

# STATE OF OUR REGION

A CELEBRATION OF OUR COMMUNITY



**Sunshine Coast**<sup>™</sup>  
COUNCIL

Our region.  
**Healthy. Smart. Creative.**







IS BUSINESS  
STRESSING  
YOU OUT?



This year's State of our Region, is a celebration of the special partnership between Council and the local community.

This book honours your contributions to the Sunshine Coast.  
Thank you.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS**

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of our land and waters, the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples. The unique values and the ancient and enduring cultures of our First Nation peoples deepen and enrich the life of all of our communities.

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

As we farewell 2019 and look forward to the dawn of a new decade, it is important to take stock and reflect on the state of our region – our Sunshine Coast.

This year has without a doubt, been one of achievement, with important work completed to support our communities and lay the foundations for our future. Our Sunshine Coast Council has completed new local facilities, roads and other projects; responded to several hundred thousand customer requests; supported a wide range of events; and implemented programs and partnerships right across the Sunshine Coast – all with a focus on building opportunities for our residents and improving the liveability of our region.

This year we have also seen the devastation of bushfires and damaging storm cells that have touched many in our community. By working with our partners in the police and emergency services and the human services sector, Council has been able to ensure our community is better prepared, is supported during these events and has access to essential services to assist in recovery.

The recent adoption of our Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019–2041 and our decision to proceed with a nomination for our region to be recognised by UNESCO as an international biosphere reserve, are arguably, the two most significant decisions that our Council has taken this year.

Both of these actions are about making sure we get the balance right – between supporting our community, enriching our natural environment and creating the right economic settings – to ensure our Sunshine Coast remains an ideal place to live – now and well into the future. That approach is inherent in everything that Council delivers for our community.

In all of our activities, Council has worked alongside some amazing volunteers, champions, passionate local organisations, business owners and mums and dads – who every day, play their part in enriching the fabric of our region.

This book is a celebration of their stories and shows when we pull together with a common purpose, we can create a truly healthy, smart, creative region. As our Community Strategy says – Together we Thrive.

I invite you to hear about Jo, a person with a disability who can now, thanks to Council's new accessible matting and beach wheelchairs, access some of our most popular beaches. You will also meet Koki, an engineer from Japan who has found work thanks to Council's Migrant Work Ready Program. Learn how a sisterhood of women helped to protect our heritage and have become teachers in our community. You can also read about how our littlest residents are becoming our future environmental leaders.

This is the shared story of our region. I hope you are as inspired as I am.

**MAYOR MARK JAMIESON**







## A STRONG COMMUNITY

We are working with our partners to shape the social fabric of our Sunshine Coast, so our communities are connected, engaged, healthy, vibrant and inclusive. Our priorities are:

- safe and healthy communities
- resilient and engaged communities
- a shared future that embraces culture, heritage and diversity
- connected people and places
- a creative culture that supports community cohesiveness, development and wellbeing.

### How is Council creating a Strong Community?



More than \$4.6 million awarded in community grants



The 2019 Horizon Festival attracted more than 31,000 attendees



Our 20-year Sunshine Coast Community Strategy launched



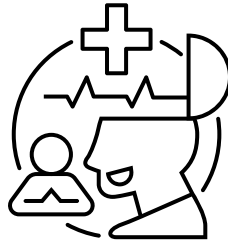
Our innovative Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2019 was delivered



Meridan Plains sports fields, Maroochydore Multi-Sports complex and Beerwah Aquatic Centre received major upgrades



The Events Centre, Caloundra underwent a \$6.85 million redevelopment



## **DELIVERING A THRIVING COMMUNITY TOGETHER**

Following 18 months collaborating with community representatives and organisations, Council was proud to launch the Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041 – a 20-year blueprint for growing a connected, engaged and inclusive community.

The strategy provides the platform for Council, the community and other tiers of government to work together to achieve the vision of Together we thrive.

The strategy's foundations are built on strong social justice principles – equity of access; the efficacy of human dignity and a level playing field – so everyone can benefit as the region continues to grow.

Many people have been, and will contribute to be an integral part of this journey – from community organisations, mums and dads, young people, service providers, local business owners and Council staff, just to name a few.

The Community Strategy provides the blueprint and some of the policy levers to bring key stakeholders together and ensure there is a common platform and community-oriented agenda that we are all working from.

Council has already formed partnerships with the Sunshine Coast Mind and Neuroscience Thompson Institute, the University of the Sunshine Coast, Department of Housing and Public Works and Queensland Council of Social Services.

The strategy is designed to ensure the focus remains on our community being the clear beneficiary as our region continues to grow and mature.



