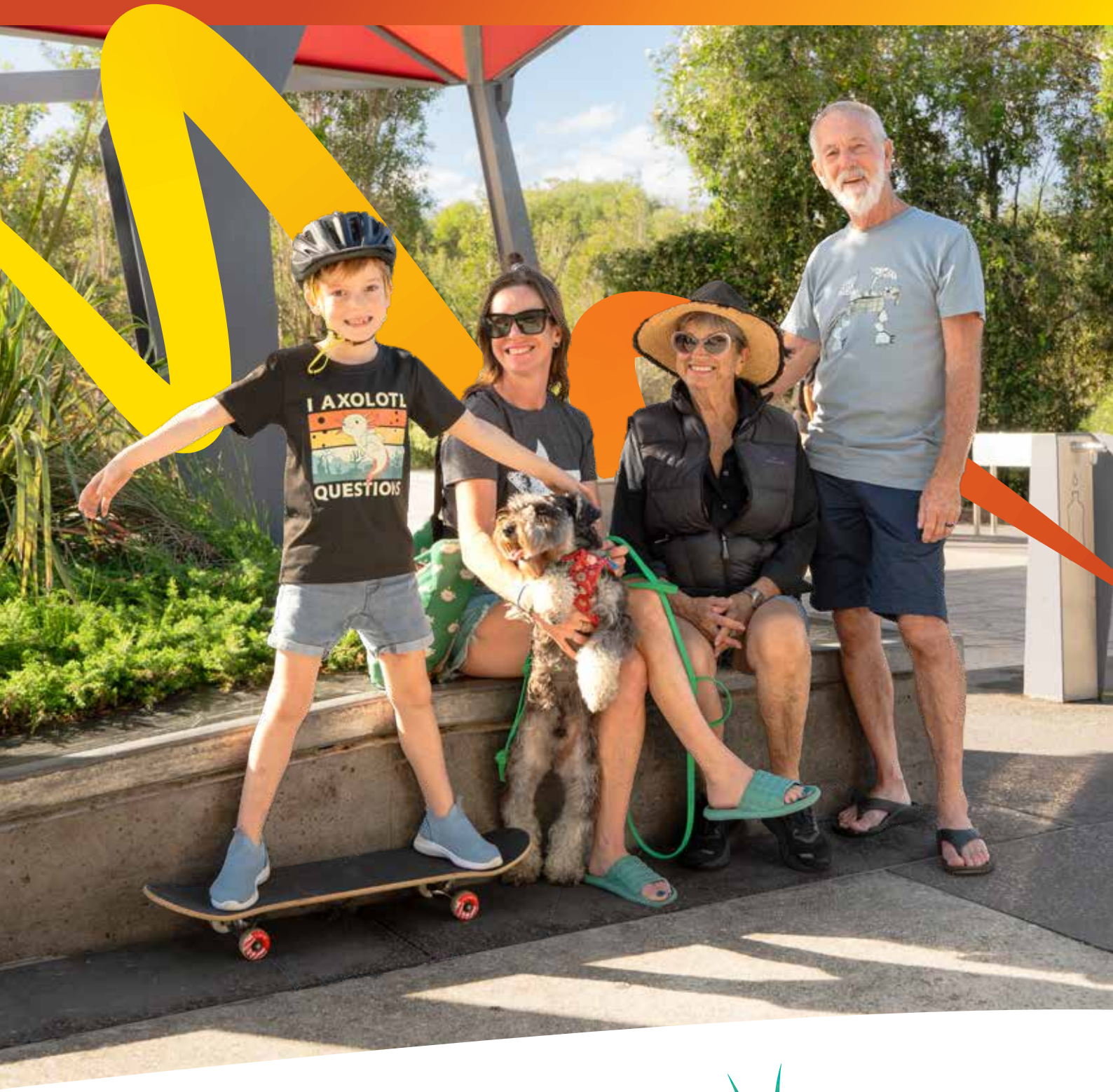
Sunshine Coast

Community Strategy 2019-2041

2024 Refresh and Action Plan 2024-2029



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Acknowledgements

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Reference document

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Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041, 2024 Refresh and Action Plan 2024-2029

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Traditional Acknowledgement

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Sunshine Coast Country, home of the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples, the Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

We recognise that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. The Traditional Custodians' unique values, and ancient and enduring cultures, deepen and enrich the life of our community.

We commit to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians and the broader First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) communities to support self-determination through economic and community development.

Truth telling is a significant part of our journey. We are committed to better understanding the collective histories of the Sunshine Coast and the experiences of First Nations peoples. Legacy issues resulting from colonisation are still experienced by Traditional Custodians and First Nations peoples.

We recognise our shared history and will continue to work in partnership to provide a foundation for building a shared future with the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples.

We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the important role First Nations peoples continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Together, we are all stronger.

Acknowledgement of contributors

Council would like to recognise and thank all contributors involved in the development of the Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041 as well as our community and partners who work with us to contribute to a thriving Sunshine Coast region. Council looks forward to working collaboratively to strengthen the fabric and vitality of our communities. Together we can build a more connected and inclusive community – a strong community for all.

Image: *Dawn Awakening*, Horizon Festival 2022. Photo: Nic Morley.

Contents

Vision **5**

Goal **7**

One vision – three strategies **9**

Our global commitment **11**

1. About the Sunshine Coast **13**

1.1 Snapshot of our community 13
1.2 Drivers of change 15

2. About the Community Strategy **19**

2.1 Purpose 19
2.2 How the Community Strategy was developed. 19
2.3 Community views 20
2.4 Role of Council 20
2.5 Council implementation 20
2.6 Measuring impact 21

3. Principles and methods **23**

3.1 Principles 23
3.2 Methods 23

4. Outcomes **25**

Topic 1.1 Health and wellbeing 27
Topic 2.1 Community places and spaces 31
Topic 2.2 Transport 35
Topic 2.3 Housing and homelessness support ..39
Topic 3.1 Inclusion 43
Topic 3.2 Volunteering 47
Topic 3.3 Community engagement..... 51
Topic 4.1 Community connection and resilience.... 55
Topic 4.2 Community safety 61
Topic 5.1 Arts, heritage and First Nations culture..... 65

5. Action Plan 2024-2029 ..... **69**

VISION

Vision

Together we thrive

The Sunshine Coast community thrives through connection with people, places and spaces and staying true to our values as a welcoming, caring and vibrant community, with opportunities to participate for all.

In 2041:

We are a kind, caring community living sustainably within our Sunshine Coast Biosphere. At the heart of our communities are our people, who come together and look after each other. There is a strong sense of belonging and community spirit across our diverse coastal, hinterland and rural communities.

We respect, value and celebrate the culture of our First Nations people. We understand and acknowledge the enduring connection to Country of the Traditional Custodians – the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples – and the contribution of the broader First Nations community.

Our community is as healthy as possible with good physical and mental health. We practise healthy lifestyles and limit risky behaviours that impact long-term health. We value and care for our environment and connect with nature to sustain and enhance our health and wellbeing.

We all have multiple fulfilling connections with others, contributing to our health and wellbeing and our sense of connection, belonging and inclusion within our local community. We are less likely to feel lonely and we can draw on support from others when we need it.

We value and celebrate diversity, in all its forms. We respect people who are different to ourselves. We are interested to learn about our different and shared experiences, and we are not afraid to talk about what makes us unique.

New residents to the Sunshine Coast are welcomed into our local community by friendly neighbours. They meet new people easily and are quickly integrated into community networks and activities. They make new friends and can participate fully in community life soon after moving in.

Everyone has equitable opportunities to participate. Prejudice, discrimination and attitudinal or environmental barriers that limit potential are removed.

We all have the capacity and willingness to actively contribute to our community. We come together to proactively identify priorities, learn from others and take collective action.

Our community is safe, with low levels of crime. Domestic and family violence is not tolerated. We also feel safe. This feeling of safety is supported through a sense of connection to others and the amenity of the built and natural environment.

Community places and spaces are inclusive and support our community to come together to connect, learn, share and collaborate. They also support our health and wellbeing.

Our transport network supports community connection and healthy lifestyles. We can get around with ease in ways that are affordable, sustainable and convenient.

Housing is suited to the needs of our community and there are affordable options for everyone. Rates of homelessness are low. People experiencing homelessness are treated with dignity and compassion.

We are prepared and resilient to the effects of climate change, as well as other shocks and stressors that may impact our communities. We maximise our resilience through building strong connections with others and preparing ourselves for different possibilities. We take personal responsibility for our own safety and resilience, and for those around us, as much as we can.

We value our shared heritage and the individual heritage of the people who make up our community. We are creative, with world-class art, music and leisure experiences that showcase our rich culture and heritage.

We all have a vested interest and personal responsibility to contribute to the Sunshine Coast that we want to see in 2041.

GOAL

Goal

A strong community

A strong community is connected, everyone is included and treated with respect, and opportunities are available for all.

01 Healthy, active communities

Information, services and programs support physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Topics

1.1 Health and wellbeing

02 Vibrant communities

Community places and spaces, transport and housing provide the fundamental building blocks for a vibrant community.

Topics

2.1 Community places and spaces
2.2 Transport
2.3 Housing and homelessness support

03 Inclusive communities

Opportunities are available for everyone to participate and be involved.

Topics

3.1 Inclusion
3.2 Volunteering
3.3 Community engagement

04 Connected, resilient communities

Communities are connected, resilient and safe where people work collaboratively to achieve shared goals.

Topics

4.1 Community connection and resilience
4.2 Community safety

05 Creative, innovative communities

Creativity, heritage and First Nations culture are sources of connection, learning and pride.

Topics

5.1 Arts, heritage and First Nations culture

One vision – three strategies

Council's vision is supported by three long-term strategies that have been developed in consultation with our community. These regional strategies collectively provide the strategic framework and desired outcomes for Council to work collaboratively across our community, with business and other tiers of government to advance our vision as Australia's most sustainable region.

To achieve the vision for the region, it is critical to progress our community, environment and economic objectives, understanding that all three are integrated and critical to the success and overall sustainability and liveability of our region.

Strategic alignment

Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041

The Sunshine Coast Community Strategy provides the strategic pathways towards a future where together we thrive. We thrive through connection with people, places and spaces and where we stay true to our values as a welcoming, caring and vibrant community, with opportunities for all to participate.

Environment and Liveability Strategy 2023

The Environment and Liveability Strategy provides strategic pathways to guide growth and shape the Sunshine Coast for future generations to 2041. It focuses on the natural environment and how it can be preserved and enhanced, as well as the liveability of the region. It enables a good quality of life for all residents, while supporting a strong economy in an accessible and well-connected built environment.

Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013-2033

The Regional Economic Development Strategy provides the strategic pathways to transition into a regional economy that is innovative, adaptive, resilient and climate ready. It encourages a more sustainable and equitable future economy, attracting investment and supporting local businesses to innovate, grow and enable diverse employment opportunities.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

As we advance our vision as Australia's most sustainable region – Healthy. Smart. Creative. the environmental, social, cultural and economic activities across the region must be carefully balanced to ensure we advance our vision sustainably.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) for peace, prosperity, people and planet provide a comprehensive and internationally recognised framework for us to collectively align the way we each live, work, learn and play every day – and form an important foundation of the performance measurement framework of our Biosphere.

Council is demonstrating regional leadership by committing to embed the UNSDGs in our strategies, plans and associated progress reporting. Each Corporate Plan goal identifies how it contributes to the UNSDGs and, in doing so, assists to progress our Sunshine Coast Biosphere aim and objectives.

