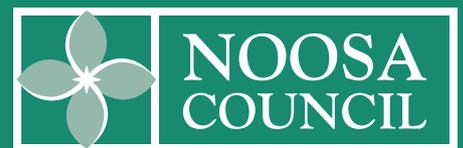


# Noosa Social Strategy



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#### **Disclaimer**

This document has been developed by Noosa Shire Council's Community Development Unit in consultation with the Noosa Social Strategy Reference group.

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#### **Acknowledgements**

Council acknowledges the Kabi Kabi people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land.

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## Executive Summary

Noosa is recognised as one of Australia's most desirable places to live, work and visit, thanks to its outstanding beauty, mild subtropical weather and enviable lifestyle prospects.

The Noosa Social Strategy (the 'Strategy') provides a framework to continue to improve community wellbeing and cohesiveness while addressing the social opportunities and challenges facing the Shire over the coming years. It highlights our current strengths as a community and commits to supporting and building upon these while at the same time identifying priority social issues and challenges for action.

The Strategy articulates Council's role in the cultural, community and social life of the Shire. It encourages greater collaboration between government and non-government organisations, service agencies, facility providers and individuals to avoid duplication, improve efficiencies and enhance community cohesion.

The Strategy will be supplemented by an implementation plan which details new initiatives, ongoing commitments and also provides actions, timeframes and key performance indicators. The implementation plan will be reported against every 12 months and reviewed every three to five years allowing for consideration of emerging issues. These documents provide Council and other agencies with solid evidence and rationale to help make well-informed decisions about social issues and community needs.

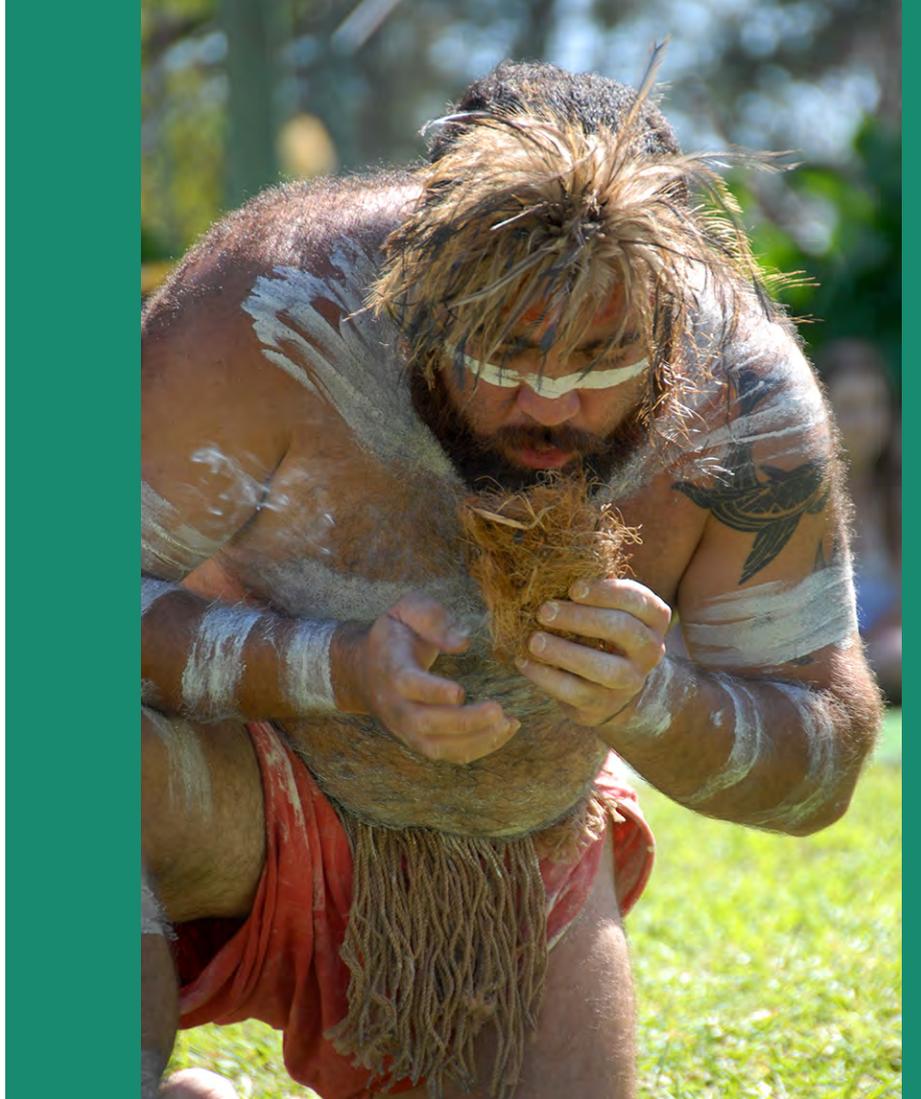
Four strategic themes are identified in the Strategy. These themes are aspirational and identify our long-term goals. We are committed to becoming a more:

- Cohesive and resilient community
- Active and healthy community
- Accessible, diverse and affordable community, and
- Creative and informed community.

These themes were developed in consultation with the Social Strategy working group, key stakeholders and through an analysis of statistics, demographics and other social data. For each theme, aspirational statements and key initiatives are outlined to inform future implementation and action planning.

In setting this policy direction, Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land past and present, salutes all those who have helped shape the Shire and pays tribute to the countless volunteers and community groups who help maintain and build the social capital of our towns, rural communities and villages.

Council looks forward to working with other tiers of government, local businesses, community organisations and individual residents to implement this Strategy.



# 1

## Introduction

People's lives are shaped by their particular circumstances, their personal choices, their families and support networks, the availability of services, the local economy and the surrounding environment. Separately and collectively these can either have a positive or negative affect on individual and community wellbeing.

Council's goal is to facilitate Noosa's development so that our social, built, and natural environments positively influence the wellbeing of residents, workers and visitors. This requires Council to plan for, create, maintain and deliver a variety of public places, facilities and services to improve people's quality-of-life. It also entails advocacy on behalf of those in greatest need; the targeted delivery of programs and services; and harnessing the power of key individuals and stakeholders within the Shire.

# 2

## Background



## The Federal & State Context

The Federal and State Governments have broad-ranging responsibilities to deal with social issues.

At the Federal and State level there are major policy changes currently being discussed and implemented in the areas of health, aged and child care, disability, affordable housing, homelessness, education and social welfare. Some of these include:

- The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Consumer Directed Care which aims to change the way in which social services are delivered across the country
- Commonwealth Home Support Program which aims to support more older people to live independently in their communities for longer
- Changes to the Aged Pension, Family Support Benefits and Youth Unemployment Benefits
- Reduction in Federal payments to the States to deliver primary health care
- A focus on disease prevention and how to meet the challenges that come with increasing rates of often preventable disease such as diabetes, skin cancer and chronic heart disease
- Taskforces into domestic violence, child sexual abuse and indigenous health
- Debates on how best to help individuals struggling with mental health issues, substance abuse and gambling addictions
- An expanded role for not-for-profit organisations in delivering social services
- New funding models for tertiary education institutions
- A shift from locally delivered services to online service delivery.

To be effective, responses to social issues require significant resourcing. The Federal budget allocates 35% of its total budget to community services. However, increasingly, the community is asking for more funding to meet growing social needs, particularly in regional areas.

As a result, State and Federal Governments are increasingly focussed on evidenced based initiatives, measurable outcomes and demonstrable value for money when providing funding to the social services sector. It is vital for organisations servicing the Noosa area to have access to consolidated and accurate localised data to inform initiatives and funding requests. Furthermore, with changes in government come changes in policy direction. So throughout the life of this Strategy there may be changes in the funding and provision of social programs and services.

The Federal and State Government's implementation of their social policy agendas affect all of our lives. Here in Noosa we face similar challenges to other people around Australia.

The Noosa Shire Social Strategy attempts to put these major policy debates and issues into a local context. It highlights our strengths and the simple fact that, regardless of what the Federal or State Government does, we as a community have a responsibility for the wellbeing of our fellow citizens.



# The Noosa Community

The Noosa Shire is located in South East Queensland, approximately 120 kilometres north of Brisbane. The region is bounded by the Gympie Regional Council in the north and west, and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council to the south. The Shire encompasses a total land area of 871.6 km<sup>2</sup> with over 800 kilometres of roads and nearly 450 kilometres of bikeways.