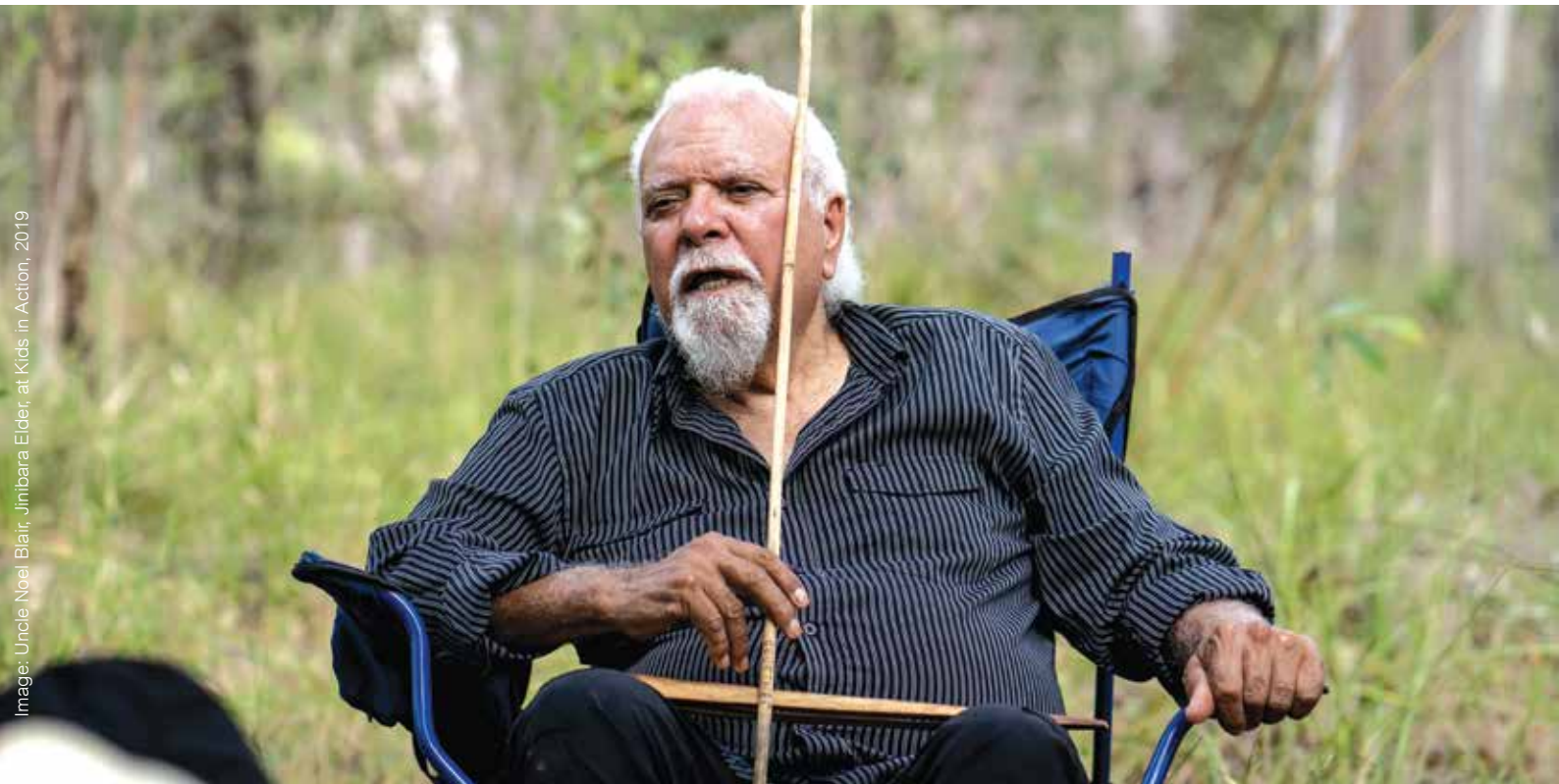
## VOICE, TREATY AND TRUTH

Council's partnership with the Traditional Owners of this region, the Kabi Kabi and Jinibara peoples, continues to strengthen our healthy environment and liveable Sunshine Coast.

During 2019, Council worked closely with many First Nations groups, resulting in a record number of National Reconciliation and NAIDOC Week events.

Council has established its own First Nations Team and is committed to working with the Traditional Owners and the broader First Nations community to support self-determination through economic and community development opportunities.

Delivering Council's Reconciliation Action Plan has been achieved through increased engagement and partnership with our local First Nations community.





## HELPING PEOPLE STAY ACTIVE

Our Healthy Sunshine Coast seniors' classes are offered at community facilities across the region and are a low-cost way to take part in everything from Strength and Stability classes to Aqua Fitness.