Photo: Nic Morley.

Our global commitment

This strategy embeds the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) into its actions. The UNSDGs for peace, prosperity, people and planet provide a comprehensive and internationally recognised framework to collectively align the way we each live, work, learn and play every day. Specific UNSDGs (as highlighted) have been embedded into the Community Strategy to ensure alignment and provide for a sustainable future.

UNSDG 1 – The strategy seeks to contribute to poverty reduction through collective community and government action in topic areas such as community places and spaces, housing and homelessness support, transport and inclusion.

UNSDG 2 + 3 – The strategy identifies specific outcomes and actions related to food security, health and wellbeing, including prioritising both physical and mental health. The strategy also recognises the importance of other topic areas, such as community connection, safety, transport, inclusion and volunteering, that influence our health and wellbeing.

UNSDG 4, 5 + 10 – Inclusion and equity are core principles in the strategy and flow through all of the topic areas covered. Outcomes and actions related specifically to inclusion are outlined in the inclusion topic.

UNSDG 8 + 9 – The strategy recognises that inclusive opportunities for training and employment provide personal, community, business and economic benefits. It also acknowledges that the creative arts, heritage and First Nations culture can support both livelihoods and cultural vitality.

UNSDG 11 – The strategy includes outcomes and actions related to transport, community places and spaces, and housing and homelessness that contribute to an inclusive, safe and resilient region for all.

UNSDG 9 + 13 – The strategy includes an emphasis on improving the resilience of our communities. Increasing our adaptive capacity to prepare and respond to increasing climate risks is an important part of community resilience. The strategy also prioritises community connections, which improve our resilience to a multitude of shocks and stressors.

UNSDG 16 – The strategy includes outcomes and actions related to community safety as well as community engagement to help promote inclusive participation in decision-making.

UNSDG 17 – Collaboration and working in partnership with others are core principles of the implementation of the strategy.

SUNSHINE COAST
BIOSPHERE

In June 2022, our Sunshine Coast local government area was recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a biosphere reserve – where responsible development and people living sustainably sit alongside active conservation.

Our region has joined a world-wide network of biosphere reserves to balance the environmental, social, cultural and economic needs of today, without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Our region's international recognition as a special place where people are living, working, learning and playing sustainably highlights the values of our region that we are seeking to protect and enhance, brings new opportunities and a range of possible benefits to our natural environment, community, lifestyle and economy.

Being recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and maintaining this credential is our region's commitment to create a positive legacy for future generations. Every resident, visitor, business and government entity has a key role to play in maintaining and enhancing the Sunshine Coast Biosphere reserve for our children, grandchildren and all those who will enjoy the prosperity, beauty and liveability of our region into the future.

ABOUT THE SUNSHINE COAST

1.1 Snapshot of our community

Population (2023) 365,942

The Sunshine Coast has experienced an average annual growth rate of **2.6%** over the past ten years (2013-2023). This is stronger growth than the Queensland average, at **1.6%**.

Average age 43 years

The Sunshine Coast has a higher median age compared to Queensland (at 38 years). **21.7%** of the population is 65 years and over, compared to **17%** in Queensland.

Future population (2041) >500,000

Future population growth is expected to be strong, increasing to more than **500,000** residents in 2041. Population ageing will continue with the median age increasing to 46 years, and **26.9%** of residents being 65 years and over.

First Nations People 8331

2.4% of our population are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, compared to **4.6%** in Queensland. The number of residents who identified as First Nations people increased by **2615** people between 2016 and 2021.

Residents born overseas 70,740

20.7% of Sunshine Coast residents were born overseas, compared to **22.7%** for Queensland. **6.1%** of residents speak a language other than English at home and **3.2%** follow a non-Christian religion.

Couples without children 30.2%

30.2% of households are couples without children, compared to **26.4%** for Queensland. **22.2%** of households are people living alone, and this proportion is expected to increase to **24.2%** in 2041. **10.5%** of households are one parent families.

Note: Statistics at 2021, unless otherwise noted.

Average weekly household income $1595

The median weekly income for Sunshine Coast households was around **5%** lower than for Queensland ($1595 compared to $1675). **22.1%** of households earned less than **$800** per week.

Severe socio-economic disadvantage 20,241

Overall, the Sunshine Coast has low levels of disadvantage. However, around **20,000** residents live in neighbourhoods considered to be severely disadvantaged (bottom 20% of Australian population).

People experiencing homelessness 1205

Estimates of people experiencing homelessness increased by around **50%** between 2016 and 2021. Homelessness rates are lower for the Sunshine Coast than for Queensland (**35/10,000 population**, compared to 43/10,000 for Queensland).

People with severe disability 21,211

6.2% of our residents need assistance with core activities, compared to **6.0%** for Queensland. **33,328** residents **(11.8%)** are carers for someone with a disability or long term illness. This is up from **11.1%** in 2016.

Unemployment rate 4.4%

Low unemployment rate of **4.4%** in 2021 (**5.4%** for Queensland), but represents 7426 residents looking for work. Unemployment for young people (15-24 years) was higher at **8.9%**, compared to **11.1%** for Queensland.

Volunteering rate 15.7%

15.7% of residents spent time volunteering in 2021, compared with **14.1%** for Queensland. This was a significant decline from a volunteering rate of **20.7%** in 2016.

1.2 Drivers of change

Over the next 20 years the Sunshine Coast community will experience many challenges and opportunities. The Community Strategy has been shaped by considering the drivers of change across the six domains below.

Population

The Sunshine Coast community is growing and is expected to continue growing strongly to 2041. The proportion of older people in our community is also growing with the number of residents 75 years and older expected to more than double to 77,000 people in 2041.

This population growth and change will require continued focus on:

- **Healthy ageing:** More older people in our community will require a renewed focus on healthy ageing, both in terms of our physical and mental health, as well as the facilities, services and activities needed for support.
- **Maintaining our cohesive community:** With new residents moving to the region, we need to continue our efforts to be welcoming and inclusive. Strengthening our cohesive community will encourage a sense of belonging for new residents and contribute to community connection and resilience.
- **Maintaining liveability and connectivity:** Population growth will require new investment in facilities, services and activities to maintain levels of liveability and connectivity. We will also need to plan for population change that may impact service demands.
- **Housing our growing population:** Population growth and change may create availability and affordability challenges over the next 20 years. This is a complex issue to resolve and requires effort from all levels of government, but there are things we can do as a community to support people to find and maintain stable accommodation.

Population growth and change will bring new experiences, ideas and perspectives to the Sunshine Coast and drive our capacity to address new challenges and opportunities.

Community

The Sunshine Coast is a caring and safe community, however some residents are disconnected, isolated or excluded. About 15% of Sunshine Coast residents have two or fewer close friends, which impacts their quality of life. Residents continue to experience discrimination and other barriers to participation.

Community connection is essential to our health and our individual and collective resilience. It is also fundamental to addressing many of the challenges faced by our community and taking advantage of available opportunities. Residents identified several ongoing priorities we need to work on to strengthen our community, these include mental health, isolation, First Nations reconciliation, volunteer participation, community engagement, inclusion and community resilience. We are also managing challenges such as the rising cost of living, population growth, change in our urban and rural areas and the climate emergency.

Community connection and the elements needed to foster community connection such as trust and inclusion, will help us address many of our current and future challenges.

The community sector also facilitates connection and resilience and is an important partner in achieving our collective priorities.

Climate

More frequent and significant disaster events are likely on the Sunshine Coast due to climate change. The number of days per year with extreme heat is increasing, sea levels are slowly rising and we will also experience more intense periods of heavy rain and storm events. Higher costs to insure, maintain and repair property will impact our community, as well as impacts to health such as emerging diseases and heat-related illnesses. Some residents, particularly young people, also feel anxious or distressed about global climate change.

We need to continue our focus on preparedness and resilience to adapt to changing conditions and return to normal quickly after disaster events. And more than just return to normal, we need to progressively improve our behaviours, resilience and adaptive capacity, so that we can prepare for increasing risks, new challenges and ongoing change.

Understanding our risks and taking individual responsibility for our own preparedness are important elements of community resilience. We can also build our network of community connections to enable sharing of resources, knowledge and support systems. Our community is more resilient when we are all connected to a network of family, friends, neighbours and organisations that we can call on when we need help or when we can provide assistance. As a community we can meet the challenges of a warming climate.

Environment

Our environment supports our health, lifestyle and sense of belonging. Productive soils, clean air and clean water are fundamental to our health. Access to nature contributes to our physical and mental health, including through the physical activities we undertake outdoors and through the benefits of relaxation and mindfulness. Aspects of our regional and local environment are also part of our sense of place and identity as Sunshine Coast residents. For some people, connection to the environment forms a fundamental part of their values, beliefs, culture and identity.

Climate change, urban expansion, habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive species and community access are impacting our local environment, including biodiversity and the functioning of our ecosystems. Our personal choices also have a significant impact on our local and global environment, including our waste, energy use and how we get around.

Increasing our use of public transport, riding and walking can help reduce our environmental impact. A more consolidated urban form and further investment in transport infrastructure can support this shift to active transport (riding and walking) and passenger transport (public transport, taxis, rideshare, etc.), however this will take time to be delivered. We can reduce our use of private vehicles now by combining trips, using online services, carpooling or moving closer to work to reduce our impact on the environment.

Our local and global environment is important for our physical and mental health, our lifestyle and our sense of place and identity. We can each take individual and collective action to reduce our environmental impact and ensure the sustainability of our region for future generations.

Technology

Artificial intelligence, self-driving cars, remote service delivery and other technological changes will continue to shape the way we live and work over the next 20 years.

For many residents, technology has increased the accessibility and convenience of services and has contributed to growing community connection. However, others are struggling to keep up, creating a 'digital divide'. People who do not use new technologies can be increasingly isolated from information, connection and opportunities to participate. Some new technologies can also contribute to feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, distraction and anxiety, particularly for young people.

New technologies can provide significant opportunities to grow a stronger Sunshine Coast community, however there are also challenges. Ensuring there are opportunities for everyone to participate and continuing to value and facilitate personal and group interactions is vital for inclusion and connection.

Economy

A strong and diversified Sunshine Coast economy is imperative to achieving a strong community, particularly at this time when housing affordability and cost of living are creating challenges for residents. It is crucial that the local economy continues to generate local, well-paid jobs that are available to all within our community as our region grows.

Having well-paid employment increases our ability to meet our own needs and the needs of our families. A higher income can be used to pay for healthier food, a variety of healthy activities and health care. Having a steady income also reduces stress, which can have both mental and physical health impacts. Having a job close to home also reduces time spent commuting to and from work, and therefore contributes to our quality of life.

A range of broad economic conditions influences employment, however physical, attitudinal and organisational barriers continue to restrict access to employment for some residents. Discrimination is one significant barrier that we can overcome as a community to broaden employment access.

All businesses, and particularly social enterprise and the impact sector, can positively contribute to our most pressing community priorities and are important partners in building strong and thriving communities.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

2. About the Community Strategy

2.1 Purpose

The Community Strategy provides a long-term framework outlining how the Sunshine Coast community and Council will work together to advance our shared goal of a strong community through to 2041. The strategy outlines what Council will (and can) do as a local government and how it will go about doing it.

The Community Strategy sets out a vision, goal and five outcomes we want to achieve. It also outlines principles and methods for how we will work together to achieve the goal of a strong community.