More than 53,000 people call Noosa home, however this swells significantly in peak holiday periods. For example, over 110,000 visitors overnights in Noosa between January and March 2015, with a further 97,000 day visitors in the same period. It is important to recognise the challenge in balancing the different needs, expectations and priorities of residents and visitors. Under the current Noosa Planning Scheme, the sustainable resident population has the capacity to grow to 62,000. While the resident population of Noosa Shire is relatively small and anticipated growth is limited, there are growing communities nearby who rely on various services, facilities and recreational opportunities within the Noosa Shire. Over half a million people are expected to live on the Sunshine Coast by the year 2036 and greater Brisbane is expected to be home to nearly 3.5 million by the same time.

Urban development in the Shire is concentrated in the coastal communities and eastern beaches from Peregian Beach in the south to Noosa Heads and Tewantin in the north. In these areas the population density is around 400 persons per square kilometre. For the balance of the Shire, the overall population density is approximately 25 persons per square kilometre concentrated in and around the hinterland centres of Cooroy, Pomona, Cooran, Kin Kin and Boreen Point. Smaller residential areas are scattered throughout the hinterland.

While significant amounts of native vegetation have been removed or greatly modified, one third of Noosa is considered to have outstanding environmental, biodiversity and natural history values and is managed primarily for conservation. A further 30,653 hectares of land is predominantly undeveloped and sustainably managed through voluntary arrangements such as Land for Wildlife and Voluntary Conservation Agreements.

In 2007 the Shire was designated a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and Man and the Biosphere (MAB) program. The Noosa community is proud of its biosphere status which going forward provides a benchmark for development proposals and sustainability initiatives across the Shire.



Noosa's economy relies significantly on tourism leveraging the Shire's great beaches, natural open spaces and outdoor recreational assets. Noosa is home to high profile cultural and sporting events which attract national and international media contributing to Noosa's reputation as a premier tourist destination. In an attempt to reduce this dependence Council is developing strategies such as the Noosa Shire Local Economic Plan to diversify the local economy and develop new high value, low environmental impact businesses across the Shire. There are approximately 7,400 businesses in Noosa which are mainly small or micro businesses. It is also home to a range of very successful entrepreneurs and skilled business people.

The Noosa community prides itself on its many strengths including:

- a strong community spirit fostering a sense of belonging among residents
- an engaged population that plays an active role in decision making
- a reputation for being a caring community that helps one another
- an outdoor lifestyle with its associated health and wellbeing benefits
- a strong and longstanding commitment to the protection of environmental values
- a large pool of active retirees, often available for volunteer work
- dynamic community groups, sporting clubs and social clubs
- popular sporting, food and cultural festivals and events
- low-rise development that is integrated with the landscape
- a lack of big city symbols such as traffic lights, neon signs and billboards
- an appreciation of our history and heritage
- a small Council that is responsive to its community
- a distinct identity and brand which leverage significant economic benefit.



## Community Snapshot

In developing this social strategy, Council built a community profile of the Shire using demographic data and education, employment and socio-economic indicators to provide an insight into the needs, challenges and issues facing the resident population. The profile will also be used as background for the new planning scheme and is available on Council's website at: <http://www.noosa.qld.gov.au/community-profile>

For the purpose of this document we have chosen to highlight a number of statistics from that profile and other sources which provide a snapshot of the Noosa Community.

# Who We Are



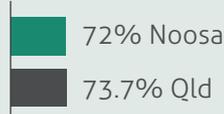
## Population

53,052

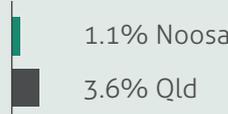
↑ represents 10,000 people



## Born in Australia



## Indigenous



## LGBTI\*

10-15% Estimated Sunshine Coast (11% nationally)

