet the needs of vulnerable groups in the community who traditionally have difficulty being heard.

Cairns Regional Council has a vision for the future where the region thrives and inspires in the way it balances economic development, environmental management and social well-being. This Plan supports that commitment to deliver the community outcome priorities expressed in the Corporate Plan.

The Role of the Community Development Unit

The Community Development Unit assists the community in the process of capacity building, building sustainability in community based decisions and in forming and maintaining strategic partnerships.

Our Values

Fairness // Equality // Respect // Trust // Participation

What is Community Development?

Community Development is a process enabling communities to develop active, sustainable and supportive environments in which people live and work.

Community Development as a philosophy is concerned with taking the journey from private concern (in the community) to public action (with the community). Through active participation and empowerment, Community Development encourages and supports the identification of barriers that prevent community members from participating in changing the issues that affect their lives.

What is Social Inclusion?

A socially inclusive community is one in which all members feel valued and have the opportunity to fully participate in the life of that community. In simple terms, a socially inclusive community is one in which everyone can enjoy the opportunity of participation be it in sport, culture, work or learning; where more people are 'one of us' than 'one of them'.

What is Wellbeing Promotion?

Wellbeing is more than the absence of ill health and much more than the state of being well. It is about affirmative personal experiences, that is, the feeling that one could achieve something positive or have a sense of purpose. Wellbeing encompasses abstract concepts such as quality of life, contentment, happiness or prosperity.





Our Values

- Fairness
- Equality
- Respect
- Trust
- Participation

How are Community Development, Social Inclusion and Wellbeing threaded through the three tiers of government?

At the Federal Government level, Community and Human Services are spread across three government departments with several Ministers heading up the various portfolio interests. In 2011 Community and Human Services are administered through:

- **The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)**
- **The Department of Human Services**
- **The Department of Health and Ageing**

At the State level in Queensland, the delivery of human services is the responsibility of the Department of Communities:

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Services
- Child Safety Services, Community Services
- Disability & Community Care Services
- Housing & Homelessness Services
- Multicultural Services
- Sport & Recreational Services and Women's Services.

Councils are set up by state legislation and their powers come mainly from the Local Government Act 2009. The six states and the Northern Territory have established local governments. Local governments (also known as councils) are responsible for community needs such as:

- waste collection
- public recreation facilities
- town planning.

The state or territory government defines the powers of local governments and decides what geographical areas those governments are responsible for. There are currently 73 councils in Queensland.

Within the Cairns Regional Council, the delivery of community and human services falls within the charter of the Community Development Unit. The Unit is geographically-based, with staff at Edmonton, Mossman, Cairns city and Cairns inner suburbs.

The Corporate Plan 2009-2014 was the subject of extensive public and community consultation and is Council's clear and concise commitment to the community. Through the six goals described in the Corporate Plan, the document sets the overall direction for Council between 2009-2014. The objectives for the Community Development Strategic Plan are therefore linked to the goals from the Corporate Plan.

Overview of Goals and Strategies

Major Place Based Initiatives and Activities

Over the five years of the Plan, the Community Development Unit will work with communities across the region to explore the issues and priorities highlighted by those communities. Additionally, the Community Development Unit will work specifically on identified projects in the following locations:

- Cairns CBD
- Cairns West
- Babinda
- Edmonton and Mount Peter
- Douglas.

The Community Development Unit will develop strategies alongside community members and identified stakeholders that examine and consider community safety, regeneration, and wellbeing. Furthermore, we are committed to working with various community groups that are representative of the region. In some cases, our work will have a particular focus on those people who traditionally have difficulty being heard; groups such as young people, Indigenous people, seniors, people with a disability, people from a multicultural background, homeless people and young families.

GOAL 1 // Caring for the Social Environment

The term 'social environment' refers to living and working conditions and the communities in which we live. The Community Development Unit commit to managing and protecting the social environment in a sustainable manner for the benefit of the entire community.

In this section of the plan, the Community Development Unit will:

- improve the quality of community facilities and public spaces in regard to disability access
- improve the opportunities for people to access all types of community spaces, including parks and the foreshores
- promote the development of community based edible horticulture projects
- work with others to improve community safety
- work with others to increase opportunities for people to become involved in their communities.

GOAL 2 // Building Vibrant Communities

We commit ourselves to working with members of the community to build creative, innovative and resilient communities where people feel able and encouraged to participate in the life of that community.

In this section of the plan, the Community Development Unit will:

- promote, support and encourage participation in civic life for those groups that traditionally have difficulty in being heard
- ensure that Cairns remains a United Nations designated 'Safe Community'
- work to increase the use of inclusive language across Council and the wider community
- support the establishment of a 'Relationships Register' for the wider Cairns region
- promote, support and encourage the establishment of an accessible Community Transport Plan for the wider Cairns region
- work to establish a Multicultural Community Centre for Cairns.

GOAL 3 // Delivering Integrated Planning

We are endeavouring to link the aspirations of social and community planning to urban and strategic planning. Through this approach we will strengthen and enhance our region so it is sustainable and reflective of our unique tropical lifestyle.

In this section of the plan, the Community Development Unit will:

- work to increase the provision of accessible social and community infrastructure across the region
- advocate for more land be set aside for social and community infrastructure.

GOAL 4 // Delivering Services and Infrastructure

We will work with the community to promote better accessibility of community infrastructure, to promote community ownership of that infrastructure and to promote the integration of that infrastructure into the fabric of our communities.

In this section of the plan, the Community Development Unit will:

- work to implement the findings of the Social Infrastructure Needs study in regard to access to youth services
- promote the introduction of environmental sustainability into lease agreements for social and community infrastructure
- ensure that all new community and social infrastructure follows Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles (CPTED)
- ensure information in regard to community infrastructure is in appropriate and accessible formats
- ensure improved opportunity of access to services provided by Council
- improve the support offered by us to those groups and individuals who manage our community infrastructure.

GOAL 5 // Creating a Socially Prosperous and Socially Sustainable Region

We will work with groups across the region to assess group and community needs and assist those groups and communities grow and develop. Social prosperity is about communities maintaining their quality of life and being able to develop new opportunities to enhance that quality of life.

In this section of the plan, the Community Development Unit will:

- work collaboratively with the diverse groups and communities across the region to improve their access to training and resources
- support the establishment of new Council officer positions to support both families and seniors
- support the development of a community employment strategy for groups that are traditionally under represented
- implement actions linked to Council's Reconciliation Action Plan.

GOAL 6 // Striving for Organisational Excellence

We will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our unit and improve our accountability.

In this section of the plan, the Community Development Unit will:

- ensure that we have regular appraisals of our performance to improve accountability and effectiveness
- improve our level of knowledge of new developments and best practice in all the fields that we operate in
- improve our knowledge of the community
- work more collaboratively across the Community Development teams to promote the sharing of knowledge
- work across the Community Development branch to ensure a better delivery of Community Development outcomes.

Council's Community Development Charter



Our community
is our future

Purpose

To support the communities of the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area to be creative, self sufficient and resilient and to be safe, fair, united and sustainable.

Why a Charter?

Our Charter acknowledges Council's commitment to the following rights and values outlined in the following documents:

- The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- The UN Millennium Declaration (2000)
- The Australian Government's Principles for Social Inclusion in Australia
- Community Services Sector Charter (QCOSS 2007).