The 2024 refresh of the Community Strategy advances the previous work undertaken by Council and our community partners over the past decade. It builds on the strong foundation created by the Social Strategy (2015) and first Community Strategy (2019 edition).

2.2 How the Community Strategy was developed

The Community Strategy was developed with extensive community input. Those who contributed did so with enthusiasm, wisdom and great ideas. Council asked residents what a strong community means to them, and the vision, goals and priorities in this strategy are shaped around this input.

Community input was gathered through:

- Online and face-to-face surveys
- Stakeholder forums
- Focus groups and key sector networks
- Engagement with schools
- Pop-ups stalls
- Social media
- Internal and external stakeholder advisory group meetings.

Thousands of Sunshine Coast residents provided input and ideas that have shaped the Community Strategy, both for the original 2019 version and again for this 2024 refresh.

Diverse community voices were vital to ensuring this strategy reflects our collective aspirations for the Sunshine Coast.

Further to this, significant research into best-practice community development initiatives and analysis of trends and forecasts have informed the development of the Community Strategy.

2.3 Community views

Community priorities in 2023/24 include:

- Housing and homelessness support
- Cost of living pressure
- Community places and spaces
- Transport.

As well as:

- Activities and facilities for young people
- Further recognition of First Nations people
- Inclusion of diversity, in all its forms
- Personal and community connection.

Our community values:

- Connection to each other and to our community
- Inclusion through embracing diversity and equity
- Collaboration
- Liveability and sustainability, including a balance between our natural and built environment.

Our community wants Council to:

- Advocate to and work with other levels of government to improve the transport network, housing affordability and homelessness support
- Increase access to health and wellbeing programs, information and infrastructure
- Support the activation of our places and spaces, and more events and activities for people of all ages and abilities to participate and connect
- Support an inclusive, caring community that is connected, looks after each other and values diversity
- Be more visible in our community and provide a diversity of ways to engage that enables people to influence matters that impact them.

2.4 Role of Council

Council, as the level of government closest to our community, plays an important role in supporting a strong community. Council contributes to a strong community by:

- Providing inclusive places and spaces for people to connect and participate
- Delivering and maintaining local transport networks that allow people to get around and connect with others and services
- Setting the requirements for development that support new housing and service delivery and limit exposure to risks
- Advocating for investment and legislative changes from other levels of government for health and emergency services, major roads, public transport, schools and universities, etc.
- Partnering with others to provide programs and services to help people connect, build their capacity to respond to local issues, keep informed and improve their wellbeing
- Engaging with our community to understand local priorities and seeking to achieve suitable outcomes together
- Providing information and resources to help people access support, activities and connection.

Council cannot achieve the goal of a strong community alone. We all need to take an active role, including individuals, households, community groups and associations, place-based communities, interest-based communities, community-sector organisations, businesses and government agencies.

We all have a role to play and personal responsibility to build a strong Sunshine Coast community together.

2.5 Council implementation

Council will contribute to achieving the outcomes of the Community Strategy through the implementation of rolling five-year action plans, which will in turn guide Council's annual operational planning.

Challenges and opportunities in our community will inevitably shift and change over time. For this reason, the Community Strategy must be dynamic and versatile, reflecting community priorities as they evolve. Council will therefore review the Community Strategy every five years so that it remains current and can achieve its stated purpose.

2.6 Measuring impact

We will use the following measures to track progress towards our shared goal of a strong community. We all have responsibility for contributing to the outcomes we want to see in our community and we will need to work together to achieve these targets.

Target	Baseline	Latest	2041 Target
Residents in agreement that the Sunshine Coast is a strong community	NA	68%	75%
01 Healthy, active communities			
1.1 Residents who rated their health as good, very good or excellent as a ranking within Regional Queensland (Health of Queenslanders, Queensland Government)	#2	#4	#1-3
02 Vibrant communities			
2.1 Residents in agreement that Council's community infrastructure meets community need	NA	56%	60%
2.2 Personal travel by active transport and passenger transport (a) (Queensland Household Travel Survey, Queensland Government)	15%	12% •	30%
2.3 Residents in agreement that they can find the type of accommodation they need	37%	35% •	40%
03 Inclusive communities			
3.1 Residents in agreement that it is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures	85%	84%	90%
3.2 Residents who volunteered for an organisation in the preceding twelve months (b) (ABS Census)	21%	16%	20%
3.3 Residents in agreement that there are opportunities to have a say on community issues that are important to them	70%	51% •	70%
04 Connected, resilient communities			
4.1 Residents in agreement that they live in an active community where people get involved in local issues and activities	77%	57% •	75%
4.1 Residents in agreement that they can get help from friends, family, neighbours or community organisations when they need it	93%	87%	90%
4.2 Residents in agreement that they feel safe all the time on the Sunshine Coast	77%	62% •	75%
05 Creative, innovative communities			
5.1 Cultural vitality	TBD	TBD	TBD

Note: • = well below target / tracking lower. (a) Latest travel data may still reflect altered travel behaviour shaped by COVID-19 restrictions and concerns. Target to be achieved at 2041. (b) Volunteering rates were impacted by COVID-19 risks and restrictions for latest data. **Source:** Sunshine Coast Council Community Connections Survey (biennial) unless noted otherwise.

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS

3. Principles and methods

The following principles and methods inform Council and community decision-making, action and how we work together to achieve our shared goals.

3.1 Principles

Local (place-based)

The Sunshine Coast is one regional community made up of many local communities. Each local community has its own unique sense of identity and its own priorities, strengths and challenges. These local differences are valued and harnessed for the benefit of each community, and this collectively strengthens our region.

Collaborative

Collaboration takes full advantage of the depth of lived experience, knowledge, expertise and other assets in our communities. Fostering relationships and ongoing communication that build trust and reciprocity are important for effective collaboration. Collaboration, transparent communication, trust and relationships are hallmarks of the way we work to achieve our goals.

Evidenced

Our actions will be driven by evidence gathered through research, data analysis and community knowledge. We will also draw upon evidence from outside the region. Evidence-based decision-making will maximise our effectiveness, ensure our resources are used efficiently, and increase the likelihood that we achieve our desired outcomes.

Equitable

A focus on equity ensures resources and opportunities are shared in a way that helps everyone, especially those who may need more support. The principles of equity and fairness are fundamental to achieving a strong community.

Outcome-focused

We will focus our efforts on initiatives that contribute to achieving our shared goals. Progress towards achieving our goals will be regularly measured and communicated. This approach requires transparency and trust to learn and improve together to maximise positive outcomes.

3.2 Methods

Encourage community involvement

As a community we will encourage and cultivate active participation and support community-led initiatives to achieve our shared goals.

Council will embrace, encourage and facilitate community participation and community-led initiatives to improve decision-making, deliver responsive services and enhance outcomes.

Grow collective capacity

As a community we will draw upon the depth of lived experience, knowledge and other assets in our community to grow our collective capacity.

Council will support collective capacity building by learning from others, engaging with community leaders and facilitating community connection and opportunities for collective learning, where needed.

Partner and collaborate

As a community we will partner and collaborate to learn from each other, explore opportunities and take collective action.

Council will learn from others and explore opportunities to work together to innovate and maximise effectiveness.

Invest in community-led initiatives

As a community we will cultivate a strong and trusting network of relationships to grow investment in community-led initiatives.

Council will support the contribution community organisations make in achieving positive community impact through co-investment.

Advocate together

As a community we will collectively advocate for the needs of our community, including for additional investment, for legislative change or to instigate action.

Council will contribute to collective advocacy to other levels of government alongside our community, where this is aligned and likely to be effective.

OUTCOMES

4. Outcomes

01 Healthy, active communities

Information, services and programs support physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Topics

1.1 Health and wellbeing

02 Vibrant communities

Community places and spaces, transport and housing provide the fundamental building blocks for a vibrant community.

Topics

2.1 Community places and spaces
2.2 Transport
2.3 Housing and homelessness support

03 Inclusive communities

Opportunities are available for everyone to participate and be involved.

Topics

3.1 Inclusion
3.2 Volunteering
3.3 Community engagement

04 Connected, resilient communities

Communities are connected, resilient and safe where people work collaboratively to achieve shared goals.

Topics

4.1 Community connection and resilience
4.2 Community safety

05 Creative, innovative communities

Creativity, heritage and First Nations culture are sources of connection, learning and pride.

Topics

5.1 Arts, heritage and First Nations culture

Each topic in this section includes:

- **Introduction:** Information about the topic and why it is important to achieving a strong community.
- **Related topics:** References to other topics or Council documents that can be read for information related to the topic.
- **Community priorities:** A summary of priorities identified by our community in 2023.
- **Council's role:** The roles that Council has in relation to the topic.
- **Examples of Council's current activities:** A selection of current Council activities related to the topic to demonstrate ongoing Council initiatives.
- **Related Council documents:** References to other Council documents related to the topic.
- **UNSDG alignment:** References to relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) aligning to the topic.
- **Outcome statements:** The desired future state we seek to achieve collectively as a community and Council through to 2041.
- **Council actions (2024-2029):** Actions that Council will complete over the next five years.
- **Community actions:** Actions that community members can take to contribute to the topic. These actions are based on ideas from Sunshine Coast residents.

The outcomes and topics overlap and are interconnected. For example, being and feeling safe is important for health and wellbeing. Actions can contribute to multiple outcomes and topics concurrently.

All of the outcomes and topics are important and require our attention. The order of outcomes and topics does not imply that one outcome or topic is more important than others.

TOPIC 1.1 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Sunshine Coast Council

Topic 1.1
Health and wellbeing

How does health and wellbeing contribute to a strong community?

Health is more than simply the presence or absence of illness, it includes elements of physical, mental and social wellbeing that contribute to our quality of life, happiness and fulfilment. Physical and mental health are inextricably linked and are equally important. Having the highest attainable standard of health is seen as a fundamental human right.

Health outcomes are influenced by our personal characteristics and behaviours, our physical environment and our social and economic environment. Some aspects of our health cannot be changed, however there are opportunities to proactively influence many aspects of our health through personal or community action. Changes to our personal behaviours, such as our levels of physical activity, diet, alcohol consumption, smoking, risk-taking behaviour, sleep and stress management, can significantly improve our health. We can also influence social and economic factors at a community level, including health services, job opportunities, crime and perceptions of safety, transport options and the natural and built environment, and particularly social connection and discrimination.

Being as healthy as possible maximises our ability to participate in our community and improves our quality of life. Physical activity reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, dementia and some cancers. Team sports have the benefits of physical activity, but also build trust, contribute to a sense of belonging and provide opportunities for diverse connections. Eating well improves concentration and memory, reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers and is especially important for the growth and development of children. Good mental health contributes to overall wellbeing, including being able to respond to life's daily challenges, improved confidence, healthier relationships, better productivity and greater participation in community.

As the Sunshine Coast community grows and changes over the next 20 years, our health and wellbeing will require continued attention. With the expected growth and ageing of our population, demand for health services will increase and we will need a renewed focus on healthy ageing. New technologies may offer more convenient and efficient options for delivery of health services, but they also present new health challenges. Use of social media, for example, can contribute to feeling down, difficulty concentrating and low self-confidence.

Being as healthy as possible maximises participation and contributes to achieving a strong community. There are many actions we can take individually and together to maximise our physical and mental health.