Tanawha couple Cathie and Ron Twaddle never miss their weekly dose of lunges and laughter at the Buderim Strength and Stability classes run specifically for seniors of all fitness levels.

Since they started attending the Healthy Sunshine Coast Seniors class' 12 months ago, Cathie and Ron have noticed significant improvements in their strength, cardiovascular fitness, balance and flexibility.

The Healthy Sunshine Coast 2020 program will give our community access to an expanded range of free and low cost activities – helping our residents to live more active lives.







## SISTERHOOD KICKING GOALS

It's an unassuming building in a small country town, but every inch is alive with the shared triumphs and stories of an amazing sisterhood of women.

On November 27, 1937, at a cost of just £156, the Queensland Country Women's Association (QCWA) Hall at Palmwoods was officially opened, to provide a place for women to come together, share stories, help others in the community and overcome isolation.

Fast forward 80 years and the QCWA Hall committee knew it was time for a refresh.

With the help of a Major Community Grant from Sunshine Coast Council, 1200 volunteer hours, and \$20,000 in donated labour and materials, the hall has been restored to its former glory, providing a facility that meets the needs of the broader community.

Since the renovation, membership of the association has increased from six to 30. The Palmwoods QCWA delivers a program for kids to learn about healthy, happy lifestyles and cooking, and thanks to new sewing machines, is teaching people of all ages to sew. Their work today has a direct link to their coming together in the QCWA Hall in 1937.

Today, posts such as this one below regularly are posted on their Facebook page, speaking volumes of the organisation's ethos.

'Are you dreaming about that finished outfit? Palmwoods CWA sewing is on again.

The cost is \$5 or free for members (or free if you can't afford to pay). Small plate for morning tea appreciated, but not essential.'

A new compliant kitchen, means the hall can be used for a range of events, supporting a myriad of community activities.

This year, 1160 community grants totalling more than \$4.8 million were awarded to our community. When Council and the community work together, it's a powerful thing, delivering outcomes and opportunities that really matter to local communities.



## TECH-SAVVY LIBRARIES

Local resident Anne Newton is making a world of difference volunteering her time to help residents better understand and use technology.

After many years working as an assistant in public libraries, Anne understood the challenges many people faced when confronted with technology. Anne volunteers her time at Kawana Library after she saw an advertisement seeking 'tech help' to show people how to use devices.

Anne is one of the 240 outstanding library volunteers who provide Justice of the Peace services, one-on-one tech support, literacy tutoring, home library and genealogy support to customers.

Sunshine Coast Libraries give people the opportunity to explore new ideas, become immersed in wonderful stories, find the information they need and provide a sense of place for every member of the community. Membership is on the rise with more than 115,000 library card holders making the most of the free events, movies, music and books to read.





# SPORTS COMPLEX SCORES UPGRADE

Thanks to a \$3.1 million upgrade to the Maroochydore Multi-Sports Complex, the new, state-of-the-art facilities are making it easier for local families and children to get involved in sport as well as providing an additional incentive for elite teams to visit.

Council committed \$2.55 million to the project with Sunshine Coast Netball Association and AFL contributing \$300,000 and \$250,000, respectively.

Delivering and maintaining great sporting facilities is fundamental to the health and social wellbeing of our community and, with sport and recreation contributing around \$442 million per year to the local economy, investing in modern facilities makes good sense.

The complex now has 26 netball courts and is well positioned to host regional, state and national competitions.





## CROSSING CULTURAL BARRIERS

Koki Mukai is a 34-year-old engineer from Tokyo. He is also a graduate of the Migrant Work Ready Program from an innovative program aimed at helping new migrants prepare for work on the Sunshine Coast.

When Koki arrived on the Sunshine Coast, he had an abundance of skills, but marketing them to potential employers was a real challenge.

Thanks to the insights he gained during the nine-week program, he has secured an engineering position with a Mooloolaba company.

Council delivered the program in partnership with Nambour Community Centre, Maroochy Chamber of Commerce, Solbar, TAFE Queensland, Volunteering Sunshine Coast and the Department of Human Services.

Many new migrants have great skills and experience, however a lack of understanding of the local work environment often impacts on their ability to secure employment.

Participants have learnt how to write a resume, make a great impression during a job interview or networking event and gained insights into the way things are done in Australia.

Since the program's completion in August, seven graduates have found positions in diverse professional areas such as aquaculture, aged care, engineering, hospitality and marketing.

The financial benefits of an inclusive community were highlighted in an August 2019 Deloitte Access Economics report\*, which estimated the economic dividend to Australia is \$12.7 billion annually. It also found increased diversity in the workplace was likely to lead to increased workplace productivity, improved employment outcomes, improved mental and physical health, reduced cost of social services and inclusive growth.