These documents take account of, for instance:

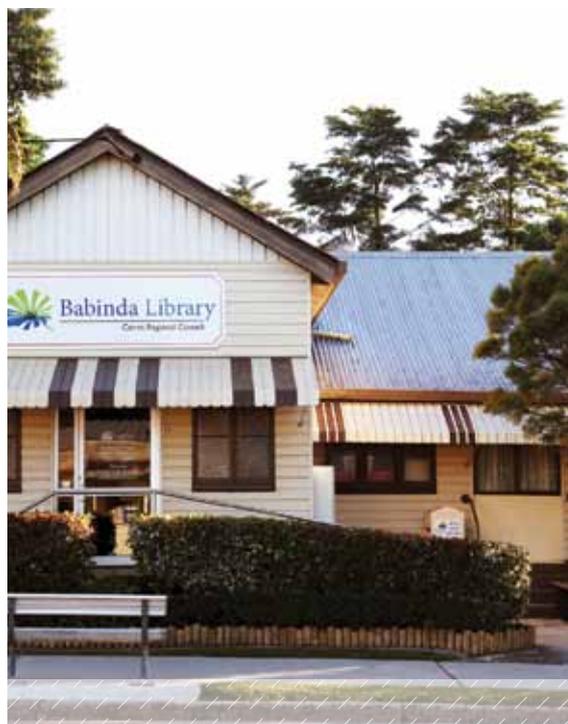
- freedom of expression; thought; a sense of right and wrong; religion and belief; peaceful assembly and fellowship
- the right to take part in public affairs and in the government of your country
- the right to take part in the cultural life of your community
- fairness and respect for diversity
- sustainable development and shared responsibility – citizens' duty to contribute to the public life of their community.

Our Principles

- **Belonging and participation** – the whole community has an equal opportunity to be involved
- **Respect** – different views, backgrounds and ideas are all worthy of respect
- **Empowerment** – building the capacity of vulnerable groups to participate and contribute in decision making
- **Collective action** – doing things together that make a difference
- **Communication** – open and honest dialogue; acknowledging different needs and building trust
- **Sustainability** – looking to our future and acknowledging that we are caretakers of our community for coming generations.

Our Goal

Building vibrant communities that are creative, innovative, inclusive and self reliant; where participation in community life is enabled and encouraged.



Our Responsibilities

Community	Council	Shared
Create a vision and contribute to a plan	Make visions and plans a reality	Connect, be inclusive and respect differences
Become involved and speak out	Develop networks; communicate and consult	Learn together
Take responsibility and participate in the development of solutions	Build the capacity and capability of the community to take action	Work together
Be persistent and committed	Be accountable and transparent	Celebrate our achievements
Be caretakers for future generations	Act sustainably	Value what we have

Introduction

The teams from the Community Development Unit, in collaboration with major stakeholders, have developed the **Community Development Strategic Plan 2011-2016** in order to:

- strengthen the capacity of the unit to better meet the needs of those who traditionally have difficulty in being heard
- effectively implement Community Development priorities highlighted in Council's Corporate Plan
- set clear direction as to the achievement of these priorities and measurable outcomes
- recognise the skills of the unit staff and enhance capability, competence and capacity.

Cairns Regional Council has a vision for the future where the region thrives and inspires in the way it balances economic development, environmental management and social well-being. The Community Development Strategic Plan codifies our commitment to delivering the community outcome priorities of the community expressed in the Corporate Plan.

The Community Development Unit is Council's key instrument in developing policies that promote community self-sufficiency through social infrastructure provision and improvements that advance community safety, access and equity.

The unit works collaboratively with a diverse range of stakeholders to understand and represent the special needs of all the different groups within our region. Working through this Community Development Strategic Plan will ensure our work with our community stakeholders will be focussed and responsive to community needs and aspirations.

Our Purpose

The Community Development Unit assists the community in the process of capacity building, forming strategic partnerships, empowerment and ensuring the sustainability of community based decisions. The Unit assists the community to plan. The Unit offers and provides support for the community; it offers aid to community groups to find funding, and assists in the management of celebrations and commemorations.

The Community Development Unit assists community members, groups and organisations to apply for Council funding. These grants support community members, groups and organisations to provide activities, events and projects that enrich the diversity of the cultural and social development of residents within the region.

Our Values

Fairness // Equality // Respect // Trust // Participation

Our Vision

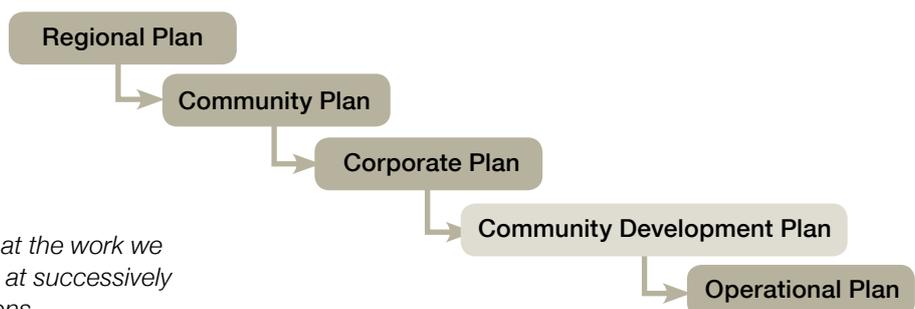
From the Community – For the Community

We listen to, learn from, advocate for, facilitate and empower the community.

Our Principles

- Inclusion and participation
- Respect
- Empowerment
- Collective action
- Communication
- Sustainability.

Where the Plan fits into Council's suite of planning processes:



Using this approach, we ensure that the work we carry out influences the outcomes at successively higher levels and meets expectations.

Setting the Scene

Following the amalgamation between Cairns City Council and Douglas Shire Council in 2008, the Cairns Regional Council area is a very diverse range of local communities. Where we live ranges from established city centre and city fringe higher density urban suburbs, substantial communities such as Mossman, Gordonvale, Port Douglas and Babinda to the semi-rural communities such as Mirriwini in the south and across the Daintree River in the far north of the region.

Cairns Regional Council covers an area of 4135 km². There are 164,356 people, including overseas visitors living here. Our population is growing. Throughout 2009, we increased by 5172 people and from the previous year (2008) we added 6516 people to our population. The predictions are that we will keep growing: 168,297 people by 2011, 182,684 people by 2016 and up to an estimated 222,640 people by 2031.

Most of us are 'working age adults' – over 56% of us are aged between 25 years and 64 years of age. Currently, the smallest portion of our population are seniors; just over 8% of the people who live in our region are aged 65 years plus. Compared to Queensland overall, we have fewer senior aged people. In Queensland, 12% of the population are aged 65 years and over.

Over the next 20 years or so, our population will get older – the 'average' age of people currently living in the Cairns region is 35 years. By 2031, this 'average' age will rise to 41 years of age and the number of people aged over 65 years will rise from 8% of the population to 18% of the population.

Most of us live as a 'family' – single parent families, couples with/without children or more than one family living together. There are over 35,000 families in the Cairns area. Family households of all types have increased indicating the attraction of our home to new families.

Over time, family and single person households have increased but the number of group households have fallen. Like many places outside of the big cities, we lose some of those people aged between 18 to 30 to adventures overseas, for job prospects, or to go to university. Those aged 18 to 30 years are generally those people who form group households with friends or other family members. Although the number of people who choose to live here has grown, the makeup of our population has remained pretty similar over recent years. Most people in the Cairns area were born in Australia with roughly 18% born overseas.

We live in a very diverse and multicultural region. Between June 2008 and 2009, 28 different countries of origin were noted for people attending citizenship ceremonies at the Council Offices.

Cairns is thought of as a centre for tourism, yet more of us work in the retail trade than in any other industry. Other industries of note in the region are health care services, public administration, transport, manufacturing and tourism associated trades such as accommodation and food services.

The Cairns Region is the fourth most popular destination in Queensland for overseas skilled visa holders to settle in: 930 visa holders came here to work recently.



