

ASSET SUSTAINABILITY

5.5. Communication and Engagement Strategy and Implementation Plan for the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Project

Prepared by: Zoe Holmes, Acting Communications Lead

Meeting Date: Thursday, November 24, 2022

Executive Summary:

This report requests Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to proceed with the Communication and Engagement Strategy, Implementation Plan including the establishment of a Stakeholder Reference Group for the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Project; and that Council endorses Terms of Reference for the Stakeholder Reference Group.

Recommendation:

"That Council:

- 1. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to proceed with the Communication and Engagement Strategy for the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Project; and**
 - 2. endorse the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Stakeholder Reference Group Terms of Reference (Attachment 1)."**
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Background:

This Strategy and Implementation Plan has been developed to guide communication and engagement during the detailed design and construction phase of the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Project.

The Cassowary Coast Regional Council (CCRC) acknowledges the potential Innisfail holds and the impact additional investment will provide through the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation project, with the potential to contribute to the ongoing social and economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 and current macro-economic factors

CCRC is seeking to revitalise the Innisfail CBD, nearby ANZAC Park and Fitzgerald Esplanade. The primary objective is to create an attractive, inviting, and functional place through improved amenity and design. This is planned to be achieved by continuing to undertake improvement works to celebrate the Art Deco history and make the area more welcoming for residents and visitors.

Once complete, the upgrade will revitalise the precinct, creating a vibrant town centre that is aimed at meeting the needs of the community as well as expectations from visitors and will encourage further development from investors.

The objective of Stage One is to develop an agreed framework and updated masterplan for the revitalisation of the CBD to facilitate:

- Enhanced opportunities to retain locals and visitors in the CBD area through providing targeted public infrastructure and visual amenities.
- Development and keeping in with town character.
- The need to maintain the unique and authentic nature of the town.
- Enhancement of the sense of community in terms of its low-key, casual lifestyle, friendliness of the residents and small-town community like atmosphere of the area.
- The potential as a desirable place to set up business, live, work, enjoy retail and leisure.
- Highlighting the town centre as a multi-functional place by balancing the demands of motorists and the need for a pedestrian-friendly environment. It is important to note that all motorists become pedestrians once their vehicle is parked.

- Provide a diversified regional economy, which builds on existing regional advantages and specialisations, such as agriculture and tourism.

The Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Project will bring benefits to the local community, business owners and wider region. However, during the detail design and construction phase, it has the potential to impact the community and, more directly, business owners, as encroachments are removed, spaces redesigned and construction impacts occur.

It is important during these phases that Council effectively engages with key stakeholders to ensure Council can deliver this project supported by effective communications and engagement.

The Communication and Engagement Strategy and Implementation Plan provides a roadmap, highlighting how Council aims to achieve effective engagement through the project. The Strategy focuses on identifying key stakeholders, project negotiables and non-negotiables, level of engagement proposed and outlines key messages.

To reach the identified stakeholders at various levels, several different methods of engagement have been identified. Methods include, letter drops, community information sessions, stakeholder meetings, one-on-one consultation sessions, a dedicated project webpage on council's "Your Say Cassowary Coast" portal project advertising and social media.

The goals of implementation of the Communication and Engagement Strategy are to:

- Create strong community involvement.
- Ensure stakeholders feel heard and involved in the design of the community space (negotiables).
- During construction, directly impacted stakeholders, such as business owners, are informed and kept up to date with planned works.

Communication and Engagement

Council commits to communicate and engage with stakeholders and the broader community in a meaningful and accountable way which is underpinned by the IAP2 Framework.

Council is dedicated to consulting with our communities consistently to involve them in strategic planning for their region. To assist with meeting this goal, a Stakeholder Reference Group (CRG) will be created to provide guidance and advice. Group members will be selected through an application process and are people who reflect the local community, have good community connections and come from diverse backgrounds and/or experiences.

Terms of Reference

The Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) Terms of Reference supports Council's goal of working collaboratively to build a community informed and engaged in its future.

The purpose of the Reference Group is to:

- Create the opportunity for stakeholders and community to be regularly informed and engaged by the Cassowary Coast Regional Council on the concept design and progress of the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation.
- Assist in increasing community awareness about the project and highlight relevant issues.

- Provide the opportunity for stakeholders to be consulted about and participate in the design process.

The Terms of Reference outlines Council's Commitment to the group, the members' responsibilities, code of conduct and membership information. It is proposed that membership consists of 12 members from the identified stakeholders.

Members will be required to apply through an expression of interest process with preference provided to those in the Primary stakeholder group.

Identified Stakeholders for Terms of Reference

| Primary Stakeholders |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innisfail CBD Traders and Operators • Property Owners/ Residents directly affected by project • Traditional Land Owners - Mamu Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC • Essential Service providers • Representative Business Organisation/Group • Innisfail Disability Action Group • Arts/Culture Groups • Environmental Groups • Department of Transport and Main Roads |
| Secondary Stakeholders |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Owners/Residents in close proximity of the area, that will not be directly impacted • Wider Community • Tourism Operators • Accommodation Owners • Community Groups • Contractors |
| Tertiary Stakeholders |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Providers • Media Agencies • Road Users • Community Facilities |

Extent of Authority

CSRG members have an active role to provide feedback and advice to Council to inform the design and direction of the Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Project as follows:

- CSRG members participate in discussions at meetings.
- CSRG members have an advisory role and do not hold any authority to make decisions or commitments on behalf of Council.

CSRG members do not have the authority to:

- Expend money on behalf of Council.
- Speak on behalf of Council.
- Commit Council to any arrangement.
- Direct Council officers in the performance of their duties.

Link to Corporate Plan:
COMMUNITY - OUR PEOPLE

What we want to see by 2025

Council working in partnership with the community, to enhance and promote pride in and livability of the region.

Strategic Objectives

- C1 Increase community engagement, consultation, transparency in decision making and ease of access to information
- C2 Develop and deliver a service excellence strategy that is valued by our community
- C8 Promote arts, culture and events as a key feature of the region's lifestyle, livability, vitality and character
- C9 In partnership with Community groups, provide opportunities for lifelong learning for all

Consultation:

Project Control Group – Innisfail CBD Revitalisation Project

Legal Implications (Statutory basis, legal risks):

Council has given due consideration to the Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld) in passing any resolution emanating from the recommendations in this paper or otherwise.

Policy Implications:

Nil

Risk Implications (Corporate, Operational, Project risks):

C1 – Lack of community/ stakeholder engagement.

C2 – Ineffective communications – lack of quality, consistency and accuracy of information going out to the public.

C3 – Ineffective media management strategy and organisational structure for media communications service.

Financial & Resource Implications:

Financial and resourcing for this project is within Council's operational parameters (including capital and operational budgets).

Report authorised by:

Andrew Graffen, Chief Executive Officer

Supporting Documents:

1. Attachment 1 - Innisfail CBD Masterplan and Revitalisation - Terms of Reference - V4