The Migrant Work Ready Program will continue in 2020.

\* 2019 Deloitte Access Economics Report







## A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

We are working with our community to maintain and enhance our region's natural assets, liveability and outstanding environment through:

- a resilient region shaped by clever planning and design
- protecting and enhancing our natural assets and distinctive landscapes
- responsive, accessible and well managed assets and infrastructure
- transitioning to a sustainable and affordable way of living
- a reputation for innovation, sustainability and liveability.

### How is Council creating a Healthy Environment?



Establishing an Australian first tripartite commitment to our Blue Heart initiative, providing new carbon farming opportunities for more than 5000 hectares on the Maroochy River floodplain



Our internationally-significant Pumicestone Passage received an A- for its ecological health



Mary Cairncross Bioblitz finalists were contenders in the prestigious Banksia Awards



More than 300 students from 25 Sunshine Coast schools participated in the 2019 Kids in Action Conference



Council unanimously endorsed a nomination for the Sunshine Coast to become a UNESCO Biosphere reserve



A further 150 hectares was purchased through the Environment Levy land acquisition program, taking Council's Conservation Estate to more than 6900 hectares



8839 hectares of privately-owned land is now being managed for conservation purposes through our Land for Wildlife program



## **BECOMING A BIOSPHERE**

On behalf of our community, Council has developed a nomination for our region to be recognised by UNESCO as an international site of excellence, known as a biosphere reserve.

A biosphere is a special place. It is a place where responsible development and people living sustainably sit alongside active conservation.

- It's about creating a legacy for our children's future.
- It's about caring for our beautiful landscapes and stunning beaches.
- It's about leveraging economic opportunities to grow local businesses.

Becoming a biosphere will help enhance our national and international reputation and support our lifestyle and environment for future generations. It's an important step in the Sunshine Coast's commitment to remain future-facing.

The Sunshine Coast UNESCO Biosphere nomination has been prepared with input from our community, a diverse range of industry sectors, interest groups and government.

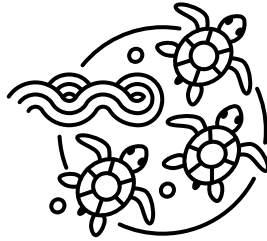
Following the nomination's assessment by the State and Federal governments, it will be considered by UNESCO, with an outcome expected in June 2021.



Image: J. Hill – Summit of Mt Ngungun







## WINTER TURTLES

Year in year out, a dedicated group of citizen scientist volunteers rise with the sun, and walk our coastline to check turtle nests and hatchlings.

July 2019 was particularly astounding for the Cooloom and North Shore Coast Care group volunteers – finding a nest of Loggerhead turtles along the east coast of Australia.

The event is significant because it is the first recorded winter nesting.

The volunteers carefully relocated 82 viable turtle eggs to an incubator to give them the best possible chance of survival.

Had the eggs been left in their original nest on the beach, they would have all perished in the cold temperatures. Thankfully, all of the 82 eggs hatched and were released to the sea.

Prior to the hatchlings being released into the sea, Council's TurtleCare Conservation team, along with Cooloom & North Shore Coast Care volunteers, worked together to analyse a random selection of hatchlings and recorded information to document the rare find.

The summertime turtle nesting season usually takes place from November to May, and more than 180 of our TurtleCare volunteers are once again donning their bright blue shirts to survey our beaches daily, looking for signs of turtles.



## **ADVENTURE SUNSHINE COAST**

More people outdoors, more often. It's a simple but impactful objective.

Adventure Sunshine Coast is helping our community do just that with the launch of the revolutionary and simple-to-use website earlier this year.

The site showcases more than 150 free, self-guided walking, cycling, mountain biking, horse riding and canoeing trails – right across our region – for people of all abilities and fitness levels.

And the award-winning website is proving popular, with more than 35,000 online visits as people search for their next outdoor adventure.



# STUDENTS FIND THEIR FEET IN NATURE

Peachester State School students, visiting the Annie Hehir Road Environmental Reserve, shouted a myriad of enthusiastic answers when asked their favourite activities. That's what you get when you give curious kids an opportunity to engage with the environment in fun ways.

For the second year in a row, students from Years 3–6 joined Jinibara Elder Jason Murphy, Geckoes Wildlife and Council officers for an environmental education workshop.

Council is proud to showcase the beauty and importance of our environmental reserves, and Annie Hehir Road Environmental Reserve is no exception. This 45-hectare property is one of 557 environmental reserves managed by Council for conservation and community enjoyment and was purchased through Council's Environment Levy program.





