Community and Client Services
Monthly Review 1 December 2014 to 18 January 2015
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Executive Summary

Director Community and Client Services

Highlights

- The annual Christmas in the Botanic Gardens was held on December 14. Close to 1000 residents attended – the best attendance in history.

- Commenced a review of the draft Open Space Planning Policy. The team is working collaboratively with Strategic Planning to finalise the policy in preparation for its adoption.

- New solid shade structures installed at Skate Park at Mirani and Anzac Park Marian.

- Nautilus Park at Shoal Point and Lamberts Beach beach accesses were built. A new emergency services vehicle access was provided at Far Beach.

- House connection plans (HCP’s) are in the process of being digitised. Client service staff have committed to having the plans available through ECM by the end of the financial year. This will reduce retrieval times. This month the target was 3,000 plans which has already been exceeded.

- The demand for financial support, through the Emergency Relief program at the Sarina Neighbourhood Centre, remains high as families in the region endeavor to stretch their budgets during the Christmas / New Year and school holiday period.

- The 2015 Sports Expo is to be held at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre on Sunday 8 February from 9am to 1pm. This year’s expo has attracted a record number of clubs with 108 clubs registering to participate on the day. This clearly demonstrates the value local sporting clubs place on this annual event that showcases a range of sports available in the region.

- 2376 maintenance requests were closed in the 2014 calendar year. This figure was an increase of 33.5% more than the 1779 requests closed in the 2013 calendar year.

- The Green Army team worked at Janes Creek, Wetland Walkabout, Blue Water Trail, DeMoleyns Lagoon, and the Mackay Natural Environment Centre undertaking a variety of tasks including fencing, weed control, plant propagation and nursery maintenance activities.

- The first meeting of the new MRBG Advisory Board was chaired by Councillor Theresa Morgan. The Advisory Board will provide a forum for Mackay Regional Council and the local community to input into the planning, design, and development of the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens.

Emerging Challenges and Issues

- MECC catering has been brought in-house. Initial results are promising but the operation will be monitored closely.

Gerard Carlyon
Director Community and Client Services
Community Lifestyle

Management

- Lawrence Booth has been appointed to the transition team for Northern Australian Services. Robert Ryan has been appointed as Acting Manager Community Lifestyle until 30 June 2015.

Client Services

Initiatives

- E-Pathway request for complaint lodgement has been designed. Implementation date to be advised as stakeholders need to be identified and processing procedures mapped out.
- Call centre ran an initiative during the year that saw over 350 staff members spend an hour with a call centre officer. This initiative is now complete and 216 survey responses have been received. An initial analysis of results has been positive. It is planned that client service staff will spend time with other departments to further enhance communication, working relationships, knowledge and understanding.

- Increase in calls December 2014 compared to December 2013 is due to being open over the Christmas period in 2014. An additional 1400 calls were taken over this period.
• An increase of infringement notices and payment schedules accounts for the rise in receipting seen this month as compared to December last year. Front counter was also open over the Christmas period this year.
The Q-gap service in the Mirani Client Service Centre is increasingly being used by the community. Additionally this service was open over the Christmas period 2014.
Q-Gap Transactions - December 2014

Number of Bank of Queensland Transactions
• The decrease in documents registered may be attributed to more correspondence going to specific departments i.e. Private certifier lodgements are now mainly received electronically. These documents are registered by the relevant program and therefore are not counted in the e-Content team statistics.

Community Development

Advice has been received that the Council application to the State Government's Diversity Delivers program has been unsuccessful. The application sought to provide a range of services for Australian South Sea Islander Communities across the State. The current funding for the CAMS - Australian South Sea Islander position expires on 30 June 2015.

Community Development team met with local Chinese restaurant owners and community groups to assist with planning for Chinese New Year celebrations to be held in Victoria St on Saturday 21 February.

