

STATE OF OUR REGION

2020

Supporting our community



Our region.
Healthy.
Smart.
Creative.



Mayor
Mark Jamieson

Mayor's message

As we look back at 2020, there's no denying there have been challenges. What is most inspiring however, is the way in which our community came together, acted in the best interests of each other and united to face those challenges.

While the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been considerable and will continue to be felt for some time, it's important we reflect and acknowledge the milestones and achievements, whether they be big or small, during this year. 2020 is a year that will always be remembered. If this year has taught us anything, it's that connectivity is vital to strengthening and supporting our community.

Community connectivity has been a number one priority for our Council – focused on keeping our residents in touch with vital information and services and indeed, with each other. We have also set a clear path to assist local businesses get back on their feet as the COVID-19 restrictions ease and achieved some significant milestones in our efforts to preserve our natural environment and the liveability of our region – flip over the page to read more.

The 2020 State of our Region report is a reflection of all that has occurred this year and our progress – in these unprecedented times – as a region.

Our Council maintains an unwavering focus on facilitating the social and economic recovery of our region, which accords with our role as guardians of the wellbeing of our community.

After all, that is what a healthy, smart, creative region does.



CEO
Emma Thomas

CEO's message

My appointment to Sunshine Coast Council CEO still seems very fresh and I have been warmly welcomed since I started in my new role in November last year.

There are many reasons why I am passionate about being a part of this team and calling the Sunshine Coast home. This is the most liveable place on the planet, but it's so much more than that.

I am impressed with the progressive culture and aspirations of our community, one which engages in discussions on our environment and wanting to make sure it is maintained and protected so that the liveability we all love is there for the future.

I am also impressed by how this Council is driving the economy, with an understanding of the big picture – good health, good education, balanced with entrepreneurial opportunities. A strong economy will help create jobs so families can work here on the Sunshine Coast.

In 2021 we will focus on giving our diverse community the ability to put forward their ideas so we all learn from each other. The balance of voices – people from different backgrounds, different ages, young people, new people, those who have lived here for a long time and immigrants to Australia – is important to how our Council delivers its services to our community.

I am looking forward to embracing our region and being part of a team recognised for caring for its community and helping Council bring ideas together, to allow our community and our Council to thrive.

Your council's COVID-19 RESPONSE for 2020

\$0 rates increase for the majority of ratepayers, through a **\$35 COVID rates rebate** on residential and commercial properties and no increase to environment, transport and heritage levies for July 2020 rates notice.

Supported innovation at Kawana Community Hall which transformed into a personal protective equipment pop-up factory, **helping a local business** produce masks for health professionals.

Our **\$287 million capital works program** is playing a critical role, helping our residents and local businesses get back on their feet, keeping people employed and providing better facilities and infrastructure for our community this financial year.

Our community kept safer by providing **1762 additional** cleaning services.

Council's Economic Resurgence Plan was developed and released to **fast track the region's economic recovery.**

#CovidKindness gained 28,000 hashtag mentions and more than 201 million views globally.

Online learning opportunities provided through our libraries and coastal discovery van.

\$1.86 million COVID-19 community response grants awarded to community groups in urgent financial need and to support them as they recover from the pandemic impacts.

Libraries' Click and Collect service was taken up by **3410 users** and home deliveries were made available to our most vulnerable.

2020 — what a year it has been for our Sunshine Coast



Our community sure loves reading. **Our libraries** received **1.4 million visitors** who borrowed **1.8 million** items during 2020.



We celebrated Caloundra Regional Gallery's 20th anniversary.



Hinterland residents can't get enough of Maleny Library's new look with more than **116,800 people visiting**.



Our community has continued to enjoy more than 1145 parks and 350 playgrounds across the Sunshine Coast.



There have been some great sporting highlights with our Sunshine Coast Lightning netball team making the **semi-finals for the fourth year**.



Footy fans couldn't get enough of **Sunshine Coast Stadium**, which hosted its first **Women's State of Origin** game. We were on the national stage with NRL premiership winners, **Melbourne Storm**, playing six matches at its Sunshine Coast Stadium home base.