With 164,356
of us, our
population is
growing

Challenges Ahead



We are a popular place to live

- Cairns Regional Council is the eighth fastest growing Local Government Area (LGA) in Queensland
- Cairns Regional Council is the second largest growing LGA in Regional Queensland
- Cairns Regional Council is the eighth FASTEST growing LGA in Queensland

Population Growth

The population in Cairns will rise over the coming years. The implications of such a rise will challenge the range, reach, number and type of services and interactions offered to the community by the Community Development Unit. In order to meet the expressed needs and expectations of new and established community members, the Community Development Unit will, through the auspices of the Community Development Strategic Plan, establish meaningful and sustainable relationships with community members and maintain an environment where dialogue is open and transparent.

The majority of new residents will live in the southern part of the region and especially in the Mount Peter master planned area. Currently this area is under agricultural cultivation, but will house up to 40,000 new residents over the next 30 years. Mount Peter will require the provision of social infrastructure, places to meet and celebrate, recreational space, and physical and social links to support services. It will need schools, shops, roads, transport links and all the other essential elements of physical infrastructure that enable a community to develop. The Community Development Unit will be one of the most important links between Council and this developing and growing community. It will be one of the chief concerns of the Unit to form mutually beneficial relationships with all new residents.

Some critical challenges that could arise from population growth and expansion:

- demand for more social infrastructure, especially in areas currently underprovided for
- demand for support mechanisms to be delivered from social/Community Development service providers that promote community capacity to be self sufficient and self sustaining
- with the trend of declining numbers of volunteers, there may be a discrepancy in the demand for low cost social infrastructure for meetings and celebrations and the capacity/ability of the community to provide for the running/management of such facilities. This may impact on costs to the community if such facilities have to be managed commercially.

Ageing Population

The population of Cairns, along with all other regions, cities, and towns across Australia and the developed world, will age. People in our society are living longer. The greatest effect will come from the baby boomer generation (those born between 1945 and 1960). Some of the oldest of this group have already retired. The loss of this large group of people from the workforce will have effects on our local economy, the national economy, skill availability, demand for services, demand for housing and its provision, planning policies, and transport and mobility. As we are living longer, this change in the demographic structure will continue for decades to come. In order to respond flexibly to these new demands, Community Development practices and policies and the Cairns Regional Council's Community Development Unit, must recognise the importance of this demographic challenge and respond proactively to it.

Some critical challenges that could arise from an ageing population:

- declining numbers of people in the workplace and potential skill shortage
- increase in the number of households
- decreasing revenue from taxes and rates
- increasing demand on services ranging from recreation to wellbeing services.

Climate Change

Changes to our climate will also challenge how and what we do. With a changing, and destabilising climate, weather variables could fluctuate leading to a much greater frequency of extreme and unpredictable weather patterns and events. These changes would have serious effects on nature and our lifestyle and would increase health risks. Increased temperature and reduced cloud cover could have an upward effect on cancer rates (skin cancer rates experienced in Australia are some of the highest in the world). A study by 'Nature' magazine concluded that climate change could place 35% of all land animals and plants on the planet in danger of extinction over the next 50 years. These occurrences will affect how we move about, where we gather, how and when we celebrate and even where we live and what our landscape looks like.

Community Development must recognise that these changes will also affect the types of interaction and support that will be asked from us and plan accordingly.

As our climate changes, the probability of alteration to our natural environment is high. A mainstay of our locale is the reef and the rainforest and the tourism dollars that these iconic locations generate. Any detrimental change could have major effects on the regional economy: income derived from tourism; numbers of tourism derived jobs; investment in significant regional infrastructure such as airports, seaports and road upgrades. Meeting these challenges will require strong collaboration between the Community Development Unit, and other Council teams, branches and departments; other levels of government, non-government agencies, community groups and members of the community.

Some critical challenges that could arise from a changing climate:

- increased demand for climate controlled/indoor meeting and/or celebration spaces
- planning for offsetting of costs for cooling (potentially through use of climate smart paint, solar panels and other materials on community buildings)
- increased response to disaster management
- increased response to airborne and/or water borne pests as they affect the community.

The Community Development Unit will play a critical role in meeting expressed and identified community needs.



Goals Section

The goal statements in this document, known as 'Community Development Strategic Plan Objectives', have been adapted from the Cairns Regional Council Corporate Plan 2009-2014 (hereafter referred to as 'the Corporate Plan').

The Corporate Plan has six goal statements:

- GOAL 1 // Caring for the Environment**
- GOAL 2 // Building Vibrant Communities**
- GOAL 3 // Delivering Integrated Planning**
- GOAL 4 // Delivering Services and Infrastructure**
- GOAL 5 // Creating a Prosperous Region**
- GOAL 6 // Striving for Organisational Excellence**

The Corporate Plan was the subject of extensive public and community consultation and is Council's clear and concise commitment to the community. Through the six goals mentioned above, the document sets the direction for Council as a whole over the time period 2009 to 2014. It makes strategic and operational sense to link the goals from the Corporate Plan to the objectives for the Community Development Strategic Plan.

All of the objectives in the Community Development Strategic Plan have been given a 'Community Development' focus, for example, the original Corporate Plan goal number one 'Caring for the Environment' becomes 'Caring for the Social Environment' as social environment rather than natural environment is the emphasis and main thrust of the work for the Community Development Unit.





I. Caring for the Social Environment

Community Development Unit – 1. Caring for the Social Environment

Cross Regional Key Actions and Success Indicators

Community Development Strategic Plan Objective

Social Environment: An individual's social environment includes their living and working conditions, income level, educational background and the communities they are part of. All these factors have an effect on health and well being. They contribute to discrepancies in life expectancy and disease rates between different groups of people living in the same geographical location.

The Community Development Unit will ensure the social environment in the care of Council is managed and protected in a sustainable manner for the benefit of the community: This goal expands our understanding of the term 'caring for the environment' as a means of opening the concept out away from concentrating on 'green' issues. It introduces the concept that our **social environment** is interlinked to our natural environment and that caring for the human condition is important if we truly care for all aspects of the environment.

Key Actions	Success Indicators	Timelines
Longer Term Projects:		
1.1 Support the development of projects that promote sustainable community based horticulture.	Edible gardens established across the region.	Pilot project June 2012 – expansion ongoing
1.2 Improve mechanisms for planning, resourcing and promoting accessibility audits of Council facilities and public spaces; advocate on behalf of disability services and all community members with a disability.	Disability awareness programme for Council employees developed.	June 2015
Short to Medium Term Projects:		
1.3 Work collaboratively with government and non-government agencies to promote the Cairns Homelessness Community Action Plan and progress the Homelessness Local Level Agreement.	Participation in the annual review of the Homelessness Community Action Plan and the Homelessness Local Level Agreement.	Annually until project completion in 2013
Annually Reported Projects:		
1.4 Refer to 1.2.	Reporting of audits completed and improvements made.	Bi-annually
1.5 Improve the quality of opportunity for access to and use of community infrastructure across the region, including parks and gardens, foreshores and buildings.	Reporting of accessibility projects undertaken as a result of cross Council partnerships.	Annually
1.6 Develop partnerships with communities, neighbourhoods, government and non-government organisations that build collaborative projects which improve community safety and injury prevention.	Reporting of community driven projects that improve community safety and injury prevention.	Annually
Foundation Projects:		
1.7 Work collaboratively with government and non-government agencies to promote initiatives that increase the opportunity for social inclusion and increase wellbeing.	Projects completed that promote social inclusion and wellbeing through strategic partnerships.	Core



2. Building Vibrant Communities

Community Development Unit – 2. Building Vibrant Communities

Cross Regional Key Actions and Success Indicators

Community Development Strategic Plan Objective

The Community Development Unit will work with community members to build more creative, innovative and self-reliant communities where participation in community life is enabled and encouraged.