Support provided to members of the local Maori Community in preparation for Waitangi Day to be held on Saturday February 7 at the Lagoons Meeting Hut. This non-profit community event will celebrate the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in New Zealand in 1840. The treaty guaranteed Māori rights to their land and gave Māori equal rights alongside the British.

Sarina Neighbourhood Centre assisted the Inter Church Council, Scripture Union, Armstrong Beach Progress Association and the Lions Club to co-ordinate the Sarina Christmas Celebration held at the Bob Wood Cultural Hall on December 6. The event attracted approximately 400 residents.
Youth Development

State Government representatives have advised that the renewal of Youth Sector funding previously approved will continue with new service agreements being finalised by 1 April 2015.

Valley District Youth Council members held an annual breakup at Mirani Community Hall with a range of activities and a BBQ.

School holiday activities at the Sarina Youth Centre have been well supported by young people looking for engaging activities during the end of year school break.

Arts Development

9 applications to the RADF funding round were approved to the value of $45,721.00. The next round for the program will close on 18 February.

Art Is In calendar, Issue 62, December 2014 – February 2015 was produced and distributed.

Sister City

The majority of student interviews for the 2015 Youth Ambassador program were conducted in December, however as some students had already left town the remaining interviews will be held at the end of January.

Inkind Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mackay Veterans Support Group</td>
<td>Support with the provision of gravel for the extension of existing car park</td>
<td>$940.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer Valley Australia Day Committee</td>
<td>Provision of 12 general waste bins for Australia Day program in Marian to be held 26/1/2015.</td>
<td>$391.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kokoda Memorial Foundation</td>
<td>Supply of 600m x 25mm and 400m x 32mm blue line water pipe</td>
<td>$818.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay Host Lions</td>
<td>Provision of 10 general waste and 10 recycle bins to support Waitangi Day to be held at the Lagoons Meeting Hut 7/2/2015</td>
<td>$233.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaforth Progress &amp; Sports Association</td>
<td>Provision of 3 general waste and 3 recycling bins for Australia Day program in Seaforth to be held 26/1/2015.</td>
<td>$397.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Museums

- Mackay Museum
  - Closed December to 5 February 2015

- Pioneer Valley Museum at Mirani
  - Closed 11 December 2014 – 4 February 2015

- Sarina Museum
  - Closed 12 December 2014 – 3 February 2015
Greenmount Homestead

- Closed 22 December 2014 – 11 January 2015
- Visitor Numbers: 38

Libraries

Food for Fines

- Almost $7,800 in overdue library fines was waived as part of Mackay Regional Council Libraries 2014 Food for Fines campaign. $4,555 was waived in 2013.

Young People’s Services

- Programs designed to encourage early literacy in children and their families had a total of 971 attendees in December.
- Baby Bounce had a total annual attendance of 5,875 while Storytime attracted 13,484 for the same period.
- A total of 748 children and 446 adults (1194) participated in The Corner at Gordon White Library during December.

Anna Derham – Executive Coordinator, Library Programs, Lawrence Booth - Manager Community Lifestyle and Councillor Alison Jones deliver Christmas Hampers to St Vincent de Paul Society.
Digital Literacy
Mackay Regional Council Libraries and the Mackay Family History Society (MFHS) delivered the second Family History Online Workshop at Gordon White Library on Thursday, December 4 with 9 participants. A further round of introductory sessions to research family history will be held in 2015.

Community Services
- CitySide Book Club discussed ‘I Came to Say Goodbye’ by Carole Overington at the meeting on Friday, December 5.
- The Valley Page Turners from Mirani met on Wednesday, December 17 and discussed ‘Gone Girl’ by Gillian Flynn.
- Mackay Regional Council Libraries’ three book clubs celebrated the end of a great reading year and took the opportunity to meet each other at Gordon White Library on Tuesday, December 18.

