



2022-2027 Community Programs Strategy

Message from the Mayor



A community is not a place on a map; it's not the roads, houses and shops; it is not the built environment. People make a community, and people who are connected and engaged will make a thriving community.

Mackay Regional Council Community Programs team is focused on building those connections. Our goal is to enhance the liveability and resilience of our community.

The team works to develop skills within the greater community to allow members to be active participants in creating positive change across our region.

They work with all members of the community on a range of issues, whether they be minor and localised or have community-wide impact.

This strategy highlights how the Community Programs team use the community development process to create positive social and economic change.

It reveals how the team will lead, partner and at times advocate for community initiatives designed to increase social participation, strengthen community connection, addresses community need and improve the liveability of our region.

Our goals are to enhance our community by:

- Providing access to information to support community decision-making processes.
- Building strong and sustainable community connections.
- Ensuring our community is inclusive, with equitable access to services and facilities.

This Community Programs Strategy is a vital steppingstone in council's vision to create the best region for liveability and livelihood.

Mayor Greg Williamson.

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

Mackay Regional Council recognises and respects the cultures and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and seeks to build strong relationships that create harmony between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the broader community in Mackay.

Mackay Regional Council respects the Traditional Custodians of the lands that make up our region, the Yuwi and Widi people. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call our region home.

Our region

Spanning over 7,600 square kilometres, the Mackay region boasts Australia's longest stretch of sub-tropical rainforest, 31 pristine beaches, and 41 unique communities. With the Pioneer Valley, a strong recreational fishing industry and a well-established and thriving agricultural and resource industry, Mackay is positioned to benefit from all the best the coast and land has to offer for its residents, businesses, and visitors.

In this region with endless opportunity, Mackay Regional Council is proud to

collaborate with the community to create an environment where families, individuals and businesses are supported and empowered to thrive. We are committed to creating a safe, healthy, connected, and sustainable community, where opportunities are realised, and lifestyle is second to none.

Our region has a population of 118,723, 32.82% of which are young people between the age of 0 and 25 years. 13.17% of our residents are over the age of 65. Five percent of our community identify as Indigenous.

The Mackay region is home to Australia's largest population of Australian South Sea Islanders and our area thrives culturally due to the rich diversity of cultural groups that reside in the region.

While our region is experiencing a period of growth, influenced by the resources and agricultural sectors, this growth presents challenges for services as they endeavour to meet the social and cultural demands of community.

Our Community Programs Strategy

This strategy aligns with Mackay Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2022 -2027 and its commitments to the community.

The Community Programs Strategy outlines the key focus areas for the Community Programs team that will assist in the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

The focus of the Community Programs team and the core driver of their actions is ensuring that community members have a say in the future of the place they call home.

More broadly, the Community Lifestyle team, encompassing Community Programs, Artspace Mackay and Mackay Regional Council Libraries work to develop a resilient community where strong connections exist between people and place.

As a result of the work undertaken by the Community Lifestyle teams community members will report feeling safe, informed, and having equitable access to the services and facilities they need to fulfil their life choices.

The Community Program's Strategy specifically supports the following themes of Mackay Regional Council's Corporate Plan:



Invest and Work






Live and Visit



Community and Environment

Key initiatives from Mackay Regional Council's Corporate plan that align with the Community Program Strategy include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Olympics 2032 Taskforce▪ Sport facility master planning projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Northern Beaches Community Hub▪ Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail▪ Mirani Community Precinct
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mayor's Domestic Violence Taskforce▪ Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors Suicide Prevention Taskforce▪ Youth Out Loud 1000 (YOL1000) – community youth project▪ Museum Collection Rationalisation Project▪ Integrated Collections Storage Facility



Our **vision**

The vision of the Community Programs team is for our region to be the best for liveability and livelihood.

Our **mission**

Our community has access to information, resources and facilities that foster health and wellbeing, connectivity, vibrancy and inclusivity.

Our **practice**

Our practice will be innovative, collaborative, empowering and agile, with community members at the centre of all that we do. Our process will change to suit the issue or project.



Role of Community Programs **with Local Government**

Community development is a process of supporting community members to identify and take collective action on issues of importance to them. This process empowers community with information, access and support to create stronger, connected and resilient communities.

The Community Programs team use the community development process to create positive social and economic change. The team will lead, partner and advocate for initiatives that increase social participation, strengthen community connection, address community need and improve the region's liveability.