This objective is a commitment from the Community Development Unit to continue to work with community members and groups that traditionally have difficulty in being heard and support them to create the kind of places that they are proud to live in.

Key Actions	Success Indicators	Timelines
Longer Term Projects:		
2.1 Promote participation in the Safe Communities Programme within Council and throughout the community. Increase networking and collaboration on longterm, sustainable safety, crime prevention and injury prevention programmes that target vulnerable groups and environments.	Re-accreditation of the International Safe Communities Programme.	2014
2.2 Advocate for the establishment of a multicultural centre in an appropriate location to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse community.	Establishment of a regional multicultural centre.	September 2016
Short to Medium Term Projects:		
2.3 Advocate for the establishment of a Relationships Register covering the Cairns Regional Council area.	Establishment of a Relationships Register.	December 2012
2.4 Refer to 2.1.	Safe Communities Strategic Business Plan developed through stakeholder consultation 2012-2015.	2012
2.5 Explore opportunities for the establishment of community cafes across the region.	Project plan for community cafes endorsed by Council.	June 2013
Annually Reported Projects:		
2.6 Increase the effectiveness of community participation in Council decision making.	Report to Council on the number and level of participation of groups who traditionally have difficulty in being heard in Council collaborative projects.	Annually
	Delivery of best practice, innovative, linguistically and culturally appropriate capacity building programmes with community groups who traditionally have difficulty in being heard at local government level.	Annually
	Participation in cross council projects and initiatives in order to raise awareness and promote Social Justice principles.	Annually
Foundation Projects:		
2.7 Increase awareness of, and use of, appropriate inclusive terminology in all Council communication.	Increased community awareness of programmes and strategies designed to strengthen and acknowledge community diversity and inclusion measured through community data collection.	Core
2.8 Support community celebrations and commemorations that acknowledge diversity and strengthen a sense of community.	Increased community participation in programmes and strategies designed to strengthen and acknowledge community diversity and inclusion.	Core
2.9 Advocate for the development and delivery of an accessible and equitable Community Transport Scheme.	Community transport scheme established within the five years of this plan.	Core



3. Delivering Integrated Planning

Community Development Unit – 3. Delivering Integrated Planning

Cross Regional Key Actions and Success Indicators

Community Development Strategic Plan Objective

The Community Development Unit will take an integrated social planning approach that strengthens and enhances a sustainable region reflective of Cairns' unique and tropical lifestyle.

This goal commits the Community Development Unit to advocate for the inclusion of socially cohesive planning principles across Council; such principles as support the establishment of sustainable communities where all ages can feel a part of their community.

Community engagement is about involving the community in the decision making process and is critical to the success and acceptability of policies and decision making.

Key Actions	Success Indicators	Timelines
Longer Term Projects:		
3.1 Work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure access to health services in the southern corridor.	Participate in the GP Super Clinic consultative committee.	December 2016
Short to Medium Term Projects:		
3.2 Integrate Council's Sustainability Scorecard principles into lease and management agreements for social and community infrastructure.	Develop a sustainability framework for use within management or lease agreements.	June 2013
	Develop a sustainability score card for use with community infrastructure lease holders and management groups.	June 2013
3.3 Implement recommendations of Council's climate change policy in regard to community infrastructure.	Develop a baseline measurement tool to assess confidence, competence and skill levels of management committees and lease holders in regard to climate change.	December 2013
3.4 Advocate for an increase in provision of appropriate and accessible environmentally and community sustainable social infrastructure across the region.	Complete the Social/Community Infrastructure Needs Analysis across the CRC area.	December 2012
Annually Reported Projects:		
3.5 Refer to 3.4.	Annual reporting against the findings of the Social/Community Infrastructure Needs Analysis.	Annually
Foundation Projects:		
3.6 Advocate strongly across Council for the implementation of social inclusion principles as an integral component in all planning and engagement projects.	Increased participation of Community Development Unit staff in cross Council planning, engagement and development activities.	Core
3.7 Collaborate with all relevant departments within Council to improve social and community activity options in neighbourhoods that promote safer communities.	Increased social land use and infrastructure planning resulting in land acquisition for community purposes in line with the findings of the Social Infrastructure Study.	Core



4. Delivering Services and Infrastructure

Community Development Unit – 4. Delivering Services and Infrastructure

Cross Regional Key Actions and Success Indicators

Community Development Strategic Plan Objective

Deliver and maintain high quality social and community infrastructure.

This goal is about the Community Development Unit working with community members and stakeholders across Council to promote the importance of planning for, procuring of, and maintaining social and community based infrastructure that supports the continuation of welcoming and cohesive communities.

Key Actions	Success Indicators	Timelines
Longer Term Projects:		
4.1 Work to implement the findings of the Social Infrastructure Needs study in regard to access to youth services across the LGA, in particular, on areas of identified need.	Implement the needs study analysis in regards to youth space requirements.	July 2016
4.2 Work collaboratively with community consortia to promote youth mental health access across the Cairns Regional Council area.	Ongoing representation on the 'Headspace' consortia committee.	December 2016
	Establish southern corridor outreach service of 'Headspace'.	July 2016
4.3 Ensure that information in regard to functions, facilities and services is available in accessible formats that meet the needs of all groups within the community.	Develop culturally appropriate, accessible communication methods/guidance for all groups within the community.	July 2015
4.4 Implement initiatives that build the capacity of community organisations and management committees who manage Council owned community infrastructure.	Governance gaps addressed through training and development opportunities.	December 2016
Short to Medium Term Projects:		
4.5 Refer to 4.1.	Complete a needs study in regard to youth space requirements.	July 2012
4.6 Advocate to make all Council customer service locations fully accessible.	Install hearing loops at all Customer Service locations.	July 2014
4.7 Refer to 4.4.	Complete a governance audit of community management committees for facilities owned by Council.	December 2014
4.8 Develop an infrastructure management training programme for management committees/lease holders that enhances use of community based infrastructure.	Training opportunities attended.	December 2014
Foundation Projects:		
4.9 Develop a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) framework for use in the commissioning of Community and Social Infrastructure in line with the Community Infrastructure Study.	Integrate CPTED design principles into all new Community and Social Infrastructure.	Core



5. Creating a Socially Prosperous and Socially Sustainable Region

Community Development Unit – 5. Creating a Socially Prosperous and Socially Sustainable Region

Cross Regional Key Actions and Success Indicators

Community Development Strategic Plan Objective

Through this goal, the Community Development Unit will work with groups across the region to address diverse needs: facilitating growth and development in the community. Creating a socially prosperous region is a shared responsibility: individuals need to adopt actions that improve their social wellbeing, communities need to support actions that directly improve social prosperity, and governments need to develop strategies, support policies and allocate funds based on research and evidence to achieve that prosperity.

Social Prosperity can be described as a community's ability to maintain a high quality of life for the people who live there. It also pays heed to the ability of that community to *create* new opportunities for life quality. This kind of prosperity is generated through: access to employment opportunities, community services, health care, adequate housing, and education. For a community to be socially sustainable, it must be able to maintain and then build on its own resources, and be able to solve problems that arise.