Heritage Collection
- 35 researchers visited the Carmel Daveson Research Room in December 2014 compared to 32 in 2013. 13 research inquiries actioned compared to 15 in 2013.
Statistics

- Public computers totalled 2,377 bookings resulting in 2,105 hours of use. In addition a total of 930 hours of wi-fi access was provided.
- Assistive Technology equipment was used for a total of 28 hours.
- Top 3 library website visits for the month of December:
  - Library Catalogue
  - Library Home
  - Opening Hours
- Database hits including The Computer School, Who Else Writes Like, Who Next, Transparent Language Online and Literacy Planet totalled 293.

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**Library Visitors**

![Graph showing library visitor statistics for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015](image)

**New Library Members**

![Graph showing new library member statistics for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015](image)
Loans increased due to extended opening hours in 2014.

**Top 5 Reserved Titles in December**

- My story / Julia Gillard.
- Meant to be / Fiona McCallum.
- Game of Thrones Season 4 [DVD]
- The Cinderella Murder / Mary Higgins Clark & Alafair Burke.
- Black Friday / Robert Muchamore.

**Artspace Mackay**

**Overview**

- December was a good month for the gallery, with two new exhibitions and a whole range of public programs on offer. The gallery hosted a special concert of the visiting choral group Gospel 7, who were in Mackay from the Solomon Islands. It was wonderful to see the main gallery full, mainly with members of our Australian South Sea Islander community. Our special Christmas BMA Kidspace was also well attended, and most toddlers were excited to see Santa Claus.

- Artspace Mackay was open to the public between Christmas and New Year. Unfortunately, visitor numbers were quite low, with the busiest day being New Year’s Eve with 30 people coming through.

**Visitors**

- 2,884 (including Town Hall)
Visitor figures

2013-2014

Website Visits

2013-2014
E-newsletter subscribers

![Graph showing e-newsletter subscribers from 2013 to 2014.]

Exhibitions

New exhibitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gallery</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Exhibition Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foyer Gallery</td>
<td>19 Dec – 8 Feb</td>
<td>Printbank Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McAleese Gallery</td>
<td>19 Dec – 8 Feb</td>
<td>Danie Mellor: Exotic Lies Sacred Ties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Printbank Award
(Foyer Gallery)

This exhibition features selected works from local printmaking group, Printbank Mackay. Printbank Awards are organised by Printbank Mackay Inc. in partnership with Artspace Mackay. The awards are biennial and are open to adults and students living in the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Council areas. Entrants have used a range of contemporary and traditional printmaking techniques.

Danie Mellor: Exotic Lies Sacred Ties
(McAleese Gallery)

This major survey focuses on the past decade of the artist's practice. Mellor's indigenous heritage informs his art, which considers Australia's colonial legacy. Born in Mackay in 1971 he maintains strong links with his mother's Country on the Atherton Tablelands, Far North Queensland. This exhibition looks in depth at how Mellor has contributed to contemporary Australian Art, and encourages engagement with the nation’s shared and contested histories through core themes.
It brings together works from public collections, including the Australian Museum, NGA, Art Gallery of South Australia, QAG, GOMA, BRAG, MCA, UQ Art Museum as well as our own Mackay Regional Council Collection works, two of which were commissioned to commemorate Mackay’s 150th anniversary.

Public Programs & Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Dec</td>
<td>Gospel 7, Solomon Island Gospel Choir</td>
<td>McAleese and Foyer Galleries</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dec</td>
<td>Christmas BMA kidspace</td>
<td>Seminar room and foyer gallery</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Dec</td>
<td>Exhibition opening – Danie Mellor</td>
<td>All galleries</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Dec</td>
<td>Danie Mellor floor talk</td>
<td>McAleese Gallery</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-24 Dec</td>
<td>Christmas drop-in activities</td>
<td>Foyer Gallery</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 -19 Jan</td>
<td>Summer drop-in activities</td>
<td>Foyer Gallery</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>770</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre and Events