Related topics

- For places and spaces that support health and wellbeing refer to 2.1 Community Places and Spaces and the Environment and Liveability Strategy.
- For initiatives that promote walking and riding refer to 2.2 Transport.
- For personal and community connections refer to 4.1 Community Connection and Resilience.
- For creative and cultural expression refer to 5.1 Arts, Heritage and First Nations Culture.
- For access to nature refer to the Environment and Liveability Strategy.
- For socio-economic factors influencing health and wellbeing refer to other topics in the Community Strategy and the Regional Economic Development Strategy.

Community priorities

- Affordable, inclusive and convenient health and wellbeing activities, programs and community sport
- Additional focus on mental health, including youth mental health, healthy ageing and suicide prevention
- Increase access to trusted information about health and wellbeing.
- Reduce risky alcohol use, drug use, smoking and vaping
- Convenient and affordable access to health services (primarily provided by the private sector and supported by the Queensland Government and Australian Government)

#4 region in Regional Queensland
for self-rated health
(2021/22, Chief Health Officer Data, Sunshine Coast HHS)

84% of residents
rated their health as good, very good or excellent
(2023, Community Connections Survey)

53% of residents
had been sunburnt in the previous 12 months
(2019/20, Chief Health Officer Data, Sunshine Coast HHS)

52% of resident
children (5-17 years) had been sunburnt in the previous 12 months
(2021-22, Chief Health Officer Data, Sunshine Coast HHS)

39% of residents
consumed alcohol at levels risky to health
(2021-22, Chief Health Officer Data, Sunshine Coast HHS)

31% of residents
had 5 or more mentally unhealthy days in the previous month
(2021-22, Chief Health Officer Data, Sunshine Coast HHS)

Council's role

Council primarily influences health and wellbeing by funding and managing subsidised health and wellbeing programs, providing sporting and recreation infrastructure, maintaining open spaces and natural areas, supporting sports clubs, facilitating food security, and sharing information and resources.

Health services, disability support and residential care are funded and delivered by the Queensland Government, Australian Government, community sector and/or private sector.

Examples of Council's current activities

- Funding and managing the Healthy Sunshine Coast program which provides free and low-cost health and wellbeing activities
- Funding lifeguard services delivered by Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) at 21 beaches
- Supporting community networks and agencies
- Sharing information about health and wellbeing services and activities
- Supporting community gardening on Council-owned land
- Providing information and resources to support sporting clubs.

Outcome statements

1.1.1 Everyone has access to information, services and programs to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing:

a) Information is available to residents to improve their health and wellbeing.

b) Everyone has access to a diverse range of affordable health and wellbeing activities.

c) Everyone has access to affordable healthy food.

d) People work to improve their own health and wellbeing and that of their families, where possible.

e) Organisations work collaboratively to share health information and local research.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Expand Council's Healthy Sunshine Coast program to deliver a broad range of low cost, convenient and inclusive health and wellbeing activities.

b) Support community sporting clubs to access programs that improve inclusion.

c) Advocate and partner to improve access to mental health services and programs (including youth mental health and healthy ageing).

d) Collaborate to undertake and share health information and research focusing on health challenges (such as healthy ageing, suicide prevention, youth mental health, skin cancer risk, alcohol/drug consumption, smoking/vaping, etc.).

e) Promote and support food security and healthy eating initiatives such as community gardens, food sharing programs, farmer's markets and growing food at home.

Community actions

Ideas from residents on ways everyone can contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community:

- Try to live a healthier and more active lifestyle, taking advantage of our amazing Sunshine Coast beaches, parks and reserves.
- Grow our own food and share it with our friends and neighbours.
- Encourage our children to participate in community sport so they can be more active, meet new friends and value community participation.
- Join with others from our community to advocate for additional health services.

TOPIC 2.1 COMMUNITY PLACES AND SPACES

Topic 2.1
Community places and spaces

How do community places and spaces contribute to a strong community?

Community places and spaces include:

- Social infrastructure that support a strong community, such as community venues, libraries, cultural facilities, aquatic facilities, indoor sports and recreation facilities, lifeguard facilities and cemeteries
- Open spaces, such as beaches, parks, pathways, recreation trails and sports grounds
- Civic spaces and streetscapes that contribute to a sense of place and can be used for meeting people, collaborating and events.

Community places and spaces contribute to a strong community as they provide important spaces where residents can come together, learn new things, connect with each other, improve their health and wellbeing, access a range of information and engage in a range of events, activities and programs. They also provide natural amenity and access to green spaces.

Community places and spaces are fundamental building blocks that support and facilitate building collective community capacity, social capital and community resilience. They contribute to a unique sense of place, community pride and a sense of belonging.

Trends influencing the use of community places and spaces over the next 20 years include:

- Population growth and demographic change, including population ageing and increasing diversity
- Climate change, including the warming climate and increasing climate risks
- New technologies
- Trends in sports participation and physical activity
- Compliance and increasing community expectations
- Increasing urban densities and decreasing opportunities for access to natural spaces
- Trends in community management
- Increased use of open and civic spaces for activities and social connection.

Considering the current and future needs of our community will ensure we continue to enjoy the broad range of benefits that our community places and spaces offer.

The Community Strategy is mainly focused on the use and management of community places and spaces. For the planning, design and delivery of community places and spaces, please also refer to the Environment and Liveability Strategy.

Related topics

- For planning, design and delivery of community places and spaces refer to the Environment and Liveability Strategy.
- For other elements of inclusive and welcoming communities refer to 3.1 Inclusion.
- For initiatives that utilise community places and spaces refer to 1.1 Health and Wellbeing, 4.1 Community Connection and Resilience and 5.1 Arts, Heritage and First Nations Culture.

Community priorities

- Upgraded and additional community facilities to meet the needs of our growing and diverse population (primarily facilitated through the Environment and Liveability Strategy)
- More focus on activation, utilisation, maintenance and promotion of current facilities
- Safety, inclusion, accessibility and affordability of facilities
- First Nations design and naming, and First Nations cultural spaces
- Activities and spaces for young people.

Council's role

Council manages and supports community access to community places and spaces, including community venues, libraries, cultural facilities, sports facilities, cemeteries, parks, recreation trails and pathways.

Council facilitates and delivers community places and spaces primarily through the Environment and Liveability Strategy. Council also advocates to other levels of government to provide additional investment where required.

The private sector and community sector also deliver and manage community places and spaces.

The Queensland Government and Australian Government are responsible for delivering and managing schools, TAFE and universities, hospitals and emergency services.

Over 100
Council and community provided venues

8 Council library branches

9 aquatic centres

59 sports grounds

19 patrolled beaches (depending on time of year)

495 amenity reserves

379 playgrounds

28 skate parks

18 cemeteries

Examples of Council's current activities

- Upgrading community places and spaces
- Managing several Council-owned facilities
- Maintaining directories of spaces available for community hire
- Managing permits required to use parks and civic spaces and streetscapes
- Managing community use and leasing arrangements with community and sporting groups for Council-owned land and facilities
- Activating community places and spaces via a mix of Council and community-led events, activities and programs
- Managing the use of facilities for safe refuge and during evacuation.

Related Council documents

- Environment and Liveability Strategy
- Libraries Plan
- Creative Arts Plan
- Regional Arts Infrastructure Framework
- Recreation Parks Plan
- Recreation Trail Plan
- Sport and Active Recreation Plan
- Regional Facilities Plan for Difficult to Locate Sports
- Aquatic Plan
- Skate and BMX Plan
- Cemetery Plan
- Asset Management Plans
- Sunshine Coast Design Strategy.

Outcome statements

2.1.1 **Our community has access to community places and spaces that meet their needs:**

a) People have access to safe, accessible, inclusive and welcoming community places and spaces that meet the needs of their community.

b) Community places and spaces contribute to a unique sense of place and community pride.

2.1.2 **Community places and spaces are vibrant with activity:**

a) Community places and spaces are activated with a range of events, activities and programs and are well utilised by the community.

b) The social and economic benefits of community places and spaces are maximised through appropriate management and operational models.

c) Community groups can sustainably manage identified community places and spaces.

d) The operation and management of identified community places and spaces supports their utilisation as places of refuge or evacuation centres.

e) Community places and spaces are maintained to support their purpose.

Note: Council planning, design and delivery of community places and spaces is primarily influenced through the Environment and Liveability Strategy. The Environment and Liveability Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Community Strategy to understand the full scope of Council action in this area.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Ensure new and expanded venues that will host Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games events are designed and delivered with inclusion and community legacy at the forefront.

b) Develop a Community Venues Plan that outlines future requirements for community venues and considers appropriate management models and leasing arrangements to maximise use, provide equitable access and meet changing community needs.

c) Investigate innovative ways to support increased community use of community leased venues.

d) Simplify processes for community-run events and local activation initiatives.

Community actions

Ideas from our community on ways we can contribute to community places and spaces:

- Participate in the activities run at community places and spaces in our neighbourhood.
- Help a local sporting club or community group apply for grants to upgrade their sporting facility or meeting space.
- Join with others from our community to advocate for additional funding for community places and spaces.
- Report vandalism or suspicious behaviour around facilities.

TOPIC 2.2
TRANSPORT

Topic 2.2 Transport

How does transport contribute to a strong community?

Transport includes the infrastructure, systems and services that residents and visitors use to get around. This includes the infrastructure, systems and services that support driving, public transport, walking, riding and various mobility services such as taxis, rideshare and car sharing programs.

Transport is a fundamental building block of a strong community, allowing residents to access employment, services and facilities, to meet people and to maintain relationships. However, not everyone has equitable access to transport. Lower-income households, people with disability, older people and people living on the outskirts of towns and in rural areas generally face access challenges.

Currently, we overwhelmingly rely on our private vehicles to get around. While driving is expected to remain a dominant transport mode, embracing public transport, walking and riding can provide many community benefits. Public transport, walking and riding contribute to better physical and mental health and are generally more affordable transport options. They also benefit our community by reducing road congestion and emissions of greenhouse gases.

We can take personal and collective action to improve equitable access to transport and to maximise community benefits. We can reduce our personal vehicle use by taking public transport, going to a closer activity, sharing a ride and replacing shorter trips with walking or riding. We can also assist neighbours with transport barriers by picking something up for them or helping them complete a task online instead of travelling. As a community, we can also advocate for more investment in public transport, walking and riding infrastructure.

Future trends influencing our transport network over the next 20 years include:

- Continued strong population growth and the form of urban development
- More residents with mobility impairment due to population ageing
- Ongoing focus on environmental sustainability and carbon emissions reduction
- Adoption of new technologies, such as personal mobility devices, electric-powered vehicles, connected and autonomous vehicles, and smart mobility technologies
- Infrastructure and service investment, including new mass transit options
- Market-driven transport services and products
- Evolving car ownership trends and travel preferences.

Ongoing planning and increased and timely investment from all levels of government will be critical to ensuring our transport system supports the liveability of our region to 2041. There are also actions that we can take individually and together to contribute to the efficiency, equity and sustainability of our transport network.

Related topics

- For other elements of inclusive and welcoming communities refer to 3.1 Inclusion.
- For planning of transport networks and related infrastructure also refer to the Integrated Transport Strategy.

2400km
of sealed roads
and 590km of gravel roads

1214km
of pathways

5km of dedicated
off-road cycleway
69km of on-road
cycle network

25 weekday
bus routes

Ride to school program run in
11 schools with over
2100 students registered.

Council's role

All levels of government contribute to the delivery of transport infrastructure. Council delivers local roads, bus stops, and walking and riding connections. The Queensland Government and Australian Government deliver major roads and public transport infrastructure (and riding infrastructure on major roads), and the Queensland Government manages public transport.

Council advocates to other levels of government to provide additional investment where required.