Key Actions	Success Indicators	Timelines
Short to Medium Term Projects:		
5.1 Continued support for the implementation of policy recommendations commensurate with the State Planning on Ageing policy.	Additional Community Development Officer post with a focus on seniors and our ageing community.	June 2014
5.2 Advocate for the development of a community employment strategy at Council encompassing young people, people with a disability, people from CALD and non-English speaking backgrounds and marginalised/vulnerable people.	Adopt a multi-faceted community employment strategy at Council.	June 2013
5.3 Develop the intentions of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) into measurable actions that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve equality in all aspects of life – a goal which benefits all Australians.	Develop, adopt and implement the Reconciliation Action Plan for CRC.	February 2013
5.4 Increase Council capacity to work proactively and strategically at early intervention and prevention strategies that mitigate the impact of future social disadvantage.	Additional Community Development Officer post with a focus on change to families.	June 2014
5.5 Work collaboratively in conjunction with Council's Economic Development Unit on place-based initiatives.	Develop a prioritised list of initiatives.	December 2012
Annually Reported Projects:		
5.6 Establish strategic partnerships that increase access to education and training for groups such as; seniors, young people, families in need and people with a disability, people from a CALD and/or multicultural background and Indigenous people.	Annual reporting on projects and initiatives implemented through strategic partnerships.	Annually
5.7 Establish strategic partnerships that increase economic participation for groups such as; Seniors, young people, families in need and people with a disability, people from a CALD and/or multicultural background and Indigenous people.	Annual reporting on projects and initiatives implemented through strategic partnerships.	Annually
Foundation Projects:		
5.8 Improve mechanisms for planning, resource allocation and service coordination between Council and the community sector.	Support the delivery of community events, awareness raising events and celebrations that recognise the value of all members of the community, through capacity building with community groups.	Core
	Support for, and promotion of, the Indigenous Employment Strategy.	Core



6. Striving for Organisational Excellence

Community Development Unit – 6. Striving for Organisational Excellence

Cross Regional Key Actions and Success Indicators

Community Development Strategic Plan Objective

Ensure that the Community Development Unit is open, ethical, and accountable in all dealings with community members.

Ensure that the Community Development Unit recognises the importance of its role as a local advocate and that it continues to offer excellence of service in responding to community needs and expectations.

This goal commits the Community Development Unit to improve openness and transparency in its dealings with stakeholders and to continually progress its effectiveness.

Key Actions	Success Indicators	Timelines
Short to Medium Term Projects:		
6.1 Work to increase effectiveness and accountability of programmes and projects through exposure to external review and evaluation with community members.	Develop external peer review and evaluation processes.	December 2012
6.2 Improve the level of understanding of Community Development practices which affect continuous improvement for the setting of strategy, the deployment of resources, monitoring and reporting.	Develop evaluation and reporting frameworks that are used for all major projects and programmes.	December 2012
Annually Reported Projects:		
6.4 Facilitate regular opportunities to participate in strategic team planning.	Regular strategic team planning.	Bi-annually
Foundation Projects:		
6.3 Work to constantly improve knowledge of community needs.	IAP2 practice principles embedded in all community engagement activities undertaken.	Core
	Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission principles adhered to in all activities.	Core
6.5 Work to maintain high professional practice satisfaction levels.	Team members report feeling supported to pursue areas of interest and innovative practice.	Core





The Role of Community Development, Social Inclusion, Wellbeing and Strategic Partnerships in the Community Development Strategic Plan

A brief description of Community Development, Social Inclusion, Wellbeing and Strategic Partnerships

Community Development

Community Development is a process. It is a process enabling communities to develop active, sustainable and supportive environments in which people live and work. Community Development is genuine when it starts in the community and achieves specific outcomes resulting in better connections for and within that community.

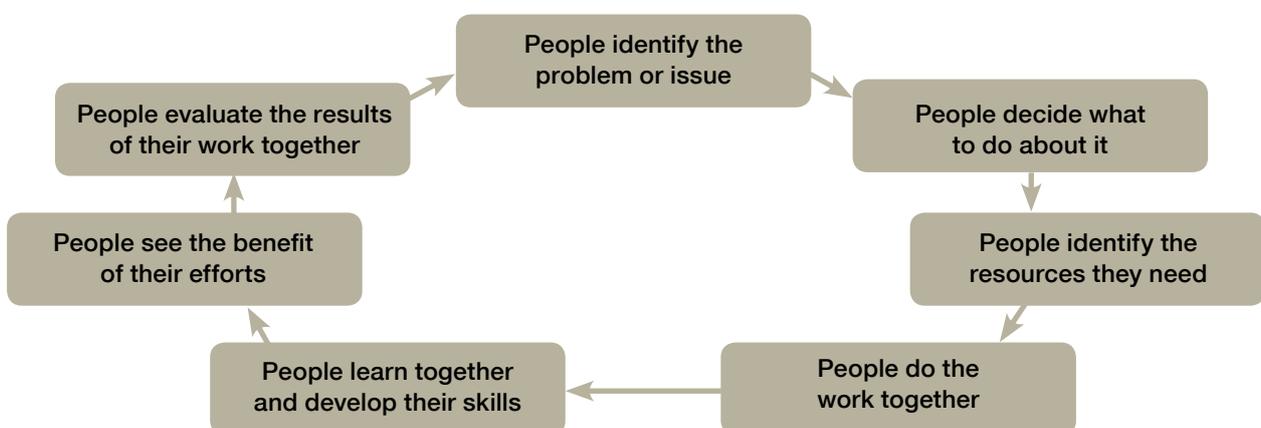
Community Development as a philosophy is concerned with taking the journey from private concern (in the community) to public action (with the community). It is a framework based on social justice and mutual respect. Through active participation and empowerment, Community Development encourages and supports the identification of barriers that prevent community members from participating and responding to the issues that affect their lives. For a community to be active rather than passive in this development of ownership, Community Development processes (the journey) are as important as outcomes.

Community Development processes are open-ended and can lead to many different outcomes. Practical examples of how the Community Development Unit has contributed to these outcomes are:

- individuals from refugee backgrounds developing self-esteem and confidence through support from the Multicultural Planning and Development Officer. They have taken part in cultural dance exhibitions, living book presentations and have become part of the Multicultural Advisory group at Council
- people participating in social activities to overcome social isolation through the work of the Access and Equity Officer. This officer has promoted the building of all ability playgrounds and campaigned for increased access to facilities in the region with community members
- increased participation in connecting activities from government and non government agencies; the focus is on addressing safety issues through the work of the Safe Communities Co-ordinator
- practical outcomes such as the Community Safety Patrol in West Cairns which receives help and assistance from the Neighbourhood Liaison Officers
- obtaining government funding to conduct community and school based outreach nutrition and activity programmes for families with the Community Planning and Development Officer.

Community Development is a circular process where community workers (in our case Council Officers) facilitate the participation of people in this process. Community Development processes enable connections to be made between communities and with the development of wider policies and programmes.

An example of how Community Development principles and processes can work:



Developed by the NT Government

Social Inclusion

A socially inclusive community is one in which all members feel valued and have the opportunity to fully participate in the life of that community. In its broadest sense, social inclusion translates to a community that is fair and where people experience a sense of belonging, of not being excluded and not being a minority. In simple terms, a socially inclusive community is one in which everyone can enjoy the opportunity of participation, be it in sport, culture, work or learning; where more people are 'one of us' than 'one of them'.

Addressing the need to make our society a more inclusive one, the Australian Government has established a Social Inclusion Board. The Board advises government departments and agencies on the principles and actions of social inclusion. Through the 'Social Inclusion Agenda' (see reference page for web details), the Commonwealth Government aims to give all Australians the resources, opportunities and capability to:

- **learn** through participating in education and training
- **work** through participating in employment or voluntary work, including family and carer responsibilities
- **engage** through connecting with people, using local services and participating in local civic, cultural and recreational activities
- have a voice in **influencing** decisions that affect them.