\* LGBTI - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex

## Noosa Residents Age



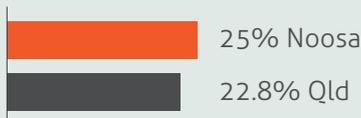
## Median Age

Qld 36 years

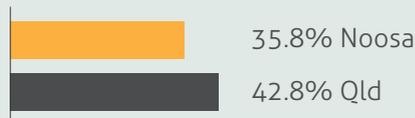
## Top 5 Non-English Languages

- German 0.9%
- French 0.4%
- Italian 0.4%
- Dutch 0.3%
- SE Asian 0.2%

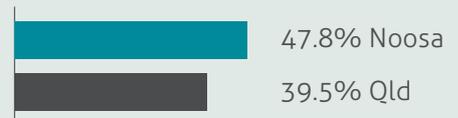
## One parent family



## Couples with children < 15yrs



## Couples with no children



Includes same sex couple families.

## Living Alone



Noosa's population is ageing at a faster rate than the rest of the State. Having an active senior population is a valuable asset, bringing diverse skills and life experiences to the community; however it also means that policy makers need to tailor infrastructure and community services to meet the needs of this demographic.

One quarter of our population live alone, increasing the risk of social isolation and highlighting the importance of individuals having multiple opportunities to connect with their community.

Noosa's community profile also tell us that over 27% of our population are under 25 so we need to provide opportunities and support for young people and their families.

For a variety of reasons marginalised groups in the community such as Indigenous, LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex) and Non-English speaking people are often under-represented in the population data. Local social and community workers believe that the number of people in these groups is probably higher than those reported here and specific initiatives should be developed to address their needs in consultation with the groups themselves.

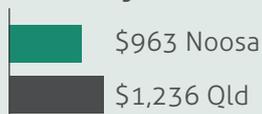
# Socio Economic



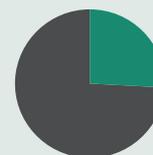
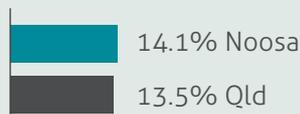
## Unemployed\*



## Median Household Weekly Income\*



## Families with no parent employed\*\*\*

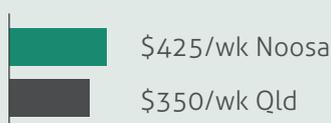


**26%**  
Pensioner concession holder^

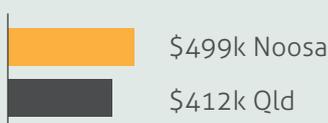
\*March Quarter 2015 ^ Centrelink 2012

\*\*Council 2015/16. Based on net costs, including depreciation and corporate overheads, but excluding Waste Management which operates at a profit.

## Median 3 bedroom house rent



## Median residential 3 bedroom house sale price



Sunshine Coast is the 12<sup>th</sup> least affordable housing market in the world\*\*

\*\* The 11th Annual Demographic International Housing Affordability Survey (2014: 3rd quarter)

## SEIFA Scores\*\*



10.7% in **least** disadvantages quintile  
12.8% in **most** disadvantaged quintile

\*\* ABS Index that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage.

## Main Employment Sectors

- Retail Trade
- Accom & Food Services
- Health Care & Social Assistance
- Construction
- Education & Training



## 20% of Council's Rates spent on Community Services#

#March Quarter 2015



Median household income in Noosa is well below the Queensland average. In addition median home purchase and rental prices are well above State averages which highlight a lack of affordable housing in the Shire. This, combined with large numbers of people on fixed incomes such as pensions, a high rate of unemployment and the growth in part-time and casual employment, tells us that many residents are struggling to meet increases in costs of living.

In contrast, the Socio Economic Indexes (SEIFA) also indicate the existence of pockets of economic advantage in places like Noosa Heads and Sunshine Beach.

# Public Health



9%

**Healthcare card holders<sup>#</sup>**



1 in 8

**Adults smoke daily<sup>##</sup>**



85%

**Children fully immunised<sup>\*</sup>**



1 in 2

**Overweight or Obese<sup>##</sup>**

<sup>#</sup>Centrelink 2012   <sup>\*</sup>Notifiable disease data 2014/2015   <sup>##</sup>PHN (2007-2008)

## Mental Health Problems<sup>##</sup>



11% Males

12% Females

## Cases<sup>\*</sup>

Food borne illness

306

Ross River Fever

119

7 Measles

17 Whooping Cough

<sup>\*</sup>Notifiable disease data 2014/2015   <sup>##</sup>PHN (2007-2008)



**22%** Delayed medical consultation due to cost<sup>^</sup>

**14.1%** Delayed purchasing prescribed medication due to cost<sup>\*\*</sup>

<sup>^</sup>over 18 years Public Health Information 2010   <sup>\*\*</sup> Compared to Qld PHN 2012-13

Our community's health is broadly comparable with the state averages for conditions such as asthma, circulatory disease, type 2 diabetes and mental health. However, these rates (particularly mental health) are high when compared to national averages.