## **BLUE HEART**

More than 5000 hectares in the heart of the Maroochy River floodplain will become a world-leading showcase for managing land and water for better social, environmental and economic outcomes under an Australian-first partnership announced in July this year.

The Blue Heart is the focus of a tripartite agreement between the Queensland Department of Environment and Science, Unitywater and Council. The agreement aims to strengthen the adaptation and resilience of the Sunshine Coast community, through the delivery of conservation, recreation and flood mitigation.

This ground-breaking partnership will focus on the natural floodplain in the Maroochy River Catchment. At its core is an area of about 1200 hectares, which is currently owned and managed by the three Blue Heart partners. There are currently a number of projects underway in this area to better understand and conserve this landscape.

The Blue Heart area has high biodiversity values which are recognised at a state and national level. Over the life of this project, Council hopes to work with private landholders, so they may access new sustainable land management options, such as blue carbon farming. Council also plans to provide parklands, sports fields and open space areas for the community and provide high value ecotourism and cultural tourism opportunities within the Blue Heart.

The Blue Heart is already attracting national and international interest and is yet another significant demonstration of our Council's extensive actions and commitment to further strengthen the region's response to climate change.







## A SMART ECONOMY

We are working towards becoming a prosperous, high-value economy of choice for business, investment and employment, with our priorities focussed on:

- new capital investment in the region
- investment and growth in high value industries
- creating a natural, major and regional event destination
- strong local-to-global connections
- strong economic leadership, collaboration and identity
- becoming a regional hub for innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity.

### How is Council delivering a Smart Economy?



Council-supported events injected more than \$67 million into the local economy



The region has \$12.5 billion in public and private investment underway or in the pipeline



More than 1500 students from 45 schools took part in Council-funded robotics workshops at 'RoboCoast'



The \$334 million Airport Expansion Project is on target for completion by the end of 2020



Sunshine Coast was the only location in the southern hemisphere named in the Top7 Global Intelligent Communities



The first NRL South Sydney Rabbitohs game, played at the Sunshine Coast Stadium in April 2019, attracted 11,912 people – a record crowd for a sporting event on the Sunshine Coast



In 2019, \$234.1 million was spent with local businesses, which is 67.61 per cent of Council's available procurement spend



## THE CURATED PLATE

This year marked the start of The Curated Plate, a four-day destination food festival celebrating the relationship between chef and producer.

Set in the picturesque surrounds of a region famed for its vibrant produce, The Curated Plate encouraged guests to immerse themselves in the flavours foraged from organic and sustainable practices and enjoy once-in-a-lifetime dining experiences.

With more than 110 Sunshine Coast businesses involved from the hinterland to the beach, the festival was a unique opportunity to showcase the region's \$700 million food and agribusiness industry.

■ The Curated Plate will continue in 2020 and promises to be better than ever.



# B-WELL AND PROSPER

There's no doubt about it, business can stress you out. In an Australian-first, Council partnered with industry leaders from across the region to enable small business owners and their staff to access tips and tricks they need to be well and to prosper.

Joining forces with local wellness and business coaches, Council launched a one-stop shop that can be accessed anytime, anywhere with an internet connection to get free advice on business, finances, health, mindfulness and wellness ideas, hear other people's stories of success and connect with other locals to help make business and life the best it can be.

The B-Well and Prosper online portal allows small businesses with less than 20 staff to log on and gain access to a wealth of information.

More than 330 businesses have accessed the program since July 2019.



**IS BUSINESS  
STRESSING  
YOU OUT?**



## **SUNSHINE COAST REGION RECOGNISED AS ONE OF THE BEST IN THE WORLD**

It was an exciting day in February when the Sunshine Coast was the only Australian location named in the Top7 Global Intelligent Communities list for 2019.

This award recognises the collaboration between community, education and industry leaders over many years to utilise technology be more efficient, expand opportunities and build sustainable prosperity.

Will Shrapnel is a fifth-generation resident, born and bred on the Sunshine Coast. He was proud to join a delegation from our region, traveling to New York to accept the Top7 award on behalf of the community.

Like many of us, Will believes the Sunshine Coast is capable of hosting the most advanced and technology-intensive industries the world has to offer. The Top7 award is a fantastic achievement for our community, as it supports our thriving ecosystem of innovation, entrepreneurs and start-ups working hard to create a better future for us all.

This Global Intelligent Communities Forum award acknowledges communities which exemplify best practice in broadband deployment and use, workforce development, innovation, digital inclusion, sustainability and advocacy. It is a tip-of-the-hat towards the exciting work being done to deliver our international broadband submarine cable. This cable, and the fast international internet connection it provides, will further bolster our opportunities and cement our reputation as a world-leading community in the digital age.