The Social Inclusion Board has developed a series of principles which are made up of the following three aspirations:

- reducing disadvantage
- increasing social, civic and economic participation
- developing a greater voice, combined with greater responsibility.

The Community Development Unit has adopted these principles as core values fundamental to the way the unit works. Through goals (see Goals section of this plan) such as the commitment to:

1. Improving the quality of opportunity for access to and use of community infrastructure across the region, including parks and gardens, foreshores and buildings.
2. Working collaboratively with government and non-government agencies to promote initiatives that increase the opportunity for social inclusion and wellbeing.
3. With community input, developing the principles of the Reconciliation Action Plan into measurable actions that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people achieving equality in all aspects of life.



Strategic Partnerships

Partnerships in this context refers to working relationships between community, non-government, (state or federal) government and local government agencies. A partnership is a commitment to work collaboratively on a project, programme or issue which pursues a common purpose and where the risks and benefits are shared equally between the partners.

The formation of strategic partnerships between government and community can be a risk-laden activity. Setting up, contributing, meeting, exchanging, framing agreements etc. are all transaction costs that have to be met within a partnership. It can be challenging for a government agency (which normally has the power in any relationship with community), to deal equally with a non-government, non-powerful partner, such as community members or a community agency. It can be equally challenging to turn over some of that decision making into finding mutually acceptable solutions or methods of achieving the preferred outcomes. However, partnerships are a most beneficial method of working as they use an equal commitment of resources and risks from the parties involved. Partnerships have the ability to bring more capacity to the project or programme and have the potential to build a more creative solution.

Additionally, when creating partnerships between government and community; skills, capacity and competence can be built in the non-government partnership component through the partnership experience.

Dixon (2010) maintains the key principles of effective community partnering are equity, transparency and mutual benefit leading to respect, trust and sustainability. With reduced or stretched resources, partnerships improve the range and quality of projects and programmes undertaken. Strategic Community Partnerships that adhere to Community Development, Social Inclusion and Wellbeing promotion principles add value as these partnerships reinforce connectivity, communication and common purpose.

The Community Development Unit has strategic partnerships with community groups, non-government organisations and government agencies. There is a network of Community Advisory Groups meeting on such topics as Access & Equity, Youth Issues, Community Safety and Multiculturalism designed to provide Council with timely advice on issues that the Unit is closely involved in. Additionally, the Officers from the Unit work with community based groups as licensees, community hall management groups, playgroups, youth service providers, the Police, groups promoting disability awareness, migrant settlement services, Tropical Population Health Unit and James Cook University, on outcome delivery projects and programmes.

Wellbeing Promotion

Wellbeing encompasses abstract concepts such as quality of life, contentment, happiness or prosperity. Wellbeing is more than the absence of ill health and much more than the state of being well. It is about affirmative personal experiences. That is, the feeling that one could achieve something positive or of having a sense of purpose.

Local Government has long been associated with improving the material wellbeing of its citizens through such measures as employment creation, physical environment regeneration and a commitment to strengthening the local economy. Additionally, many of the important factors that support improvement in wellbeing, such as planning for leisure, community infrastructure and urban planning, are core business for Local Government. Local Government is exceptionally well placed to improve conditions that in turn support the promotion of wellbeing.

There is growing evidence that a commitment to improving psycho-social as well as material wellbeing benefits vulnerable members of the local community and improves outcomes for all (Marmot et al 2010). This research found that the greater the number of people in a community who say that they feel they experience high levels of emotional and social wellbeing, the more resilient that community is and the more able it is to support its own members (Friedli 2009).



Wellbeing is more
than the feeling
of happiness...

The Local Government role in the promotion of Wellbeing

Wellbeing is more than the feeling of happiness, therefore, the role of Local Government is not to make its citizens happy but to become involved in the creation of conditions that enables wellbeing to flourish. Local Government can improve wellbeing conditions through promoting employment and learning, promoting a strong local economy, supporting local business, championing public transport and ensuring that infrastructure and the natural environment is accessible. In contrast, poor quality environments (both built and social), access inequality and high crime are accepted as undermining the capacity of wellbeing.

People's sense of their success is highly influenced by their perception of psycho-social wellbeing. Feeling positive about life, feeling in control, feeling that challenges or adverse events can be coped with and feeling connected to the community and to others all contribute to wellbeing. Wellbeing is highly dependent on the spread of social, psychological and material resources in and through any community, all of which can be influenced by Local Government action.

Positive wellbeing has been associated with take up of healthier lifestyles, better physical health, higher educational attainment, improved employment rates, more social cohesion and less crime. Through urban design and public or community transport policies, Local Government enhances the visual amenity of the area. This has positive effects on physical and mental health.

Win-win opportunities such as those noted above indicate that initiatives to improve wellbeing are effective intervention strategies for Local Government to adopt. As the arm of Local Government charged with delivering Community Development, the development and roll-out of wellbeing promotion activities, projects or programmes will fall within the remit of the Community Development Unit.

Provision of Human Services and the three tiers of government – where do we fit?

Human Services are defined as the provision of programmes or facilities that are designed to meet basic health, welfare, and other needs of a society.

Within the Australian Federal System, each tier of government administers a different series of services. Whilst there is no specific recognition in the Federal Constitution of Local Government, it is accepted that Local Government exists AND is a provider of services closest to members of the community.

See Appendix 1 for a fuller discussion and explanation of the provision of human services across the three tiers of government in Australia.

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) is the peak body for Queensland councils; representing and supporting local government. One of the most important activities undertaken by LGAQ is the promotion of efficient performance of local government in Queensland. In this promoter role, LGAQ has issued a series of policy statements supporting the various aspects of the work of Local Government.

From an LGAQ perspective, Community Services covers the areas of:

Capacity Building, Community Safety, Young People, Seniors, Access and Equity, and Affordable Housing

Human Services covers the areas of:

Planning and Resourcing, Arts and Culture, Library Services, Sport and Leisure, Child Care, Gaming, Prostitution, and Liquor Licensing.

In the Governance Section of its policy document, LGAQ makes several strong references to good governance being linked to representation of the community. Sections 2.3.1 Community Engagement, 2.3.2 Cultural Diversity, 2.3.3 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People and 2.3.4 Community Access to Council Services, (*see reference pages for web page details*) all give legitimacy to the human services work undertaken by the Community Development Unit on behalf of Cairns Regional Council.

Within the Cairns Regional Council, the delivery of community and human services falls within the remit of three Community Development teams. Community Development is a part of the Sport, Recreation and Community Development Branch, which in turn is a part of the Community, Sport and Cultural Services Department. The department as a whole is responsible for cultural services such as the Tanks Arts Centre, the Cairns Civic Theatre, public art installations, the botanical gardens and much of our iconic infrastructure, such as the Lagoon and Esplanade. Additionally, the department is responsible for the delivery of library services and the management of leisure infrastructure, such as the swimming pools and provides support for, and promotes, sporting and recreational activities.

See Appendix 2 for a fuller discussion and explanation of the range of roles and responsibilities of the Community Development teams at CRC.