Management

- Hosted staff from Artour and Arts QLD to finalise arrangements for the forthcoming QLD Touring Showcase which is to be held at the MECC, March 2015
- Finalised contractual arrangements for the Mackay / Isaac Anywhere Festival
- Coordinated Christmas décor across the region, working with the Parks & Environment team who undertook the install
- Managed Carols in the City held at the MECC on 6 December
- Met with Police, Liquor Licensing and Mackay Cutters regarding the forthcoming St George Illawarra Dragons v Mackay Cutters and Cowboys v Broncos match

Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre

Overview

- December 2014 was quieter than previous Decembers, reflecting the current economic environment. A distinct absence of Christmas Parties at the Centre was noticed. Most regular clients downsized their Christmas celebrations significantly.
- Performing arts hires include Dance Avenue, Leisa Payne School of Dance, Centre Stage, Fame Talent School, and ABBA Live.
- Corporate hires include BMC (Billiton Mitsui Coal), In Focus Money Management, and Council with the Diversify Mackay Leadership Alliance luncheon.

Capital Program

- Work has commenced on replacing the Entertainment Centre’s 28 year old air conditioning system. Excellent progress has been made, and as at 31 December works are ahead of schedule. This significant job is necessary and once complete audience comfort should be achieved through use of programmable thermostats, and it is anticipated that thermostatic controls and other sustainability measures will generate savings. Practical completion is targeted for early February.

Development/Other Issues

- Grinders Corporate Catering gave notice of intention to terminate their contract as of 31 December 2014, ending their catering contract after 18 years. As Grinders has ceased trading, the best and agreed interim measure to ensure the Centre’s catering staff was to employ key Grinder’s contract staff in house. A number of staff have been taken on, (mostly casual food and beverage attendants), as well as full time chefs. No changes to menus and stocks are now necessary in the short term, and the MECC’s food & beverage operations should not show a difference to the public.
- Given Grinders Corporate Catering ceased trading and had assets for sale, the Friends of the Theatre generously agreed to purchase equipment from Grinders that will be invaluable to the Centre.
• The Friends of the Theatre, conscious of the economic times we are living in, have also agreed to supplement paid food and beverage staff at theatre shows and functions. This will reduce operating costs and provides for greater volunteer services (and subsequent engagement) with the Centre. At this point in time over 20 Friends of the Theatre have worked with the Centre to obtain Responsible Service of Alcohol certificates, and volunteer enthusiasm is palpable.

Entrepreneurial
• One entrepreneurial performance was held this month, the *Stars of Sun Records*. This Las Vegas tribute show was well received and attended. Audience numbers while healthy, were not as high as expected, and a loss was recorded for this venture.

Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th># of Events</th>
<th>Actual Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awards Evening</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocktail Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concert</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECC Complex Tour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,124</strong></td>
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</table>

Non-Financial Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Financial Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Year to date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Performances fully cost recovered</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum number of catered functions</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(excluding performances)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average attendance at shows</td>
<td>Auditorium 550</td>
<td>Auditorium 398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foyer/space 100</td>
<td>Foyer/space 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halls 600</td>
<td>Halls 306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One Hall only 200</td>
<td>One Hall only 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of non-utilised days</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Performances at the MECC</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly occupancy of facility</td>
<td>175,000</td>
<td>104,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Hire Satisfaction</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>86%</td>
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### 3 Year Comparisons

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performances</td>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>External Ticket Sales</td>
<td>Performances</td>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>External Ticket Sales</td>
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<td>JUL</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10,996</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9,953</td>
<td>9,229</td>
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<td>AUG</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13,525</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9,994</td>
<td>3,225</td>
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<td>SEP</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14,403</td>
<td>1,784</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9,286</td>
<td>902</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCT</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36,761</td>
<td>4,575</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42,128</td>
<td>1,202</td>
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<td>NOV</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20,333</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22,024</td>
<td>1,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEC</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8,124</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14,211</td>
<td>760</td>
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<td>JAN</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>13,162</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,783</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEB</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16,391</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7,507</td>
<td>2,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAR</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10,825</td>
<td>1,408</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8,873</td>
<td>4,038</td>
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<td>APR</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6,154</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8,768</td>
<td>4,038</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAY</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9,050</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9,729</td>
<td>3,094</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUN</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7,593</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,227</td>
<td>4,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>104,142</td>
<td>8,261</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>170,771</td>
<td>18,682</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendances (30 Months) 433,787**
Stadium

- Mackay Cutters v St George Illawarra Dragons is now on sale through Mackay Tix, and the match will be held Saturday 31 January.