# A GEM OF AN IDEA

In 2019, 17 students and six finalist teams participated in the Mayor's Telstra Innovation Awards, with the all-girl team 'RoboGems' from Chancellor State College taking out first prize. Their winning entry called Parki-bit, was a wearable device aimed at assisting sufferers of Parkinson's disease.

Following their success in the awards, team RoboGems has participated in a range of business events and opportunities including being selected as Queensland activators, sponsored by the Queensland Government, for a global network of women known as SheEO. Since the Mayor's Telstra Innovation Awards were launched in 2016, more than 120 students have participated and shared in more than \$80,000 in prizes and experiences.

Through the Regional Economic Development Strategy's Investment in Talent and Skills Pathway, other programs were also supported, helping young people prepare for their career.





## **AIRPORT EXPANSION TAKES OFF FOR EXPORTERS**

The Sunshine Coast Airport Expansion project continued throughout the year as Council delivers a new runway, parallel taxiway and other infrastructure that will help connect the Sunshine Coast with the world. A new runway and better facilities means greater accessibility and more opportunities for work, tourism and exporting businesses. It is an asset which opens our region to global markets, giving our \$700 million food and agribusiness sectors direct access to new customers.

In fact, the Airport Expansion project will contribute \$4.1 billion to the local economy over the period to 2040. It will also generate around 2230 jobs in our community, help to boost tourism, enable visitors from many locations to gain direct access to the region, and support our local exporting businesses. The first aircraft will touch down on the new runway on May 21, 2020 and the project will be complete by the end of that year.







## SERVICE EXCELLENCE

We are working to deliver positive experiences for our customers and great services to our community by:

- respecting and valuing our customers
- providing flexible and customised solutions for our customers
- ensuring regular and relevant engagement with our community
- having service quality assessed by our performance and value to customers
- ensuring our assets meet endorsed standards for sustainable service delivery.

### How is Council delivering Service Excellence?



Council assisted more than 262,000 customers through our contact centres



60 kilometers of coastline and more than 12,000 kilometers of waterways were maintained



More than 1.4 million people visited our local libraries



Council delivered 98 per cent of its \$357 million capital works program



99 per cent of our 10.6 million domestic waste bins were collected on time



1045 hectares of recreational land and 6909 hectares of environmental reserves were also managed and maintained



## **NO BARRIERS TO OUR BEACHES**

Going to the beach independently is something most of us take for granted, but for some it's a little harder.

Jo Ellsum lives just 100 metres from the beach and spending time in the water is her favourite thing to do. However, without the help of her husband, she was unable to get from her wheelchair to the water.

Now, thanks to the roll-out of accessible matting and beach wheelchairs at four Sunshine Coast beaches, getting to the water by herself is a whole lot easier.

Council has allocated \$50,000 towards this project, which includes ongoing maintenance of the accessible matting and wheelchairs, and modifications to existing ramps at all four beaches.

Council and surf lifesaving clubs at Coolum, Kings, Mooloolaba and Alexandra Headland beaches delivered the initiative, but the lion's share of the work is being done by volunteer lifesavers who roll out the matting every weekend between September and May and take bookings for beach wheelchairs and life jackets.

People with disabilities, parents with prams and seniors shouldn't have to watch from the sidelines and initiatives like this are essential to ensure more people, of all abilities, experience the joy of visiting our beaches.





# DELIVERING SMILES ALL ROUND

Beerwah's much-loved Turner Park has delivered plenty of smiles to little faces after it was rejuvenated into a playground for all ages.

The upgrade features sections for both big and little kids in line with the intent of the community-led master plan for the park.

The shaded setting gives our youngest minds the opportunity to meet other children – learning, exploring and physically developing while having fun outdoors.

Uniquely designed to help kids stay active and build confidence, the playground incorporates Beerwah's fruit farming history in the toddler section and boasts an 8.5 metre tall, multi-level play tower – only the second of its kind in Queensland.

Council prides itself on the diversity and maintenance of 1213 community green spaces spanning across the Sunshine Coast, so our residents can continue to enjoy the outdoors.





## **IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO RAISE A SKATE PARK**

From the 1970s when skaters dropped into abandoned swimming pools to today's precision-built concrete skate parks, skate culture has come a long way.

Earlier this year, and following extensive assessments, community surveys, expert reviews and in line with the Skate and BMX Plan 2011-2021, Council sought community feedback on three skate park design options for Dicky Beach.

Option one was the overwhelming favourite, winning more than 60 per cent of votes. As a result of local user feedback and expert advice, Council undertook further design development to come up with a final skate park layout. Community response to the future direction of the site has been very positive.