With inherent skills in the community development process the team works across a range of sectors with many touch points into our community. Historically, their focus has been supporting and advocating for vulnerable and at-risk population groups and developing our arts, cultural and sporting sectors. They also work with service providers and agencies to address issues of community safety, crime prevention and mental health. With their skills, knowledge and networks, the team are well positioned to support the community to respond to issues of concern.

Purpose of this **strategy**

Through a series of community engagement activities, including face to face, online sessions and a community survey, we connected with residents, visitors, service providers, not for profit organisations and

clubs to hear what is important to our community. These activities and conversations have informed the development of this strategy and will drive the actions of the team over the 2022-2027 period.

You told us



- opportunities to participate in sport and recreation are important, as they allow you connect socially and maintain physical and mental health
- you value the rich cultural diversity of our region
- our heritage and history are important and informs our future
- your connection to place is important and you want to be consulted and participate in the development of the region
- you want to see more inclusive practice and accessible services and facilities to ensure all members of our community have equal opportunity regardless of their level of ability or circumstance
- that access to information is essential to support your decision making
- feeling, and being, safe in our community is important to you
- you want us to listen and to advocate for change that will improve outcomes for our community
- you want our young people to have the opportunity to develop skills and pursue a wide range of interests
- your local library is a place to connect, build skill and source information
- fostering partnerships that result in innovative solutions to issues in our community are welcomed and encouraged
- you value council's investment in community through a range of funding programs
- you want to learn more about our Indigenous beginnings and our Australian South Sea Islander heritage
- our local artists, arts workers and venues contribute to creating our unique identity and should be supported and encouraged
- volunteering provides social connection and skill development, however many of you are unsure where to start the volunteering journey
- young people want the opportunity to participate in activities and entertainment in spaces that are separate from their home or school environment that is welcoming, inclusive and targeted to them
- young people want to be active civic participants and be part of decision-making processes that impact how they live and interact in the region

Our actions

We will:

- actively participate in the Domestic Violence, Suicide Prevention and Olympics 2032 taskforces
- focus attention on our localities to build connection and resilience
- work with arts and business sectors to retain our creative community who develop product that reflects our region
- facilitate a range of workshops that develop the skills of the community
- advocate for community in the planning and delivery of new infrastructure
- partner with community service organisations to develop innovative solutions to address gaps in service delivery
- partner with community to celebrate and grow our international connection through Sister City programs
- use a range of mechanisms to ensure the community voice is heard
- engage with relevant parties to ensure information, services and facilities are inclusive and accessible
- work with our sport and recreation providers to ensure a range of opportunities are available in our community
- promote volunteer opportunities to enhance community connection and support
- ensure our funding programs address needs and / or create new opportunities within the community
- ensure that the needs of our marginalised, vulnerable and at-risk populations are understood and those with lived experience are included in the development of solutions to address the community's needs
- redevelop our museum assets to enable efficient management to ensure our history and heritage is preserved and reaches its potential
- engage with our Indigenous community to strengthen relationships and support the sharing of cultural heritage
- undertake research and keep up-to-date on issues impacting our community to proactively take appropriate action
- support increased youth engagement in civic decision-making processes.

We recognise that Artspace Mackay and Mackay Regional Council Libraries are key council program partners that also work to support and engage our community. Through co-ordinated collaborative partnerships the teams will deliver this strategy over 2022-2027.



Prioritising **our work**

We will work to build a community that is:

- Safe
- Healthy and Connected
- Inclusive
- Creative
- Cultural



How will we **measure our achievements?**

- through surveys of residents; not for profit organisations, clubs and service providers will report on the strength of their community connection because of our work
- feedback from those participating in our programs indicates increased level of skill and knowledge
- our social media reach into community increases
- the number of people participating in council facilitated sport and recreation programs increases
- organisations report an increase in the number of people taking up volunteer opportunities.