- The MECC & Events program continues to undertake facility bookings and facility cleaning at the Stadium, while managing all operational accounting matters and grounds maintenance. The incoming Stadium management has taken control of turf maintenance. A full handover to the new Stadium management is expected end February.

Festivals and Events

- A highly successful Carols in the City was held at the MECC on 6 December. A late addition to the program was the Solomon Islands Choir who arrived in Mackay literally 48 hours before. This soulful choir added both colour and multiculturalism to our traditional Christmas celebrations, and much good feedback ensued. A capacity crowd filled the MECC for Carols; with another thousand people attending the precinct for add on activities. Santa and the Mayor’s Christmas Tree lighting delighted children and excellent feedback has been received. First time new sponsors, Porters have already pledged to sponsor Carols in 2015 following the success of the 2014 program.

- The New Year’s Eve River Party was finalised with a topical array of entertainment, market vendors and activities. Many inquiries were received regarding the New Year’s Eve celebrations, (far more than in previous years). It is apparent that many in the community are looking for free family entertainment, and there has been great growth in all Festival & Events attendances this year.
Carols in the City at MECC

City Christmas Tree at new Bluewater Quay location
Property Services

Management

- Facilitated a meeting at the Agricultural School in Sarina with Bob North and the Sugar Shed Co-ordinator to discuss the possible development of linkages between the Sugar Shed and the School with the result being an agreement for the school to supply ginger and eggs to the Sugar Shed.

  Discussions will also be held with relevant teachers at the Sarina State High School in regards to building the interaction into school courses which would involve students experiencing the full scope of producing a raw product and following it through the process of becoming an item for sale at the Sugar Shed, hopefully it will also provide opportunities for students to work at the Sugar Shed.

- In line with internal safety audit findings work has been undertaken at the Sarina Sugar Shed to replace old shelving and review storage requirements for supplies and stock.

Project Technical Officer

- Daily Mercury Building (Ground Floor) fitted out over the Christmas break to accommodate the Northern Australia Services transition team.

- Internal painting works at Andergrove Community Hall commenced.

Security Access Requests

![Security Access Requests Chart](chart.png)
Property Co-ordinations

Leases

Lifeline at Mirani

Lease negotiations commencing, an application for permanent closure of a road reserve to be made as part of lease and building sits within the road reserve

The program is currently dealing with approx. 36 leases

Land Dealings

The Property Co-ordinations officer is currently dealing with 13 Road Realignments, 3 Land Acquisitions and 6 Easements, no new matters were listed over the reporting period.

Sarina Sugar Shed

Sarina Sugar Shed achieved its second highest month of sales in December, only being surpassed by sales of Sugar Shed Rum when it was launched in September 2013.

Batch No. 3 of Sugar Shed Rum was released for sale on the 1st November 2014, 700ml bottles of rum accounted for $10,500.00 of the $20,000.00 alcohol sales in December.
Community and Client Services 1 December 2014 - 18 January 2015

Gift Shop sales were also stronger than this time last year mainly due to the increase in hamper sales. Over 700 hampers were put together this year by staff and volunteers increasing sales from $3,900.00 in 2013 to $12,950.00 in 2014.

Produce made at the Sarina Sugar Shed also had an outstanding month with sales of $11,796.00 compared to $3,165.00 in 2013.

Ticket sales for December were slightly up on last year by $500.00.