Resources and References

Resources

Cairns Regional Council internal resources:

- Cairns Regional Council Corporate Plan
- Community consultation in regard to the Corporate Plan
- Community consultation with Council Reference and/or Advisory Groups in regard to the development of the Community Development Strategic Plan
- Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan (2010-2015)
- 2007 Community Engagement Outcomes, Your Shire, Your Say (Douglas, 2007)
- Access and Equity Strategic Plan
- Youth Issues Paper
- Positively Ageless – Queensland Government Discussion Paper on Ageing
- Not for Profit Tenures Policy and review
- Dixon Partnering Solutions – Partnering Above and Below the Line

References

Cairns Regional Council – Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan (2010-2015)

Cairns Regional Council – Our Place in the Sun (Draft Community Plan 2031)

City of Port Philip – Community Plan 2007-2017

<<http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au>>

Dixon Partnership Solutions Partnering Above and Below the Line

Marmot Review 2010

Brit Gov 'foresight review on mental capital and wellbeing (2008 – the Govt Office for Science)

<http://www.lgaq.asn.au/web/guest/home/content/-/journal_content/56_INSTANCE_aW08/10136/8398fcb0fbd89dc64975e258a47ee1a#p_56_INSTANCE_aW08>

Marrickville Council Our Place, Our Vision – The Marrickville Community Strategic Plan

TAFE WA – Strategic Plan 2006-2010

Sydney South West Area Health Service (NSW Health) – Community Health Strategic Plan 2007-2012

City of Rockingham – Community Development Plan 2007-2012

University of Western Sydney – Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan

Townsville Regional Council – Community Plan 2020

The Local Government Improvement and Development Agency, The Mental Health Foundation and the Young Foundation (UK) – The Role of Local Government in Promoting Wellbeing

Kiama Municipal Council – Social & Community Plan 2004-2009

City of Wagga Wagga – Community Social Plan 2009-2013

Local Government Professionals (LG Pro) Corporate Planner's Network – Embedding Community Priorities into Council Planning

Appendix I

An overview of the role and responsibilities of Federal Government

At the Commonwealth Government level, Community and Human Services are spread throughout three government departments with several Ministers heading up the various portfolio interests. Community and Human Services are administered through:

- The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FAHCSIA)
- The Department of Human Services
- The Department of Health and Ageing

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FAHCSIA) covers the following issues and groups:

Carers, child support, communities, families/children, gambling, drugs, housing and homelessness, Indigenous Australians, mental health, people with a disability, seniors, volunteers, women.

There are five Ministerial portfolios in FAHCSIA.

The stated purpose of the department is to improve the lives of people in Australia by creating opportunities for economic and social participation by individuals, families and communities.

- **Carers** – people with a disability or severe medical condition, or frail aged are supported by FAHCSIA through a series of programmes and services, and benefits and payments for carers such as the ‘Young Carers Respite and Information Services Programme’
- **Child Support** – the aim of FAHCSIA is to make child support better, through the provision of services for child support
- **Communities** – FAHCSIA assists communities through support for disaster recovery, strengthening community resilience, provision of emergency relief funding, supporting Indigenous community members and their families through the provision and referral to a range of mainstream and Indigenous services that meet local community needs

- **Families and children** – support is provided to families and children through support both directly for families and for organisations providing services for families under the headings of parenting, children, family finances and family relationships
- **Gambling and drugs** – the impact of gambling and drugs is reduced through support programmes such as ‘the family support programme’
- **Housing and homelessness** – the aim is to make more housing available and to reduce homelessness through a focus on housing affordability and an increase in the provision of social housing
- **Indigenous people** – the focus of FAHCSIA’s work is the ‘Closing the Gap’ initiative and support for Indigenous organisations
- **Mental health** – the national mental health plan offers a series of programmes such as an employment strategy, supports respite care options and offers support to community organisations
- **People with a disability** – FAHCSIA offers support to people with a disability through the provision of funding to schemes such as the national disability advocacy programme or postal concessions to people who are blind
- **Seniors** – FAHCSIA provides financial information services, pension reviews and the national broadband initiative
- **Volunteers** – the department supports volunteering through the provision of funding to volunteer resource centres that then provides quality volunteer management and training activities
- **Women** – The Office for Women is responsible for the delivery of the majority of programmes and services relevant to women. These are activities, policies and strategies designed at reducing violence against women; activities aimed at improving women’s place in society; support for research relating to women and the promotion of economic security for Australian women (this includes pay equity, superannuation, managing money and women in business).

The Department of Human Services includes the Child Support Agency, the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service Australia and the Human Services agencies of Centrelink, Medicare Australia, and Australian Hearing.

Together the Department and these various agencies work to improve government social and health-related provision and provides a central policy and coordination role for the delivery of services across the Human Services Portfolio.

The Minister for Human Services is responsible for the operations of the Department of Human Services and Human Services portfolio agencies.

- **Child Support Agency (CSA)** assists separated parents provide the financial and emotional support necessary for their children's wellbeing.
- **CRS Australia** helps people with a disability, injury or health condition to attain and keep a job through the provision of individualised vocational rehabilitation. It helps employers to keep their workplaces safe.
- **Centrelink** delivers a range of government payments and services to Australians, including retirees, families, carers, parents, people with disabilities, Indigenous people, and people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It provides services at times of major change.
- **Medicare Australia** looks after the health of Australians through efficient services and payments, such as Medicare, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register and the Australian Organ Donor Register.
- **Australian Hearing** provides a full range of hearing services for children and young people up to the age of 21. It also provides services for eligible adults, aged pensioners and most war veterans.

The Department of Health and Ageing supports universal and affordable access to high quality medical, pharmaceutical and hospital services. It helps people to stay healthy through health promotion and disease prevention activities.

Three Ministers and one Parliamentary Secretary administer the services offered via the Department of Health and Ageing. These Ministries are Health & Ageing, Mental Health & Ageing and Indigenous Health. The majority of agencies and services within this Department concentrate on the provision of better health and healthier ageing for all Australians; the range encompasses organ/tissue donation, food standards and professional services reviews. The major issues and areas within the Department of Health & Ageing are: Population Health, Medicines and Medical Services, Aged Care and Population Ageing, Primary Care, Rural Health, Hearing Services, Indigenous Health, Regulation of Private Health Care, Health Systems and Information Management, Acute Care, Bio-security and Health and Medical Research.



An overview of the role and responsibilities of State Government

Under the Constitution which formed the Commonwealth Government of Australia, the state Governments retained legislative power over all other matters that occurred within their borders, including:

- police
- hospitals
- education
- public transport

Each state has its own Constitution, which divides the state's government into the same divisions of legislature, executive, and judiciary as the Commonwealth Government. The state parliaments are permitted to pass laws related to any matter that is not controlled by the Commonwealth under Section 51 of the Australian Constitution.

At the State level in Queensland, the delivery of Human Services is the responsibility of the Department of Communities. Currently, the varied range of services and programmes delivered through the new Department of Communities comes within the portfolio responsibilities of four Ministers. These are the Minister for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs, the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport and the Minister for Community Services and Housing and the Minister for Women.

An overview of the role and responsibilities of Local Government

The Local Government Areas of Queensland are the defined areas within which legally constituted Local Government authorities, known as Councils, have responsibilities to provide local services. Local Government is mainly concerned with matters of local significance such as local roads, rubbish/garbage collection and recycling, parks, building applications, libraries etc. All local Councils have the same basic powers and responsibilities, however their structures and the types of service they provide vary according to local requirements. As part of a responsible sphere of Government, Councils have considerable discretion in exercising their powers and responsibilities, and in planning for the specific and diverse needs of their local communities.

The State or Territory governments define the powers of the Local Governments, and decide what geographical areas those governments are responsible for. Each Local Government has the equivalent of a legislature and an executive only. Councils can be called cities, shires, towns, or municipalities; they are still controlled by the state or territory government above them.



Appendix 2

An overview of the role and responsibilities of the Community Development teams

The three Community Development teams are situated in the south of the Cairns Regional Council LGA (at Hambleton House in Edmonton), in the centre of the LGA (at the Council Offices on Spence Street and in the inner city suburbs of West Cairns) and in the Douglas area (at the Council Offices in Mossman).