Council delivers behaviour change programs that encourage a reduction in private vehicle use and improve road safety.

Community priorities

- More public transport investment, including passenger rail and mass transit, to support a shift away from private vehicle use (primarily delivered by the Queensland Government)
- Reliability, affordability, accessibility and safety of the public transport network (primarily delivered by the Queensland Government)
- Additional focus on congestion and the cost of getting around
- Additional investment in road infrastructure and improved traffic management (major road infrastructure primarily delivered by the Queensland Government)
- Transport options for vulnerable or isolated population groups.

Examples of Council's current activities

- Delivering new and upgraded local roads, bus stops and paths for walking and riding
- Providing and regulating parking
- Funding and managing the Council Link service for seniors and people with disability to access services and shops
- Delivering programs and initiatives that promote and encourage use of passenger transport and active transport
- Developing maps that show accessible footpaths for people of all abilities.

Related Council documents

- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Active Transport Plan
- Parking Management Plan
- Road Safety Plan.

Outcome statements

2.2.1 **Our transport network connects people and places, enhances sustainability, supports future population growth and serves the economy:**

a) People have access to an integrated, reliable, safe, sustainable and inclusive transport network.

b) Our transport network provides increased travel choice and mobility for all.

c) Our transport network supports efficient movement of people and goods.

d) Our transport network prioritises walking, riding and passenger transport and encourages a shift to these modes of travel.

e) Parking is delivered and managed to balance lifestyle, economic activity and improvements in passenger transport.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Review and update the Integrated Transport Strategy.

b) Continue to invest, plan and advocate for identified priority transport projects and supporting infrastructure which supports future growth and preserves the liveablity and lifestyle of our region.

c) Prioritise investment in walking and riding infrastructure to deliver a connected, safe, healthy and sustainable active transport network.

d) Promote active and public transport options and encourage behaviour change to reduce private vehicle use.

e) Investigate expansion of community transport services to improve convenience and access to additional locations and services.

Community actions

Ideas from our community on ways everyone can contribute to our transport network:

- Reconsider when and how often we travel.
- Minimise our personal car travel.
- Use public transport more as the network starts to improve.
- Ride responsibly on shared paths so that pedestrians feel safe.
- Join with others from our community to advocate for more investment in our transport network.

TOPIC 2.3 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT

Sunshine Coast Council

Topic 2.3 Housing and homelessness support

How does housing and homelessness support contribute to a strong community?

Access to safe and secure housing is a basic human right and is a fundamental base from which to build a strong community.

The population of the Sunshine Coast is expected to continue growing strongly over the next 20 years and we will need to find additional housing for around 8000 new residents each year. This new housing needs to be suitable for residents and provide choice. Social housing, student accommodation, independent living units, residential care and crisis and transitional accommodation are also part of the mix of housing needed.

Continuing to meet this ongoing housing demand will be a challenge. Housing availability and affordability are issues already, and the existing mix of housing is not well suited to the current or expected future population. In addition, neighbourhoods of the Sunshine Coast are typically low-density residential areas, and we therefore spend more time and money just getting around.

Access to diverse housing options in higher density areas provide a range of benefits, including:

- Local areas with more population have more opportunities for connection and greater social capital
- Housing diversity increases the diversity of residents in an area (including by income and life-stage) which contributes to more diverse connections and strengthens community inclusion and resilience
- People can stay in their own neighbourhood throughout their life helping to maintain social networks and access to services
- Smaller dwellings may better suit small households, can be more affordable for low-income households and can be located closer to services and employment centres reducing transport costs
- More efficient public transport networks can be provided which supports affordable access to employment and services.

A lack of affordable housing, combined with rising rental and purchase prices, has driven an increasing number of individuals and families into housing insecurity and homelessness. Other drivers can also include mental illness, domestic and family violence, family breakdown, loss of employment and substance abuse. The challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness may be complex, and they require additional support and focus. Ensuring the safety, dignity and respect of people while experiencing hardship is something that we can all contribute to in some way. Access to affordable and secure housing is inextricably linked to our health and wellbeing, and ability to participate in community and economic life.

Where and how we accommodate our growing population will have significant impacts for the future liveability, vibrancy and resilience of the Sunshine Coast. How we engage with and support people experiencing homelessness is also indicative of our caring and compassionate community.

The Community Strategy is mainly focused on access to housing for everyone in our community. For priorities related to supply of land/housing, the settlement pattern and development, please refer to the Environment and Liveability Strategy and the Planning Scheme.

1.1% residential vacancy rate
(2022/23, SQM Research)

47.1% of renting households pay **$450** or more per week, compared to **32.8%** in South East Queensland and **25.7%** in Queensland
(2021, ABS Census)

The rate of homelessness is **35 per 10,000 population,** compared to **43 per 10,000** population for Queensland
(2021, ABS Census)

Related topics

- For planning and regulation of housing refer to the Environment and Liveability Strategy and the Planning Scheme.
- For other elements of inclusive and welcoming communities refer to 3.1 Inclusion.

Community priorities

- More focus on housing choice, including diversity and affordability, social housing, emergency accommodation, and higher density development (mainly influenced through the Environment and Liveability Strategy and the Planning Scheme)
- Review of state and federal government regulations and incentives
- Amenities and facilities to improve safety and dignity for people sleeping rough
- Increased support and services for people experiencing homelessness.

Council's role

All levels of government influence housing supply and demand through regulation and policies. The Queensland Government and Australian Government also fund social housing, emergency accommodation and residential care. The private sector and community sector deliver and manage most forms of housing.

Council influences settlement patterns and housing form through advocacy and collaboration with other levels of government and the private sector, and utilising Council's legislative planning role through the Planning Scheme.

Council supports education and community-led initiatives that respond to housing and homelessness challenges, and advocates for our community to other levels of government.

Homelessness support services are funded by the Queensland Government and Australian Government and are mostly delivered by the community sector. Council works in partnership with these services and community organisations to enhance preventive and crisis responses.

Council manages civic spaces and streets to ensure the safety and amenity for people experiencing homelessness, residents and visitors. Those experiencing homelessness are provided access to information, amenities and other appropriate support services.

2.0% of dwellings across the Sunshine Coast were social housing, in comparison to **3.1%** for Queensland
(2021, ABS Census)

Examples of Council's current activities

- Identifying surplus Council-owned land suitable for affordable housing with a strong focus on key workers
- Supporting community-led initiatives to provide temporary transitional accommodation with appropriate wrap-around support services
- Publishing the Housing and Homelessness Directory
- Raising awareness and understanding of homelessness and its causes through the voices of lived experience
- Developing an internal guideline for interacting with people experiencing homelessness
- Offering discounts to fees and concessions for community organisations that deliver affordable housing
- Advocating to other levels of government for regulatory changes and additional resources and support.

Related Council documents

- Environment and Liveability Strategy
- Planning Scheme
- Housing and Homelessness Action Plan
- Responding to Homelessness Policy and Guideline.

Image: Caloundra Regional Gallery in collaboration with Sunshine Coast Libraries presented the 'Changing Perceptions of Homelessness by Clair Letitia Reynolds' exhibition that aimed to challenge and change current perceptions and stigmas associated with homelessness.

Outcome statements

2.3.1 Our community has access to accommodation that meets their needs with low rates of homelessness:

a) People have access to affordable and diverse accommodation that meets their needs.
b) Universal and inclusive design is integrated into housing and tourist accommodation.
c) People have the capacity and support to maintain long-term housing.

2.3.2 People experiencing homelessness are supported, safe and included:

a) Facilities, services and support are available to assist people experiencing homelessness.
b) People are aware of the facilities, services and support available.
c) People work together with people experiencing homelessness to improve outcomes.
d) People understand the challenges and causes of homelessness and demonstrate compassion towards people experiencing homelessness.

Note: Delivery of housing and accommodation by the private and community sector is primarily influenced by Council through the Environment and Liveability Strategy and the Planning Scheme. These documents should be read in conjunction with the Community Strategy to understand the full scope of Council action in this area.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Implement actions identified in the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.
b) Continue to facilitate and support community-led initiatives to improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.
c) Collaborate to undertake and utilise research (including lived experience) and build awareness and understanding of homelessness.

Community actions

Ideas from our community on ways we can contribute to housing and homelessness support:

- Volunteer to support people experiencing homelessness.
- Join with others from our community to advocate for more investment in social housing.
- Investigate renting out a spare room.
- Try to learn from people who have had an experience of homelessness.

TOPIC 3.1
INCLUSION

Topic 3.1 Inclusion

How does inclusion contribute to a strong community?

The Sunshine Coast is home to residents who were born in **170 different countries** (2021, ABS Census)

Inclusive communities recognise, respect and embrace diversity, in all its forms. Inclusion goes beyond tolerance, towards acceptance, understanding and celebrating difference. Fundamental to inclusion is recognition of the inherent value of each member of our community, and the need for everyone to have equitable access and opportunity. Our community is stronger when everyone feels valued, can participate in all aspects of community life and can reach their potential.

The Sunshine Coast community suggested that our diverse community includes:

- People of different ages - children, young people, middle-aged people and older people
- Women and men, people with non-binary gender, transgender and intersex people, and people with diverse sexuality
- First Nations people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse people, new migrants and people of different faiths
- People with physical and non-physical disability
- People who are frail or terminally ill
- Long-term residents and new residents from within Australia
- Lower socio-economic households and people experiencing homelessness.

These multiple characteristics of our personal identities influence our experiences of the Sunshine Coast. Often, barriers exist that limit our participation based on one or more of these personal characteristics. One of these barriers is discrimination, but other barriers include lack of information, physical access, perceptions of safety, cost, communication barriers, lack of culturally appropriate activities, negative stereotypes and stigma, and distrust of government services.

There are many benefits of reducing participation barriers for a more inclusive community:

- Resources and opportunities are shared in a way that helps those who need the most support
- More diverse social connections increase social capital and community resilience
- Improved physical and mental health due to increased connection, employment and sense of belonging
- Improved actual and perceived safety and greater community cohesion
- Improved adaptability and resilience to community challenges by drawing on varied talents and perspectives
- More resilient businesses and economy through participation, increased productivity and innovative thinking
- Sense of belonging encourages greater contributions to community life and facilitates collaboration
- New perspectives contribute to a more compassionate and understanding community.

We all contribute to fostering an inclusive Sunshine Coast.

Related topics

- Inclusion is a core element of a strong community and therefore has linkages to all other topics in the Community Strategy.
- For inclusion in the natural and built environment and business sector see the Environment and Liveability Strategy and Regional Economic Development Strategy.

Residents spoke
110 different languages,
including German, Spanish, Mandarin, Afrikaans and Portuguese (2021, ABS Census)

2.4% of residents are First Nations people
(2021, ABS Census)

5.5% of residents are new migrants (migrated from overseas in the previous ten years)
(2021, ABS Census)

21% of residents were born overseas, including **8.3%** residents were born in non-core anglosphere countries
(2021, ABS Census)

Community priorities

- Creating a welcoming region
- More awareness, education and activities, events and programs to recognise, respect and value diversity, in all its forms
- Accessibility of facilities, housing and transport
- Recognition of First Nations people and closing the gap
- Promotion of inclusion and diversity in all forms.

Council's role

Council works to promote and foster diversity and inclusion and opportunities for all. Council delivers a range of services, programs and activities that everyone can participate in. Council raises awareness and education about the importance of inclusion and is working to reduce barriers and improve access and inclusion.