"Support local" is our motto. Council spent **\$268 million** with our local suppliers in 2020.



More than **\$5 million** was awarded to **over 900 grants for community projects**, events and partnerships which provided direct benefits to our region.



We broke new ground with **Sunshine Coast City Hall** under construction and the first commercial office building nearing completion in Maroochydore City Centre.



About **22,300 people** enjoyed an online experience supporting local arts for the reimagined **Horizon Festival 2020**.



The Sunshine Coast Design Book won **two national awards and one state award** for helping to guide the delivery of buildings, streets and spaces that embody the look and feel of our Sunshine Coast.



We are proud to support **9118 hectares of habitat** managed for conservation under our Land for Wildlife Program.



Our region's native vegetation increased to **124,872 hectares**, representing 55 per cent of our local government area. This is a great achievement for a rapidly growing community like the Sunshine Coast.



Great progress has been made to secure funding for the **\$68 million**, Stage 1 expansion of the Sunshine Coast Stadium, with the Queensland Government committing the \$20 million Council sought in the lead-up to the recent State election.



Our community assisted more than **300 individuals** and families experiencing homelessness by transforming the **Sunshine Coast Stadium** into a temporary Community Hub during the pandemic.



We are taking the hassle out of parking with the new \$23.5 million ParkNGo Mooloolaba Central completed in December.



We officially opened our region's new **international standard runway in June**, providing a gateway to the Sunshine Coast from a wide range of Australian and international locations, as well as enabling export opportunities.



AFL and netball facilities have a new lease on life with a **\$1.9 million upgrade** at Maroochydore Multi Sports Complex.



Our beaches are summer-ready with a **\$5.5 million investment in lifeguard services** across the region, plus new tower and lifeguard services for Bokarina Beach.



Sunshine Coast **Tennis Centre** in Caloundra is making a "racquet" following its **\$2.1 million upgrade** to courts and facilities.



A landmark agreement between Sunshine Coast Council, SunCentral Maroochydore Pty Ltd and Walker Corporation was signed, which will see Walker Corporation invest **\$2.5 billion** into the **Maroochydore City Centre** over the life of the project.



Council unanimously endorsed a community engagement framework for the **Sunshine Coast Mass Transit project**.



SUNSHINE COAST
TOP7
INTELLIGENT
COMMUNITY
2020

We continue to strengthen our region's reputation on the world stage with the announcement of the Sunshine Coast as a **global Top7 Intelligent Community** for the second successive year.



Works have begun on the \$2.65 million Nambour Splash Park.



More land was incorporated into public ownership in the region's **Blue Heart**, an Australian-first partnership dedicated to conservation, rehabilitated waterways plus more.



Sunshine Coast Stadium shines bright with a \$2.8 million lighting upgrade.



We've made more progress with **\$7.6 million** invested in Stage 1B of Mooloolaba transport corridor.



The **Mooloolaba Foreshore** revitalisation project is underway and will provide more parkland for you.



Happy campers enjoyed Mooloolaba with the completion of our **\$3.8 million upgrade to Mooloolaba Holiday Park** and a \$620,000 upgrade to the Mudjimba Beach Holiday Park.



We welcomed **Sir Elton John** to the Coast for the Farewell Yellow Brick Road Tour which attracted more than **31,000 people**, including **14,000 visitors** from outside our region.

Looking forward to 2021

1 Join The Movement

Our popular Healthy Sunshine Coast program will be back in early 2021 with free and low-cost activities being held across our local community. Activities will be suitable for all ages and fitness levels. [Will you choose to get active?](#)

2 Sunshine Coast Heritage Plan 2021-2031

We will deliver [The Sunshine Coast Heritage Plan 2021-2031](#) providing Council with a framework to guide the identification, protection, conservation and management of the region's heritage.



3 Sunshine Coast Art Prize 2021

The renowned Sunshine Coast Art Prize is one of the most dynamic and prestigious visual arts awards in Australia. The diverse range of 40 works by established and emerging artists from across the country will be showcased in an exhibition at Caloundra Regional Gallery from [27 August to 10 October 2021](#).