A joint local media advertising campaign has boosted the Sugar Shed’s image and public awareness assisting with repeat hamper sales to corporate customers.

Aquatic Facilities

Aquatic Facilities Attendance Figures
Note on attendances:

**Bluewater Lagoon**
Closed late July and August (attendance in August reflect contractor attendance)

**Memorial Pool**
Closed May

**Pioneer Pool**
Closed June, July August

**Mirani Pool**
Closed May, June, July and August

**Sarina Pool**
Closed June, July and August, September 2014 (May, June, July and August 2013), December 13 – 26 inclusive (Qld Education requirement)

The operational management of Sarina Swim Centre by Property Services staff, NQ Water Services and recent new lessee Pat Wright (currently operating under an MOU awaiting Qld Ed approval of facility head lease with MRC) has seen excellent patronage and community feedback. The smooth transition, improved community profile and facility appeal is a credit to the operators engaged.
Corporate Communications and Marketing

Management

#MackayPride video was officially relaunched in December at the DMLA Report back luncheon and continues to gain traction in the marketplace, with over 2,327 views. Designs were finalised for the new waste trucks to include images of the region, utilising the #MackayPride concept. These will be revealed in early March on the new waste trucks.

#MackayPride Facebook competition was launched in January, encouraging people to post what makes them proud. Good support from Sarina Sugar Shed, Economic Development and the MECC who provided prizes.

New Communications Coordinator commenced duties in December and appointment finalised for the renamed Social Media-Website officer in January 2015.

Eight community grants provided to groups for Australia Day celebrations and preparations are well in hand for council’s Australia Day awards ceremony to be held on January 25 2015.

Website visits for December 2014-January 15 2015

Facebook
Fans: 7511

Twitter
Followers: 1178
YouTube

There was a strong response to our YouTube channel during December and early January.

Video views: 3317

Estimated minutes watched: 5565

Top videos

Mackay Pride - Share Your Pride. 2,327 views (70%)

Council selling house for $1 to be used as drop-in centre > 139 (4.2%)

Jet boat tours to unlock tourism potential of river > 116 (3.5%)

Council Connect - Australia Day nominations December 14 > 70 (2.1%)

Over 200 media mentions for the reporting period.

General

- Preparations finalised for Australia Day awards ceremony. Entertainment booked and invite letters arranged for all nominees and those who provided nominations.
- Grants distributed to eight successful community groups to host Australia Day activities with council funding
- Strong response to Australia Day nominations with over 140 received for eight categories. Facebook presence and marketing coupled with TV advertising, generated a great deal of interest from the community
Example of Facebook advertising to promote Australia Day awards

- Preparations continue for the QR Steam Train visit on January 31. We have engaged local community groups and provided tickets for them to use as a fundraising venture. Static displays will also be arranged at the Mackay and Sarina rail platforms.
- Bumper Christmas edition of internal newsletter Grapevine produced for staff, comprising over 22 pages.
- Media issues included - Caterers decision to leave the MECC, Blacks Beach meeting with residents over new protection measures, publicity on new stadium company, start of Jetstorm power boat rides in the Pioneer River and promotion for Australia Day nominations
- Designs finalised before Christmas for new waste and recycling trucks
- Launch of new #MackayPride Facebook competition to lead into Australia Day. People asked to share what makes them proud to enter the competition for a $1,000 prize pack
Media call to announce Stadium committee – Rob Porter and Tegan Philpott
Parks and Environment

Management

- Attended asset management workshop focusing on maintenance management planning for the program.
- The consultant's brief for detailed design of the Botanic Gardens was completed with tenders to be called in February.

Parks Building Services Activities

Electrical Operations

- Five traffic signal maintenance runs were conducted and twenty one lamp replacements completed.
- Nine emergency responses to traffic lights completed and three pole lowering for wide loads.
- Testing and tagging was completed for sixteen work areas.
- Eleven electrical repairs to park electrical infrastructure.
- Replacement of solar panels at Freshwater Point boat ramp and lighting repairs at the Harbour boat ramp.