The Community Development teams' approach to what they do is formed from a desire to assist the community in the process of capacity building, the forming of strategic partnerships, of empowerment and ensuring the sustainability of community based decisions. Working strategically across the region, the central team has the following resources available to ensure an equitable and inclusive community, which both the Douglas and southern teams are able to access:

- **Multicultural Planning & Development** – development of access and equity strategies which increase community participation, promote awareness and encourage community cohesion
- **Youth Development** – promotion of opportunities for young people and assisting youth sector organisations address issues strategically. This post also provides advocacy for young people within Local Government
- **Community Safety** – consultation with community representatives to identify emerging personal and public safety issues and advocate a coordinated and evidence based policy response. Provide advice to community members on safety promotion, and evaluation of areas in line with crime prevention through environmental design principles.
- **Safe Communities Co-ordination** – Safe Communities Programme Coordination – maintaining the WHO accreditation of Cairns as an 'International Safe Community' through building partnerships between government and non-government agencies, business and community. Providing infrastructure and resources to develop a localised, collaborative approach to long-term, sustainable injury prevention. Development of safety promotion programmes that make Cairns a safe place to live, work and visit.

- **Access & Equity** – ensuring that equitable and dignified access is provided throughout Council facilities and assets ensuring people with a disability have equal access to the goods and services provided by Council. Identification of access issues within the community, and providing workable solutions. Work with disability networks to promote inclusion of people with a disability in the community.
- **Neighbourhood Liaison** – Work with and facilitate partnerships between Government, non-government agencies and the Community to implement responses to identified issues and to undertake a Community Development and capacity building role in the inner city suburbs of West Cairns.

Community Development has a specific Douglas based team who work in the CRC Mossman office. There are three generalist positions: a Community Development Officer, a Community Projects Officer and an Indigenous Special Projects Officer.

- **Community Development Officer** – facilitates Community Development initiatives that assist the community to sustain a positive level of liveability and inclusiveness. Consults with the community in identifying the needs of target groups. Proactively participates in sourcing funding, developing, implementing, promoting and monitoring projects.
- **Indigenous Special Projects Officer** – develops and manages special projects that pertain to the Indigenous community across the region. Maintains collaborative networks with government and Indigenous communities. Develops and implements culturally appropriate protocols within Council. Forms, monitors and maintains networks to ensure Indigenous communities are able to engage and participate in Council's decision making process.
- **Community Projects Officer** – works collaboratively with communities in Douglas to enhance their capacity to identify their aspirations, with a focus on living a safe, equitable, inclusive and sustainable lifestyle. Implements and evaluates community based special events and activities that are developed collaboratively with Council and the local community.

Community Development services in the south are organised and offered from the Hambledon House Community Centre, which is located in Edmonton. The service aims to promote, support and enhance community, family and individual lifestyles by providing opportunities for the community to 'come together'. Hambledon House is a service delivery centre and a community centre. It offers a quality and affordable facility for meetings, training, community functions and events. It provides:

- an information, referral, advisory and support service
- free, responsive and confidential counselling and support services
- support to individuals, families and community groups to develop services, programmes and activities that respond to the needs of residents living in the southern suburbs of Cairns and including the Yarrabah community
- parenting support and advice.



Building vibrant
communities

Appendix 3

A response to issues

Characteristics/Trend/Feature: Increasing population across the region

Issue Requiring Response	Strategy / Response to Issue
<p>Currently, the population of the region is 168,251 which is a change from the previous year of +2.37%. New people moving into the region may lack networks and support and the increase in population will offer a challenge to the Community Development Unit in regard to the range and number of programmes, projects, services and initiatives that can be successfully delivered which promotes inclusion and wellbeing.</p> <p>Some of the critical challenges inherent with an expanding population are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a demand for more social infrastructure • a demand for support mechanisms that promote community sustainability and sufficiency 	<p>1. Caring for the Social Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work collaboratively with government and non-government organisations to promote initiatives that increase the opportunity for social inclusion and increase wellbeing. <p>2. Building Vibrant Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase the effectiveness of community participation. – Support community celebrations and commemorations that acknowledge and strengthen a sense of community. – Continue advocacy for the establishment of a multicultural centre to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse community. <p>3. Delivering Integrated Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advocate for an increase in provision of appropriate, accessible and sustainable (socially and environmentally) social infrastructure across the region. – Advocate for the implementation of social inclusion principles as an integral component in all planning and engagement projects. <p>4. Delivering Services and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure that information in regard to functions, facilities and services is available in accessible formats that meet the needs of all groups in the community. <p>5. Creating a Socially Prosperous and Socially Sustainable Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase Council capacity to work proactively and strategically at early intervention and prevention strategies that mitigate the impact of future social disadvantage.

Characteristics/Trend/Feature: Ageing population

Issue Requiring Response	Strategy / Response to Issue
<p>Currently, the proportion of people aged over 65 is 8% and is smaller than the proportion of people the same age in Queensland overall. However, over the next 20 years, our population will get older. Currently, the average age of people in the region is 35 years, by 2031 this will rise to 41 years and the proportion of people aged over 65 years will have risen from 8% to 18%.</p> <p>Some of the challenges associated with ageing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential skill shortages as people leave the workforce in large numbers • increase in the number of households • changes in demand for the way services are delivered and where they are located. 	<p>1. Building Vibrant Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advocate for the development and delivery of an accessible and equitable Community Transport Scheme. <p>2. Delivering Services and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure that information in regard to functions, facilities and services is available in accessible formats that meet the needs of all groups in the region. <p>3. Creating a Socially Prosperous and Socially Sustainable Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish strategic partnerships that increase access to education and training for groups such as seniors. – Establish strategic partnerships that increase economic participation for groups such as seniors. – Continued support for the implementation of policy recommendations commensurate with the State Planning on Ageing Policy.

Characteristics/Trend/Feature: Increasing number of families/emerging or increasing housing density in the southern part of the region (Edmonton and Mount Peter)

Issue Requiring Response	Strategy / Response to Issue
<p>There are currently 35,000 plus families living in the Cairns area and over time, family households have increased in number. Many more families will come to live in Cairns as both the master planned community of Mount Peter and the more established Edmonton expand. In both cases new land will be released, allowing more new homes to be developed. Mount Peter is predicted to be the home of 40,000 new residents over the next 30 years. Such a development will require new social and community infrastructure, links to support services, and physical infrastructure such as schools, health centres/hospitals, roads and transport – the things that help a place become a sustainable community.</p> <p>Some challenges associated with an increasing number of families are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for more support services • need for family friendly social and physical community infrastructure 	<p>1. Caring for the Social Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work collaboratively with government and non-government organisations to promote initiatives that increase the opportunity for social inclusion and increase wellbeing. <p>2. Building Vibrant Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advocate for the development and delivery of an accessible and equitable Community Transport Scheme. – Increase the effectiveness of community participation. – Support community celebrations and commemorations that acknowledge diversity and strengthen a sense of community. – Advocate for the development and delivery of an accessible and equitable Community Transport Scheme. <p>3. Delivering Integrated Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advocate for an increase in provision of appropriate and accessible and sustainable (socially and environmentally) social infrastructure across the region. – Advocate for the implementation of social inclusion principles as an integral component in all planning and engagement projects. – Work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure access to health services in the southern corridor area of the region. <p>4. Delivering Services and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure that information in regard to functions, facilities and services is available in accessible formats that meet the needs of all groups in the region. <p>5. Creating a Socially Prosperous and Socially Sustainable Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish strategic partnerships that increase access to education and training for groups such as families. – Establish strategic partnerships that increase economic participation for groups such as families. – Increase Council capacity to work proactively and strategically at early intervention and prevention strategies that mitigate the impact of future social disadvantage. – Work collaboratively in conjunction with Council’s Economic Development Unit on place-based initiatives.



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