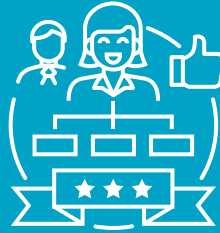
The Dicky Beach Skate Park is part of Council's Dicky Beach Precinct Plan and is due for construction in 2021.











## OUTSTANDING ORGANISATION

We are striving to be a high-performing, customer-focused organisation marked by great people, good governance and regional leadership by:

- a collaborative workplace culture with engaged, energised and skilled people professionally ready for the future
- investing in core capabilities and opportunities for staff to lead, learn and grow
- delivering strong and accountable leadership enabling councillors, individuals and teams to be their best
- being a financially sustainable organisation
- delivering collaborative, proactive partnerships with community, business and government
- earning a reputation for implementing innovative and creative solutions for future service delivery
- implementing systems and processes which underpin quality decisions and enhance the customer experience.

### What makes Council an outstanding organisation?



Development of the Maroochydore city centre automated waste collection system, the Sunshine Coast International Broadband Network, and delivery of Development.i have added to Council's proud record of Australian-firsts



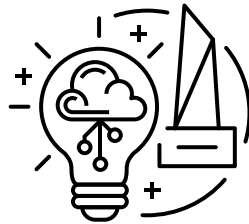
Council recognised with 17 awards



Delivered an \$848 million Council budget



109 per cent of Council electricity consumption offset by the Sunshine Coast Solar Farm



## TOP GONGS GO TO...

Our community shone brightly at local, state and national awards this year – highlighting the game changing individuals and businesses making our region healthy, smart and creative.

Some of the highlights include Bankfoot House which was recognised multiple times for the heritage-listed house museum, and received two High Commendation awards at the prestigious 2019 Queensland Heritage Awards.

Development.i, a revolutionary development tracking and visualisation platform, won the Improving Planning Processes and Practices award at the Planning Institute of Australia Queensland Awards.

Sunshine Coast Council's Disaster Management Team won the Local Government Award at the 20<sup>th</sup> Resilient Australia Awards for their disaster preparedness.

Meanwhile Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve received a top gong in recognition of Excellence in Project Innovation for the Rainforest Discovery Centre.





# GOOD FINANCIAL HEALTH

Sunshine Coast Council has finished the year in an excellent financial position, which enables Council to deliver a wide breadth of services to the community as well as invest in region-shaping projects which will provide opportunities for the community today and well into the future.

Once again, our Council achieved a strong financial sustainability rating from the Queensland Treasury Corporation, making us one of only three of Queensland's 77 Councils to receive this high assessment.

Council's financial statements are independently audited by the Queensland Audit Office and we have received eight consecutive unmodified audits since 2012 which is a fantastic outcome and one that all our ratepayers should be pleased to see.

Our Council prides itself on its prudent financial stewardship which places us in a strong financial position out-performing other major South-East Queensland Councils.





## **READ AND WRITE FOR LIFE**

For the past 30 years, Sunshine Coast Council Library staff, in collaboration with dedicated volunteers, have been running our highly valued 'Read and Write for Life' literacy program.

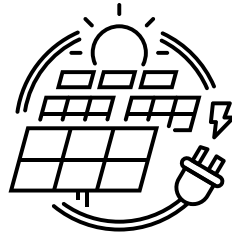
Many of us take for granted the ability to read a book or write a letter, but if you've got challenges in those areas, it's great to know that your local libraries can help.

The free 'Read and Write for Life' program is one that Council is really proud of. The program has the potential to change our learners' lives, whether it be as simple as helping them to read their children a bedtime story or opening up new job opportunities.

The program offers free, confidential support with general literacy, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, maths and basic computer skills. It is open to everyone, from school leavers, parents, grandparents, workers, unemployed, people with physical or intellectual disabilities and migrants.







## **SOLAR FARM CHARGES AHEAD**

Since the Sunshine Coast Solar Farm began generating power two-and-a-half years ago, it's been a quiet achiever, silently delivering savings and offsetting more than 109 per cent of Council's electricity use.

From commissioning in July 2017 through to 30 November 2019, the Sunshine Coast Solar Farm has generated 66,800 megawatt hours of electricity, more than offsetting the 59,089 megawatt hours of energy consumed by Council. By taking a proactive approach, Council is successfully combatting the impacts of the cost of its operations from rising electricity costs.

The solar farm has also packed a powerful environmental punch with a massive 53,400 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided since operating.

This region-shaping project continues to future-proof our ratepayer dollars, with money saved being more effectively spent delivering services to the community. Council is proud to deliver on its vision to be Australia's most sustainable region and in doing so creating awareness around renewable energy.