Public Amenities

- Following the Christmas New Year break a significant amount of vandalism of public toilets has been noted. All amenities have been inspected and repairs completed.
- Facia on the Seafortth swimming enclosure amenities were repaired and repainted.

Park Furniture and Playgrounds

- Playground repairs were up for the month due to increased usage over Xmas holidays.
- Guttering and downpipes repaired on picnic shelter in the main street of Finch Hatton.
- Recently installed picnic setting at Centenary Park Walkerston was repaired following vandalism.
- A damaged timber picnic setting was removed from Midge Point Esplanade and a replacement ordered.
- Repairs to paths at Northview Park and Fairmeadow Drive Park are being arranged.
Other work Completed - City Heart, Bluewater Quay and Bluewater Trail

- 17,000sqm of concrete and path cleaned with blower
- 8,000sqm of concrete and path cleaned with high pressure water cleaner
- 24 furniture, fence and bin repairs completed
- 8 bags of rubbish and 16 trolleys removed from river bank
- Reinstated rocks to the edge of the path under the Edmond Casey bridge
- Picnic shelters, furniture and bbq’s cleaned with water blaster in preparation for Christmas

Capital Works - In progress

- Quota Park – Replacement of existing play equipment and construction of solid roofed shade structure. Shade trees are also being planted as part of this project.
- Seaview Park – Replacement of existing play equipment and construction of solid roofed shade structure.
- Sarina Cemetery Rotunda – Construction of new rotunda at Sarina Cemetery.
Capital Works Projects Completed

Mirani Skate Park Shade Structure

Marian Cemetery Rotunda

Anzac Park Marian Shade Structure
Cemeteries

Burials/Ashes in Mackay Region

Administration – Parks Bookings

Park Bookings
Grass Maintenance Activities

Parks Maintenance Activities

Horticulture

Orchid House Visitors

Plants Grown in the Nursery and Planted out by Horticulture Staff:
140mm Plants – 150
Larger Plants – 80
Natural Environment and Marine Beach Activities

Coastcare Volunteer Activities – Delivered in Partnership with Reef Catchments

The final Coastcare event for 2014 was held at Bucasia on Saturday 6th December. Despite heavy overnight rain, 15 volunteers braved the showers to remove weeds and maintain the revegetation area near the Bucasia Caravan Park. Morning tea was served in Seaview Park as a thank you for all the hard work our volunteers have put in over the year.

Natural Environment Plan Implementation

- Blacks Beach Zone C – finalisation of community consultation, public notification, project planning.
- Beach access at Town Beach completed (Cameron Street).
- Weed control work has commenced at Blacks Beach Spit, with one contractor undertaking work in the northern section, and a second contractor starting in the south of the reserve. Interpretive and directional signage has been installed as well as two bench seats.
- A council report has been prepared to enable the fishway co-contribution projects with Reef Catchments.
- Concept design underway for Blackrock Creek fishway.
- A contractor is undertaking weed control at DeMoleyns Lagoon. The Green Army team is also working at an area of this site.

Field Team Activities (Sarina and Mackay Beach Teams and Habitat Restoration Team)

- Fencing was repaired at Finlaysons Point, Town Beach, Far Beach, Harbour Beach, Lamberts Beach, Campwin Beach and Bucasia Beach
- Handrails were installed at Eimeo Beach.
- Walkways were repaired at Cape Hillsborough, Grasstree Beach, Armstrongs Beach, Sarina Beach, Slade Point Reserve and Bucasia Beach.
- Seaforth, McEwens and Haliday Bay swimming enclosures were maintained. Trapped fish and crabs were removed from the McEwens Beach swimming enclosure.
- Weed control was undertaken at Campwin Beach, Sarina Beach, Louisa Creek, Sandfly Creek Environmental Reserve, Eulbertie Reserve, Blacks Beach and Slade Point Reserve.