Council also supports not-for-profit organisations that deliver community-led initiatives through targeted investment. Many community and private sector organisations support inclusion in our community. The Queensland Government and Australian Government also provide support to organisations that contribute to inclusion.

Examples of Council's current activities

- Ongoing commitment to reconciliation and strengthening collaboration and partnerships with local First Nations communities through the Reconciliation Action Plan
- Facilitating Council's Multicultural Advisory Group
- Delivering awareness campaigns and information that prevent discrimination, including the Shine a Light on Racism campaign
- Coordinating the Migrant Work Ready and Migrant Business Ready programs
- Coordinating delivery of All Access Day at the Beach
- Facilitating Young Leaders Academy made up of young people – the future leaders of the Sunshine Coast
- Supporting Harmony Day events and activities.

Related Council documents

- Reconciliation Action Plan
- All Abilities Action Plan.

Outcome statements

3.1.1 Everyone feels valued, respected and welcomed:

a) People are aware and embrace the value of diversity, in all its forms.

b) Reconciliation is progressed with First Nations people.

c) Newcomers are welcomed and connected into our community.

d) Barriers to participation are minimised or eliminated.

e) People feel they belong and contribute to community life.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Implement actions identified in the Reconciliation Action Plan in partnership with Traditional Custodians and First Nations people.
b) Implement actions identified in the All Abilities Action Plan.
c) Develop and implement a Youth Action Plan to guide Council action on the priorities of young people.
d) Utilise the Welcoming Cities Standard to become a more welcoming and cohesive community.
e) Collaborate and partner to deliver events, activities and programs that promote and support best-practice diversity and inclusion.
f) Develop and promote local stories showcasing the diversity of people and places of the Sunshine Coast.
g) Support initiatives that strengthen social enterprises and for-impact businesses to address community priorities.

Community actions

Ideas from residents on ways everyone can contribute to inclusion in our community:

- Provide a positive welcome to new residents in our neighbourhood.
- Treat other people with respect.
- Keep an open mind to new ideas and the future of the Sunshine Coast.
- Learn about people from different backgrounds by participating in events, activities and programs.
- Provide opportunities for young people to be involved.

TOPIC 3.2
VOLUNTEERING

Topic 3.2 Volunteering

How does volunteering contribute to a strong community?

Volunteers donate their time for the common good and without financial gain. They can donate their time to organisations or work alongside other community members on shared priorities. This topic focuses on the work volunteers do for groups, clubs or organisations, often referred to as formal volunteering.

Organisations that engage volunteers are managing multiple current trends that are impacting volunteering:

- Formal volunteering rates declined across the Sunshine Coast during the COVID-19 pandemic and have been slow to fully recover to normal levels
- Rising cost-of-living pressures are making the costs associated with volunteering more of a burden
- Traditional volunteers, who volunteer on a consistent, regular and ongoing basis, are getting older and may be difficult to replace with new volunteers who are preferring more flexible, ad-hoc and episodic volunteering
- Significant new global challenges have potentially shifted interest to priorities beyond our region
- New technologies allow volunteers to be involved in ways that are convenient and informal, such as working on a project from home when they have time
- Organisations want to improve management and safety standards through training, health and safety policies, etc. However this can be burdensome for organisations and volunteers alike and can create barriers to participation.

Volunteering provides significant benefits to volunteers themselves and to the community generally:

- Volunteers gain new work experience and skills which may increase their employability
- Volunteers benefit from a new sense of purpose which can improve life satisfaction and health
- Volunteers grow the number and diversity of their personal connections which reduces isolation and improves health – this contributes to increased social capital and community resilience and better health outcomes for our community
- Our community benefits from thousands of hours of effort to deliver services, programs and activities that otherwise may not be possible.

Volunteering is an important part of a strong community. With the donation of their time and skills, volunteers contribute to community priorities and help create a more connected and resilient community.

Related topics

- For other forms of community involvement refer to 3.3 Community Engagement and 4.1 Community Connection and Resilience.

15.7%
of the Sunshine Coast population volunteered in the preceding twelve months (2021, ABS Census).

This was a significant decline compared to **20.7%** in 2016 likely due to Covid-19 restrictions and concern about Covid-19 at the time.

Community priorities

- Additional promotion of opportunities for volunteering
- Focus on encouragement, support, recognition and celebration of volunteers
- Support for organisations that engage volunteers to improve systems, processes and provide flexible opportunities.

Council's role

Council engages volunteers to deliver programs focused on community, cultural and environmental outcomes.

Council also supports community volunteering through awareness and promotion, recognition of volunteers and investing in organisations that engage volunteers.

Examples of Council's current activities

- Providing information about volunteering on Council's website
- Providing volunteering opportunities through libraries, galleries, museums, environmental programs, parks and gardens, community festivals and events
- Supporting community-led volunteering programs
- Recognising volunteers through awards
- Undertaking research on volunteering in collaboration with others
- Investing in not-for-profit groups for community-led projects, events and activities with broad community benefit and to strengthen the ability of groups to respond to community needs.

Related Council documents

- Sunshine Coast Council Employee Code of Conduct.

Outcome statements

3.2.1 **Residents volunteer to support community needs:**

a) Information about volunteering opportunities is clear and easy to find.

b) Volunteers and potential volunteers have the capabilities required to contribute to community priorities.

c) Organisations that engage volunteers have the skills and capacity to attract, manage and retain volunteers.

d) Volunteers are recognised and rewarded for the work they do.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Improve initiatives recognising residents who contribute to community, including volunteering.

b) Collaborate to deliver training to assist volunteering organisations improve volunteering recruitment, retention and management.

c) Collaborate to deliver a Sunshine Coast Volunteer Showcase to raise awareness of volunteering opportunities and offer training and recognition of volunteers.

Community actions

Ideas from residents on ways we can contribute to our community through volunteering:

- Help out a neighbour, if they need support.
- Volunteer to help keep a local community group, sporting club or facility going.
- Pick up rubbish to maintain our community places and spaces.

TOPIC 3.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Topic 3.3
Community engagement

How does community engagement contribute to a strong community?

Community engagement is the active participation of residents in decision-making processes on matters and issues that are important to us and our region. Diverse perspectives and community participation enable better understanding of community needs, values, and local knowledge and ensure that decision-making is well informed.

It helps in strengthening relationships and partnerships and building trust between community and government so we can work together to respond to local issues, challenges and aspirations, and so that government can provide and support better services, programs and facilities. With increased transparency and a range of meaningful and tailored ways to engage, community members can have a say in shaping the future of the Sunshine Coast.

The flow on effect is an increase in trust and improved governance to make better, more sustainable, equitable decisions that improves liveability and community cohesion. Community engagement can be supported through inclusive, representative, transparent and well-planned community involvement.

The following trends may influence how people engage in decision-making over the next 20 years:

- New technologies will offer more convenient and accessible options for engagement, but also create barriers to participation for some
- Hybrid methods of community engagement – with both online and in-person options – will continue to be needed to enhance inclusive participation
- Significant global social, environmental and economic challenges and opportunities will continue to attract community interest and involvement
- A lack of interest and participation in local community engagement may grow due to perceptions that individual input is not reflected in decisions or does not lead to meaningful change
- The number of voices involved in community engagement may remain low or decrease, increasing the need for community engagement that is inclusive and representative of community views.

Community engagement plays a vital role in achieving a strong community. It promotes better-informed decisions, responsive services and enhanced outcomes for all.

Related topics

- For other forms of community involvement refer to 3.2 Volunteering and 4.1 Community Connection. and Resilience.

51%
of residents agreed that there are opportunities to have a say on community issues that are important to them (2023, Community Connections Survey).

Around 30%
of residents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Community priorities

- More opportunities to be involved in Council community engagement processes, including for people with lived experience
- Promotion of opportunities to be involved in Council community engagement processes
- Council to utilise more inclusive, diverse and authentic community engagement approaches with a local focus
- More transparency, accountability and communication about how community input has influenced Council decision-making.

Council's role

Council regularly invites community input into our projects, programs, services and initiatives. Council encourages this by implementing best-practice engagement activities to inform decision-making that is responsive to community aspirations.

Council shares information and resources and communicates opportunities for the community to get involved in matters that impact our region. Council also collaborates and works in partnership with other organisations and agencies to deliver community engagement projects where relevant.

Residents and groups initiate community-led engagement processes to address or advocate for issues and opportunities in their communities.

Examples of Council's current activities

- Undertaking inclusive community engagement for a variety of projects to influence decision-making
- Upgrading Council's online engagement platform, 'Have Your Say', to increase functionality
- Undertaking surveys to understand community priorities and satisfaction with Council.

Related Council documents

- Community Engagement Policy
- Excellence in Engagement Framework
- Inclusive Engagement Guideline.

Outcome statements

3.3.1 **Our community is engaged and heard on matters that are important to them:**

a) People actively participate in community matters and decision-making processes.

b) People have opportunities to contribute meaningfully to matters that impact them and our region.

c) Information and ways to participate are available in a range of formats to meet the needs of our diverse community.

d) People's contributions into community engagement processes are valued.

e) Community engagement outcomes inform decision-making and planning processes.

f) Information on how community engagement outcomes have informed decision-making and planning processes is shared.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Review Council's Excellence in Engagement Framework to further embed and model leading engagement practice.

b) In collaboration with First Nations people, develop guidelines for engaging with First Nations individuals and groups to ensure their meaningful contribution into decision-making.

c) Deliver the Young Leaders Academy developmental program to foster civic engagement and community leadership.

d) Review and strengthen Council use of community advisory and reference groups and participatory engagement processes.

e) Develop a guide on how to co-design solutions in collaboration with people with lived experience to improve inclusive and authentic engagement.

f) Explore a periodic regional community engagement program to understand community priorities and opinions on key issues.

g) Develop a Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Community Engagement Plan that encourages community participation in opportunities that create a lasting positive legacy for our community.

Community actions

Ideas from our community on ways we can enhance community engagement:

- Participate in community engagement opportunities thoughtfully and respectfully.
- Share opportunities for community engagement with people we know and groups we're involved in.
- Get involved in a local residents' association.
- Help a neighbour or friend participate, who might otherwise find it difficult.
- Vote responsibly in Council elections.
- Engage with our local Councillor to let them know about things that are needed in our community.

TOPIC 4.1 COMMUNITY CONNECTION AND RESILIENCE

Sunshine Coast Council

Topic 4.1 Community connection and resilience

How does community connection and resilience contribute to a strong community?

This topic covers three related concepts:

Community connection

Social connection is a fundamental human need. Our personal relationships with family, friends and neighbours help us feel connected. Participation in community social, sporting, cultural and leisure activities, life-long learning programs, helping and socialising with neighbours, volunteering and attending community events builds friendships, connections and networks within the community. Feeling connected reduces social isolation and loneliness and contributes to a sense of belonging and purpose. When people are connected and have stable, supportive relationships, they are more likely to make healthy choices and can better cope with stress, anxiety and depression. It also increases levels of empathy, trust and cooperation. Strong community connections also support information sharing and capacity building.

Community resilience

Social networks and relationships are also important in times of adversity. When everyone in our community has a diverse range of connections, we all have someone to call on in times of need. This improves our personal and collective resilience to a broad range of potential challenges. Having a network of trusted neighbours or local community members is important for resilience because people who are close-by are more likely to be able to help in a difficult situation.

In the context of disasters, emergencies and climate change, community resilience is focused on how we prepare for significant events to reduce their disruptive impact. To do this, we need to seek out information to be aware of our current and future risks and take responsibility to prepare ourselves with our families, friends and neighbours. Our community networks also need to include emergency services, infrastructure providers and community organisations to maximise disaster resilience.