To recognise and continue its great work, Council has moved into the detailed design stage of an education centre at the solar farm site. The centre will serve to inspire and educate not just our community, but the broader Australian community which has demonstrated interest in learning from our Sunshine Coast approach.

By boosting productivity through infrastructure, sustainability and planning, our region works towards lessening our environmental footprint for our community and for generations to come.

# A HEALTHY, SMART, CREATIVE 2020 TO LOOK FORWARD TO



Image: ben vos productions



## SUNSHINE COAST DRAWS NRL BIG GUNS FOR 2020

Three National Rugby League games will take place on the Sunshine Coast in 2020, including the Cronulla Sharks against the North Queensland Cowboys on May 16, the Holden Women's State of Origin on June 19 and the South Sydney Rabbitohs playing the New Zealand Warriors on August 15, 2020. The Sunshine Coast will be the only regional destination in Australia to host two NRL clubs in the one season.

## BRISBANE ROAD CAR PARK REDEVELOPMENT ROLLS ON

The new eight-storey multi-deck car park will improve public parking availability in Mooloolaba by increasing the number of car parking spaces from 176 to more than 700, with a further 54 motorcycle spaces and 50 bicycle spaces. Weather permitting, the new car park is expected to be completed by December 2020.



## REFRESHING OUR HINTERLAND PARKS AND TRAILS

In 2020, several of our much-loved hinterland parks and facilities will receive an upgrade, including the Glass House Mountains District Park and Russell Family Park in Montville. With more playgrounds, new pathways and refreshed recreational amenities, keep an eye out for even more family-friendly and active opportunities for our hinterland community.



## DEVELOPING OUR COASTAL HAZARD ADAPTATION STRATEGY TOGETHER

Council's Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy '*Our Resilient Coast. Our Future.*' will be the subject of further community engagement in 2020, to gain further local perspectives on the risks and adaptation options for protecting our coastal assets. It is critical our strategic and proactive plan for the future management of this coastline be developed hand-in-hand with the community.



## LOCAL ROAD UPGRADES

As part of Council's \$97 million investment in roads and stormwater assets, 2020 will see the completion of the \$2.4 million upgrade of Kiamba Road, \$2 million road rehabilitation projects in Caloundra's Queen and Beerburrum streets and the innovative use of recycled tyres in crumb rubber seal for rural road resealing in Beerburrum, Cambronn and Mount Mellum.



## HORIZON TO DELIGHT IN 2020

Horizon Festival is again set to delight and connect our community in 2020, with a carefully curated program of unique experiences across visual arts, performance, music, words and ideas, and creative workshops.

The festival will run from August 28 to September 6, 2020 in a region-wide celebration of the people, places and stories of the Sunshine Coast.



## CABLE CONNECTS SUNSHINE COAST TO THE WORLD

The cable landing station was completed in September 2019, with the International Broadband Submarine Cable Network due to come ashore before the end of December and be in service by mid-2020.

Forecast to deliver \$927 million for Queensland and more than 860 new jobs, it will provide the fastest data and telecommunications transmissions from the eastern seaboard of Australia to Asia and help position our region as a future digital trade hub.

## RUNWAY TAKES SHAPE

The first stage of the new runway and associated infrastructure at the Sunshine Coast Airport will be completed and operating from May 21, 2020, with the remainder of the project completed by the end of 2020.

The Sunshine Coast Airport Expansion project is forecast to deliver an economic benefit of \$4.1 billion and 2230 new jobs between now and 2040, providing a direct gateway from the Sunshine Coast to the world.





## EVENT EXCITEMENT BUILDS

The 2020 Sunshine Coast event calendar offers plenty for everyone. With more than 60 major events spread across the year, residents and visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy exciting sporting and recreational events including marathons, triathlons, bowls, cricket and surfing plus three huge rugby league matches. They will also enjoy world class food and cultural experiences, including The Curated Plate food festival in August 2020, which will serve up the best Sunshine Coast produce from land and sea.



## ENVIRONMENT LEVY PRESERVES OUR LIFESTYLE

The Environment Levy is used to buy, protect and enhance environmentally significant land which provides important habitat areas for flora and fauna and contributes to maintaining the liveability of the Sunshine Coast. Next year, the levy will continue to connect people with nature through conservation partnership initiatives and build our knowledge through research and monitoring.



## CALOUNDRA REGIONAL GALLERY TURNS 20

Sunshine Coast's Regional Gallery at Caloundra will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020, and invites our community to join in the celebrations throughout the year.

A special week-long celebration is planned from August 8-16 to celebrate its anniversary on August 11, 2020. Immerse yourself in the visual delights of the gallery's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition program.





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