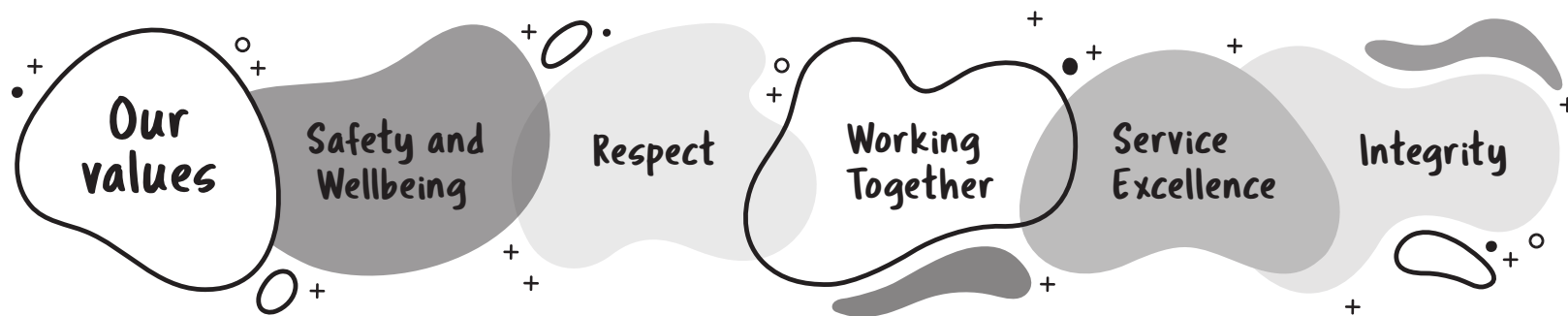
Outcomes of the strategy

- community members have access to information to support their decision-making processes
- community connections are strong and sustainable
- our community is inclusive, and everyone has equitable access to services and facilities
- community is engaged and actively involved in collective action
- the best region for liveability and livelihood.



Our commitment to community in delivering this strategy

In the delivery of this strategy the Community Programs team commit to upholding our values.





Our **action plan**

Whilst the following priorities form the basis of our plan, we recognise that through our work, other issues and opportunities may arise that require our focus. These opportunities will be explored.

Priority 1: **Safe Community**

Focus activity	Practice		
	Lead	Partner	Advocate
Mayor's DV Taskforce		●	●
Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors Suicide Prevention Taskforce		●	●
Develop a Community Safety strategy	●	●	
Facilitate opportunities to relieve housing stress in the region		●	●



Priority 2: **Healthy and Connected Community**

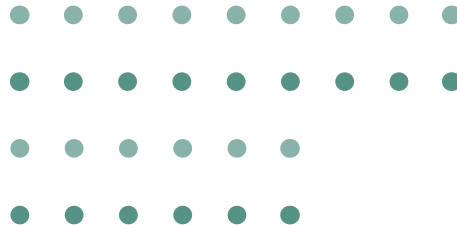
Focus activity	Practice		
	Lead	Partner	Advocate
Plan for 2032 Olympic legacy outcomes	●	●	●
Olympics 2032 Taskforce		●	●
Deliver on the actions of the Sport and Recreation Strategy 2018 - 2028	●	●	●
Deliver Sport and Recreation master plans and management plan projects	●	●	●
Undertake a suite of capacity building and advocacy activities/programs to meet identified skill and knowledge gaps in community	●	●	
Promote our program and the opportunities available to community	●		
Develop the ability of our organisation to lobby and advocate on behalf of the community	●	●	●
Actively engage with community and support initiatives that enhance liveability	●	●	●
Deliver Neighbourhood Centre and Youth Centre programs in conjunction with other tiers of government and local partners	●	●	●
Explore volunteer opportunities to enhance community connection and support	●	●	●





Priority 3: **Inclusive Community**

Focus activity	Practice		
	Lead	Partner	Advocate
Build emergency preparedness, resilience and connection in our localities	●	●	●
Improve access and inclusion for all residents	●	●	●
Research, and implement, tools to measure impact and engagement	●	●	
Actively engage young people	●	●	●
Support and celebrate our diverse populations including LGBTQIA+ and multicultural communities	●	●	
Engage with and learn from our First Nations People	●	●	●
Provide and manage a range of funding opportunities that improve the liveability of residents	●	●	●
Develop an Access and Inclusion Plan	●		
Actively engage our seniors	●	●	●



Priority 4: **Creative Community**

Focus activity	Practice		
	Lead	Partner	Advocate
Prepare an Arts and Culture strategy 2022-2026	•		
Administer the Regional Arts Development Fund in partnership with Arts Qld	•	•	•
Develop the capacity of the creative community	•	•	•

Priority 5: **Cultural Community**

Focus activity	Practice		
	Lead	Partner	Advocate
Develop a Cultural and Heritage strategy	•		
Undertake a collection rationalisation project of the museum collection and develop an accessible catalogue	•		
Plan for the construction of an Integrated Collections Storage Facility to accommodate the Museum, Artspace, Library and corporate records collections	•	•	
Manage the museum assets and collection to best practice standards	•		
Foster opportunities to strengthen Sister City programs	•	•	•





2022-2027 **Community Programs Strategy**

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