Collective action

Joining with others to take collective action can help achieve shared goals and contribute to the betterment of communities. This requires a willingness and capacity to join with others within our community. It also requires reaching out through our networks to find other people who are interested in pursuing joint action. Collective action is more likely to be effective at creating positive social change.

Many complex social trends are influencing community connection, resilience and collective action:

- Changing family structures and ageing populations are affecting forms of support and interaction, while also providing new opportunities for diverse intergenerational connections
- Mobility and economic factors are reducing time available to connect with and be involved in local communities
- New technologies are offering alternative avenues for community connection that are more convenient and accessible, but in some instances, also leading to social isolation and fragmented online communities
- Social institutions, including faith groups and neighbourhood associations, are responding to the changing needs of the community by adapting their services and offering new ways to participate
- The Sunshine Coast is a 'community of communities' with strong local identities that emphasise and support local community connection and sense of belonging.

Community connection, resilience and collective action are fundamental elements of a strong community. They contribute significantly to the health of our community and how we adapt to change and prepare and respond to disruptive events. Almost any opportunity or challenge that we face as a community can be pursued or addressed more effectively when we work together.

57% of residents agreed that they live in an active community where people get involved in local issues and activities (2023, Community Connections Survey).

87% of residents agreed that they can get help from friends, family and neighbours when they need it (2023, Community Connections Survey).

76% of residents agreed that their neighbours are willing to help them and others (2023, Community Connections Survey).

8.5 close friends per resident on average (2023, Community Connections Survey).

42% of residents are somewhat or very confident that their local area will be able to adapt to the effects of climate change in their lifetime (2024, Living on the Sunshine Coast Survey)

43 facilities can function as evacuation centres or places of shelter.

6 disaster activations per year on average for severe weather and flood events.

Related topics

- Community connection and resilience is a core element of a strong community and therefore has linkages to all other topics in the Community Strategy
- For disaster management, adaptation and resilience refer to the Environment and Liveability Strategy.

Community priorities

- More affordable local events, programs and activities and promotion of these initiatives to provide opportunities for people to come together and enhance sense of belonging
- Social connections for people who are isolated
- Hazard and preparedness information and education, with more targeted emergency alerts and warning messages
- Investment in resilient infrastructure and better coordination of government services
- Long-term planning and recovery, including mental health.

Image: Community Strategy Photo Competition submission - Six Friends Celebrate.

Council's role

Council supports community connection through community development initiatives that bring people together, strengthen groups and provide information and support.

Council is responsible for managing disaster events through its Local Disaster Management Group and improving awareness and information related to disaster preparedness. Through a community development approach and reviewing Council's organisational capacity, Council contributes to the resilience and adaptive capacity of the community, as well as to community response and recovery following events.

The community sector, with funding provided from a range of sources, manages community centres, neighbourhood centres and other meeting spaces, and delivers events, activities and programs which contribute to community connection and resilience.

Examples of Council's current activities

- Delivering community events, activities and programs
- Investing in community groups to facilitate and deliver local events, activities, and programs that support community connection
- Facilitating community development through connection, facilitation and support
- Providing 'At Home in My Neighbourhood' resources that encourage neighbourhood scale events and connection
- Involvement in local and regional disaster management groups
- Ensuring Council infrastructure and service delivery is climate resilient.

Related Council documents

- Local Disaster Management Plan
- Disaster Recovery Sub-Plan
- Regional Climate Action Roadmap.

Outcome statements

4.1.1 **People are connected to each other and their community:**
- a) People have many, diverse connections to reduce social isolation and to call upon in times of need.
- b) Local community events, activities, programs and services support and strengthen connections between people and their communities.

4.1.2 **People work together to proactively identify, research and respond to community priorities:**
- a) People lead collective action to proactively identify, research and respond to current and emerging community priorities.
- b) Local organisations support collaborative, community-led initiatives aligned to community priorities.

4.1.3 **Our community is adaptive and resilient to increasing climate risks, disasters and emergencies:**
- a) Government agencies, infrastructure providers, businesses and community members work collaboratively to build adaptive capacity and resilience.
- b) People have access to the information and resources necessary to continually increase their own adaptive capacity and resilience.
- c) People maximise their self-reliance by taking personal responsibility to understand their risks and take appropriate action.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Collaborate, partner and invest to build community connections through the delivery of free and low-cost initiatives within local communities and neighbourhoods.
b) Support residents and community organisations to deliver collaborative, community-led responses to identified community priorities.
c) Support residents and community organisations to plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards and minimise associated risks.
d) Partner to support local community-led resilience, adaptation planning and recovery activities.
e) Continue to expand and promote Disaster Hub, including the ability to provide more personalised information and notifications.
f) Improve inclusion at Council evacuation centres and raise awareness of these centres and their inclusion features.

Community actions

Ideas from our community on ways everyone can contribute to community connection and resilience:

- Build strong relationships with our neighbours.
- Join with others in our community to take meaningful action on shared challenges and opportunities.
- Hold a neighbourhood party to get to know our neighbours.
- Participate in local events and activities.
- Contribute to social media groups by suggesting positive, constructive actions that we could take together.
- Learn about different risks in our neighbourhood.
- Put together an emergency plan for our household to prepare for different scenarios.
- Learn more about and adopt sustainable living practices.

TOPIC 4.2 COMMUNITY SAFETY

Topic 4.2
Community safety

How does community safety contribute to a strong community?

Community safety refers to the ability for people to go about their daily life without fear or risk of harm or injury. To feel and be safe are seen as basic human rights and are important underlying requirements for a strong community. Being safe and feeling safe enables people to participate in community life, to feel included and to have a sense of belonging. When people feel safe in their homes and can freely engage in local neighbourhoods and community places and spaces, it creates a sense of wellbeing, promotes liveability and enhances community pride. Our safety also contributes to a willingness to trust other people and particularly people who are different to ourselves. A lack of community safety therefore limits opportunities for collaboration, and stifles innovation and entrepreneurship.

The primary focus is on crime prevention which works to remove or reduce the risk and fear of crime and negative perceptions of places and people. Perceptions of community safety, real or perceived, can impact on the way people feel and how they interact and participate in their community. Fear of crime can be as detrimental to community functioning as high rates of crime. One of the most effective ways to reduce fear of crime is through activities that encourage community cohesion and connection. Community safety is therefore closely related to other aspects of a strong community, such as community connection, resilience and inclusion. There are actions that we can take as a community to improve community safety in our region.

With new technologies and our ageing population, online safety and elder abuse may be growing areas for crime prevention. Our work to maintain and promote community safety needs to consider these and future trends and remain flexible to ongoing change.

This topic also includes a focus on domestic and family violence, which is any violent, threatening or controlling behaviour, or behaviour intended to cause fear, related to an intimate or family relationship. Any form of violence, including domestic and family violence, is unacceptable on the Sunshine Coast.

Related topics

- For road safety refer to 2.2 Transport.
- For the design of community places and spaces to maximise safety refer to 2.1 Community Places and Spaces.
- For safety during disasters and emergencies refer to 4.1 Community Connection and Resilience.

Community priorities

- Addressing perceived safety issues, such as youth crime, road and pedestrian safety, online safety, beach safety and elder abuse, as well as graffiti, vandalism and attitudes about population groups
- Additional services for people experiencing domestic and family violence, such as emergency accommodation, services and support (primarily provided by the Queensland Government)
- Awareness, education and prevention programs targeting perpetrators of domestic and family violence and improving attitudes towards women
- Investment in lighting and closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance, and community responses, such as Safety Houses and Neighbourhood Watch
- Additional police presence and engagement, more investment in police facilities and harsher penalties (primarily provided by the Queensland Government).

Council's role

Community safety is a shared responsibility of all levels of government and the community.

Council coordinates and supports crime prevention and community safety initiatives, including facilitating connections between partners, raising awareness, and supporting initiatives that promote community connection. Council also provides and maintains safe community places and spaces, supports safe urban design, and creates and enforces local laws. Council undertakes targeted education and raises awareness of domestic and family violence and supports community-led initiatives.

The Queensland Police Service is the lead agency for crime prevention and law enforcement.

62% of residents agreed that they feel safe all the time on the Sunshine Coast (2023, Community Connections Survey).

75% of residents agreed that they trust most of the people in their neighbourhood (2023, Community Connections Survey).

6487 total reported offences per 100,000 population in Sunshine Coast LGA, compared to a rate of 10,999 per 100,000 offences for Queensland (2022/23, QGSO Regional Profile).

Examples of Council's current activities

- Guiding safe design of new developments through implementation of crime prevention through environmental design principles (CPTED)
- Facilitating community connections through supporting and delivering programs
- Undertaking long-term community development work regarding neighbourhood safety
- Collaborating and supporting community partners in crime prevention initiatives
- Managing graffiti removal
- Installing CCTV surveillance systems
- Supporting community-led initiatives focused on domestic and family violence prevention
- Raising awareness and supporting education to prevent domestic and family violence.

Related Council documents

- Community Safety Policy
- Urban Public Lighting Plan.

Outcome statements

4.2.1 The Sunshine Coast is safe and is perceived as safe:

a) Organisations, agencies and community members share information, deliver initiatives and work collaboratively to improve safety.

b) Community connection and the sharing of information and stories support improved perceptions of safety.

4.2.2 Our community is safe from domestic and family violence:

a) Services are available to assist people experiencing, or at risk of, domestic and family violence.

b) Organisations and agencies work collaboratively to prevent domestic and family violence through education and other initiatives.

c) Our community is aware and educated about domestic and family violence.

d) People lead collective action to reduce and prevent domestic and family violence.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Promote community programs aimed at improving safety and perceptions of safety.

b) Raise awareness of services and accommodation options available for people experiencing domestic and family violence.

c) Continue strong messaging that builds knowledge and awareness of domestic and family violence, its prevention and supports.

Community actions

Ideas from our community on ways everyone can contribute to community safety:

- Report criminal or suspicious activity to authorities.
- Get to know our neighbours and local community.
- Treat everyone the way we would like to be treated.
- Have a conversation with our mates about managing anger and respecting other people.
- Declare our home a violence-free zone.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour when we witness it.

TOPIC 5.1 ARTS, HERITAGE AND FIRST NATIONS CULTURE

Sunshine Coast Council

Image: *NOISE* by Dancenorth Australia, Horizon Festival 2023. Photo: Nic Morley.

Topic 5.1
Arts, heritage and First Nations culture

How do the arts, heritage and First Nations culture contribute to a strong community?

The arts encompass many forms of creative expression and storytelling, including; literature, music, theatre, dance and other performing arts, such as circus, comedy and puppetry, visual arts and crafts, screen, including film, television and online, and emerging and experimental arts.

Heritage is the cultural, historical and natural aspects of community we inherit from the past and we want to protect for the future. As well as physical objects, heritage includes intangible elements, such as languages and traditions. As residents of the Sunshine Coast, we all have a shared history of this place, but many of us also have a personal history of other places and cultures that we bring.

First Nations people have an ongoing culture that includes language, creative expression, storytelling and connection to the past. First Nations culture is the oldest continuing culture in the world, being passed down from generation to generation for the past 60,000 years. The Sunshine Coast region overlaps two First Nations communities, each with their own culture, language, beliefs and practices. The unique values, and ancient and enduring cultures of the Traditional Custodians deepen and enrich the life of our community.