Environmental Ranger Activities

- **Green waste and general dumping:** Information notices were sent to residents regarding green waste dumping in Sandfly Creek Environmental Reserve (East Gordon St frontage), Makybe Diva Drive, reserve off Pacific Drive Blacks Beach, Acalon Drive and Skiddaw St. Letters of demand sent to properties in Victor Avenue, Chanelle Court and Starboard Circuit. Penalty Infringement Notice ($1,821) issued to a person for dumping household rubbish at Slade Point.
- **Beach access:** Warning notices issued to six cars driving on Shoal Point beach.
- **Illegal Vegetation Clearing:** Information notices/letters of demand sent to four properties regarding tree damage or removal, including one incident at Coral Drive Blacks Beach for damage to foreshore vegetation.
- **Community education:** Provided contributions to articles in Grapevine and Daily Mercury on the rehabilitation and release of Dawn the Green Turtle.

Mackay Natural Environment Centre Activities

- Plants were supplied to McEwens Beach residents to stabilise the sand scrape area
- Plant stock/order database is in development
- The seed raising shed was covered in shade cloth by the Green Army team
Other Projects

- The final Natural Environment Advisory Committee for 2014 was held on Tuesday 16th December. Members received presentations on a proposed Platypus survey to be held at the Botanic Gardens, a Tilapia monitoring program, and the Green Army team.
- A briefing to council was delivered on the petition received regarding the Bucasia Beach Plan.
- Nautilus Park and Lamberts Beach accesses were replaced.
- A new emergency services vehicle access was provided at Far Beach.
- A beach signage audit was carried out and quotes were requested for additional and replacement signs.
- Weed control, including the aquatic weed Hymenachne, was undertaken at Blacks Beach.
- The bush regeneration tender was awarded and contractors advised.
Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

Horticulture

Horticultural works focussed on keeping the living collection alive and healthy during the extensive dry of December, whilst coping with the influx of weeds and grass maintenance once rains commenced in January. Continuation of hand watering under permit persisted due to the extremely dry conditions through most of December and early January. Site wide irrigation review and repairs, exotic water weed spraying, pruning and hedging and plant labelling continued.

Site Works

The appointment of the Infrastructure Maintenance Officer has already made a difference with improved presentation of the gardens and cost saving to Council. Maintenance activities included boardwalk and deck oiling, painting, maintenance of the bespoke Chris Trotter sculpture, seat repairs, pathway repairs and drainage repairs.

Community Engagement

Christmas in the Gardens

December 14 - the annual Christmas in the Gardens was again held on the Tropical Sun Garden Lawn. Lindsay Hains and her musical students were the first group of entertainers, followed by the ever popular Annette Worthington and Karen Bonham. Close to 1000 residents attended – the largest turn out in history, proving the change from Saturday to Sunday evening was a popular choice.

School Holiday Activities

School Holiday activities are run every holiday period for school aged children with 1-2 session per day. Sessions included:

- 'All Wired for Christmas'. Christmas Decorations made by kids from nature and wire.
- 'Microscopic Marvels' - children went for a walk through the MRBG using magnifying glasses, anna-lupes and hand-lenses to get up close views of nature
- Web@BotanicGardens - 39 children discovered many different types of spiders, cocoon of moths and birds in nests in these hidden spots.
Lagoons Gallery Exhibitions

December 3, 2014 to January 18, 2015 - Creative Shots Photo Club members portrayed the theme of their exhibition ‘Power of Nature’. It might be a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis, the surge of incoming waves on rocky shores, a lightning storm, or a newly sprouted seed. Visitors to the exhibition were also encouraged to vote for the image they feel best demonstrates the exhibitions’ theme ‘Power of Nature’.

**Botanic Gardens Website visits**

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**Comments:** The website use saw its typical seasonal fluctuation, however January saw lower visitation than the same period in 2014. A website competition will be devised for the 2015/16 school holiday period to encourage visitation.