4 Sunshine Coast Mass Transit System

Momentum continues for a mass transit solution to address our public transport needs now and well into the future. [Residents can provide input early in 2021](#) on the proposed mass transit system as well as land use options to help us manage growth along the coastal corridor.



5 Discover 200 FREE adventures on your doorstep

Explore our region's great outdoors with 200 (and growing!) **FREE** walking, cycling, paddling and riding trails, covering all tastes and levels at Adventure Sunshine Coast! Visit adventure.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au today and find your next adventure.

6 Hinterland connections

[Kenilworth Community Transport Service](#) provides residents living within a 6.5km radius of the Kenilworth Post Office transport to Nambour, Maleny, Mapleton, Eumundi and Yandina for a flat fee of \$8 one-way or return. Residents in neighbouring Kenilworth localities, including Belli Park, Cambronn, Conondale, Coolabine, Eerwah Vale, Gheerulla, Kidaman Creek and Obi Obi can also use the service, which now includes trips to the Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

7 Immerse yourself at Horizon Festival

Enjoy the Sunshine Coast's leading contemporary arts festival, running region-wide from [27 August to 5 September](#). There'll be more than 100 events in music, visual art, theatre, dance, words and ideas, comedy and workshops, all set against the spectacular backdrop of the Sunshine Coast.



8 NAIDOC 2021: Culture Remembered; Revitalised; Reactive

Visit [Caloundra Regional Gallery 24 June to 15 August 2021](#) as we celebrate First Nations – stories, songs, dance and artworks reflecting the past, current and future of the oldest continuing culture in the world. In association with Sunshine Coast Council's Cultural Heritage Services.

9 Lift your mood and your life

The Lift Project Sunshine Coast is a free online wellbeing program available for all Sunshine Coast residents. Round three kicks off in February and for 10 weeks you'll receive practical tips to boost your mental and physical wellbeing.



10 Preparing for climate change

We'll finalise our [Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy](#), to assist the Sunshine Coast get prepared for the impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels, storm tides and erosion.

11 Blue Heart

We'll continue to work with our partners – the Department of Environment and Science and Unitywater – to progress our region-shaping project – the Blue Heart, an area of more than **5000 hectares** within the Maroochy River Catchment. It's an area where effective land and water management is demonstrating environmental, social and economic outcomes.



12 Your chance to Create Caloundra

We'll be asking you what you think about a vibrant new [Community and Creative Hub in Caloundra](#) – a place where arts, community and creativity can come alive. The proposed hub will create a community precinct linking The Events Centre, new district library, Caloundra Regional Gallery and a new town square through to Bulcock Beach. Have we got it right? You can have your say on the second phase of Community Engagement in early 2021.

13 Streetscape improvements for Eumundi

The Eumundi community has provided feedback on what they love and what can be done to further enhance their main street, Memorial Drive. Valuable knowledge and ideas shared through the community consultation period will inform the draft streetscape design which will be presented in early 2021 so locals can provide further feedback on the streetscape's look and feel.



14 Fresh courts for Coolum

Enjoy a hit of tennis at the upgraded Coolum Sporting Complex in 2021. Four tennis courts are being replaced with premium acrylic concrete courts, complemented by new fencing and nets. The upgrade is supported by the Queensland Government's Works for Queensland program and expected to be complete by March (weather permitting).

[More information on these initiatives is available at sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](#)

Local business support

Sunshine Coast Council offers a range of COVID-19 local business support including:

- industry resources
- government support programs
- mental health programs
- tips for businesses
- resources for business recovery.

Together, we can build a more connected, inclusive and resilient community.

The B-Well and Prosper online portal allows small businesses with less than 20 staff to access a wealth of free information across all areas of small business and wellbeing.

Join the B-Well and Prosper community at:
bwell.mindstar.com.au/b-wellsignup



Our region.
Healthy.
Smart.
Creative.

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