Arts, heritage and First Nations culture contribute to learning, community connection and our sense of identity. They can help us engage with significant current and future community challenges, such as climate change, inclusion and connection, and help us view these challenges from new perspectives. They can support community connection by bringing people together, sharing experiences and sparking conversation. They can also contribute to our unique sense of identity, pride in our community and opportunities for employment. For these reasons, arts, heritage and First Nations culture are important contributors to the achievement of a strong Sunshine Coast community.

Related topics

- For other elements of health and wellbeing refer to 1.1 Health and Wellbeing.
- For places and spaces that support arts, heritage and First Nation culture refer to 2.1 Community Places and Spaces.
- For other elements of inclusive and welcoming communities refer to 3.1 Inclusion.

Community priorities

- Expansion, development and promotion of arts and cultural programs, experiences and fit-for-purpose spaces
- Preservation and promotion of heritage and culture
- Increased promotion and education of First Nations culture.

Council's role

Council funds and delivers events, activities and programs that acknowledge or celebrate creativity, heritage and First Nations culture. Council invests in creative arts, heritage and First Nations organisations that deliver initiatives for the community. Council also assists the development of the creative arts sector by supporting community leaders, connecting and promoting sector participants and sharing information and resources.

4.1 out of 5
is the region's average cultural vitality score (2022/23, Council Data).

88% of residents
agreed that they were proud to be part of the Sunshine Coast community (2023, Community Connections Survey).

78% of residents
agreed that the Sunshine Coast has a unique identity that sets us apart (2023, Community Connections Survey).

Examples of Council's current activities

- Delivering the Horizon Festival and other arts programs and experiences
- Investing in and supporting creative arts and heritage organisations to deliver initiatives and programs
- Designing and delivering development programs for the creative arts and heritage sector
- Delivering heritage programs including talks, exhibitions, films and educational initiatives
- Building respect for First Nations cultures and facilitating First Nations-led initiatives
- Investing in community-led arts and heritage initiatives.

Related Council documents

- Creative Arts Plan
- Heritage Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan.

Image: *SAND* by Courtney Scheu and Itamar Freed, Horizon Festival 2022. Photo: Alain Bouvier

Outcome statements

5.1.1 **People value our rich and diverse histories, heritage and First Nations culture:**

a) The ancient and ongoing culture of the Kabi Kabi peoples and Jinibara peoples, and broader First Nations community, is valued, shared and celebrated.

b) Our diverse histories and heritage are explored, shared and celebrated.

c) Our diverse histories, heritage and First Nations culture contribute to community connection, identity and pride.

5.1.2 **Our community values artistic expression, creativity and innovation:**

a) Creatives, artists and the creative arts sector are professional, skilled and connected.

b) Arts audiences thrive through genuine participation and a diversity of meaningful and tailored experiences.

c) Artistic expression, creativity and innovation are embedded in the identity, culture and experience of the Sunshine Coast.

Council actions (2024-2029)

a) Collaborate with Kabi Kabi peoples and Jinibara peoples to ensure local First Nations history and ongoing culture is protected, respected and celebrated.

b) In collaboration with First Nations people, develop and implement a First Nations Arts Strategy to support and expand the First Nations creative arts sector, including youth-focused creative development.

c) Support the development of local artists and arts content that can be profiled, experienced and exported to build capacity, strengthen engagement and cultivate identity.

d) Work with heritage community organisations to grow capacity, sustainability and professionalism.

Community actions

Ideas from our community on ways everyone can be involved in arts, heritage and First Nations culture:

- Learn about the Traditional Custodians of the land where we were born and where we live.
- Keep an eye out for local arts and cultural activities to participate in.
- Support arts groups as a participant or as a volunteer.
- Invite a friend to a cultural activity as an opportunity to do and learn new things together.
- Learn about the local history of our neighbourhoods.

ACTION PLAN 2024-2029

5. Action Plan 2024-2029

Council will work towards completing the following actions between 2024 and 2029. These are new actions and will be completed in addition to ongoing Council activities.

New Council Actions	Council Role	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Resources	Council Branch Responsibility (Lead)
0.1 Actions Related to all Outcomes								
a) Develop a Community Advocacy Plan that summarises opportunities and challenges related to the Community Strategy to inform joint Council and community advocacy initiatives.	Direct Action Advocate	•		•			Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
b) Develop and implement a Local Community Planning Program that supports local communities to develop their own community action plans.	Collaborate / Partner			•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development
c) Continue to deliver community forums that strengthen community networks, information sharing and collaboration outcomes.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner		•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
Outcome 1. Healthy, Active Communities								
1.1 Health and Wellbeing								
a) Expand Council's Healthy Sunshine Coast program to deliver a broad range of low cost, convenient and inclusive health and wellbeing activities.	Direct Action	•	•	•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development
b) Support community sporting clubs to access programs that improve inclusion.	Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Sport and Community Venues
c) Advocate and partner to improve access to mental health services and programs (including youth mental health and healthy ageing).	Advocate Collaborate / Partner	•	•				Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
d) Collaborate to undertake and share health information and research focusing on health challenges (such as healthy ageing, suicide prevention, youth mental health, skin cancer risk, alcohol/drug consumption, smoking/vaping, etc.).	Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
e) Promote and support food security and healthy eating initiatives such as community gardens, food sharing programs, farmer's markets and growing food at home.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development / Parks and Gardens / Economic Development

New Council Actions	Council Role	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Resources	Council Branch Responsibility (Lead)
Outcome 2. Vibrant Communities								
2.1 Community Places and Spaces								
a) Ensure new and expanded venues that will host Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games events are designed and delivered with inclusion and community legacy at the forefront.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Sunshine Coast Program – Brisbane 2032
b) Develop a Community Venues Plan that outlines future requirements for community venues and considers appropriate management models and leasing arrangements to maximise use, provide equitable access and meet changing community needs.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner		•	•			Subject to securing additional resources	Environment and Sustainability Policy / Sport and Community Venues / Property Management
c) Investigate innovative ways to support increased community use of community leased venues.	Collaborate / Partner			•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Property Management / Sport and Community Venues
d) Simplify processes for community-run events and local activation initiatives.	Direct Action	•	•	•			Achievable within existing resources	Customer Response
2.2 Transport								
a) Review and update the Integrated Transport Strategy.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•				Achievable within existing resources	Urban Growth Projects
b) Continue to invest, plan and advocate for identified priority transport projects and supporting infrastructure which supports future growth and preserves the liveablity and lifestyle of our region.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Urban Growth Projects
c) Prioritise investment in walking and riding infrastructure to deliver a connected, safe, healthy and sustainable active transport network.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Urban Growth Projects
d) Promote active and public transport options and encourage behaviour change to reduce private vehicle use.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Urban Growth Projects
e) Investigate expansion of community transport services to improve convenience and access to additional locations and services.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•					Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development

New Council Actions	Council Role	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Resources	Council Branch Responsibility (Lead)
2.3 Housing and Homelessness Support								
a) Implement actions identified in the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Urban Growth Projects / Community Planning and Development
b) Continue to facilitate and support community-led initiatives to improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.	Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
c) Collaborate to undertake and utilise research (including lived experience) and build awareness and understanding of homelessness.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
Outcome 3. Inclusive Communities								
3.1 Inclusion								
a) Implement actions identified in the Reconciliation Action Plan in partnership with Traditional Custodians and First Nations people.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
b) Implement actions identified in the All Abilities Action Plan.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development
c) Develop and implement a Youth Action Plan to guide Council action on the priorities of young people.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development
d) Utilise the Welcoming Cities Standard to become a more welcoming and cohesive community.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
e) Collaborate and partner to deliver events, activities and programs that promote and support best-practice diversity and inclusion.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development / Arts, Heritage and Libraries
f) Develop and promote local stories showcasing the diversity of people and places of the Sunshine Coast.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development / Arts Heritage and Libraries
g) Support initiatives that strengthen social enterprises and for-impact businesses to address community priorities.	Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Economic Development

New Council Actions	Council Role	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Resources	Council Branch Responsibility (Lead)
Outcome 3. Inclusive Communities continued								
3.2 Volunteering								
a) Improve initiatives recognising residents who contribute to community, including volunteering.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•				Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development / People and Culture / Environmental Operations
b) Collaborate to deliver training to assist volunteering organisations improve volunteering recruitment, retention and management.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development / Environmental Operations
c) Collaborate to deliver a Sunshine Coast Volunteer Showcase to raise awareness of volunteering opportunities and offer training and recognition of volunteers.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner			•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development
3.3 Community Engagement								
a) Review Council's Excellence in Engagement Framework to further embed and model leading engagement practice.	Direct Action		•	•			Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
b) In collaboration with First Nations people, develop guidelines for engaging with First Nations individuals and groups to ensure their meaningful contribution into decision-making.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•				Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
c) Deliver the Young Leaders Academy developmental program to foster civic engagement and community leadership.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•				Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
d) Review and strengthen Council use of community advisory and reference groups and participatory engagement processes.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner			•	•		Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
e) Develop a guide on how to co-design solutions in collaboration with people with lived experience to improve inclusive and authentic engagement.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner		•	•			Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
f) Explore a periodic regional community engagement program to understand community priorities and opinions on key issues.	Direct Action		•				Subject to securing additional resources	Community Planning and Development
g) Develop a Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Community Engagement Plan that encourages community participation in opportunities that create a lasting positive legacy for our community.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Sunshine Coast Program – Brisbane 2032

New Council Actions	Council Role	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Resources	Council Branch Responsibility (Lead)
Outcome 4. Connected, Resilient Communities								
4.1 Community Connection and Resilience								
a) Collaborate, partner and invest to build community connections through the delivery of free and low-cost initiatives within local communities and neighbourhoods.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
b) Support residents and community organisations to deliver collaborative, community-led responses to identified community priorities.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
c) Support residents and community organisations to plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards and minimise associated risks.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Environment and Sustainability Policy
d) Partner to support local community-led resilience, adaptation planning and recovery activities.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development / Disaster Management
e) Continue to expand and promote Disaster Hub, including the ability to provide more personalised information and notifications.	Direct Action	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Disaster Management
f) Improve inclusion at Council evacuation centres and raise awareness of these centres and their inclusion features.	Direct Action Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Subject to securing additional resources	Disaster Management / Sport and Community Venues / Community Planning and Development
4.2 Community Safety								
a) Promote community programs aimed at improving safety and perceptions of safety.	Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
b) Raise awareness of services and accommodation options available for people experiencing domestic and family violence.	Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
c) Continue strong messaging that builds knowledge and awareness of domestic and family violence, its prevention and supports.	Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development

New Council Actions	Council Role	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Resources	Council Branch Responsibility (Lead)
Outcome 5. Creative, Innovative Communities								
5.1 Arts, Heritage and First Nations Culture								
a) Collaborate with Kabi Kabi peoples and Jinibara peoples to ensure local First Nations history and ongoing culture is protected, respected and celebrated.	Deliver Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Community Planning and Development
b) In collaboration with First Nations people, develop and implement a First Nations Arts Strategy to support and expand the First Nations creative arts sector, including youth-focused creative development.	Deliver Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•				Achievable within existing resources	Arts, Heritage and Libraries
c) Support the development of local artists and arts content that can be profiled, experienced and exported to build capacity, strengthen engagement and cultivate identity.	Deliver Collaborate / Partner Advocate	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Arts, Heritage and Libraries
d) Work with heritage community organisations to grow capacity, sustainability and professionalism.	Deliver Collaborate / Partner	•	•	•	•	•	Achievable within existing resources	Arts, Heritage and Libraries

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