The high rates of obesity, numbers of adults smoking and delayed medical consultation are indicators of future rates of preventable disease. Based on this evidence it is prudent to trial and develop specifically targeted prevention programs and activities to reduce these risk factors.

Rates of child immunisation in Noosa are also significantly lower than the rest of the State and directly relate to the incidence of some preventable childhood diseases.

Our sub-tropical climate means that we need to maintain preventative practises such as mosquito control programs and regulation of food preparation hygiene to reduce the incidence of diseases such as Ross River and food borne illness.

# Community Participation



Approx. 200  
**Community organisations**



100+  
**Sport & recreation organisations**

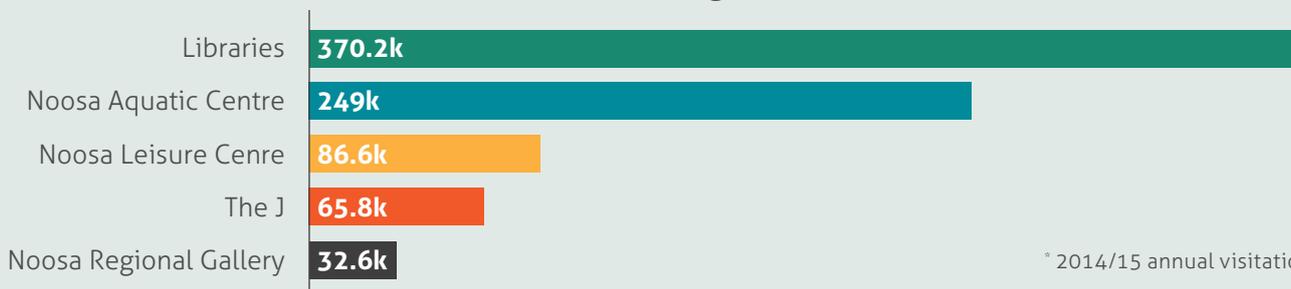


**Volunteers**



23,285 hours  
**of service provided by Noosa Community Support**

## Visits to Council Managed Facilities\*



\* 2014/15 annual visitation

One of the key learnings from the Community Profile is that Noosa is a highly engaged community both politically and socially. One fifth of our residents volunteer their time and our community facilities are well used.

We have over 300 community groups providing services and opportunities for members. Our task is to maintain this social capital and enhance community networks.



# Community Safety



128

## Responses

to Noosa callers for crisis intervention, counselling and support for DV



311

## Domestic violence orders in place\*\*



11

## CCTV Cameras in Hastings Street\*

## Police Stats^

expressed as rate per 100,000 of estimated residential population (ERP)

### Offences against person



### Offences against property



### Total Offences



\* DV Connect Qld 2014-2015 \*\* 2014/15 financial year ^2015/15 QRSIS output (QPS)

Noosa is a very safe place to live with relatively few offences against persons and property compared to the Queensland average. While this is something to be proud of it does not mean that we should be complacent.

We need to provide support to victims of crime and natural disasters, provide preventative initiatives and maintain community awareness of issues such as domestic violence and substance abuse.





## Community Facilities & Services

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The Noosa Shire has a strong and active community sector representing diverse interests and needs. There are approximately 300 not-for-profit community and sporting organisations located within the Shire. These groups range in size and scale from small groups focussed on local activities to religious organisations with large congregations and not-for-profit organisations delivering services at a regional, state and national level.

Not-for-profit community organisations fill the gaps left by the government and business sectors, often providing direct assistance to the most vulnerable in the community. Support from corporate sponsors and the community, as well as government at all levels, is needed to sustain a healthy not-for-profit sector.

A preliminary audit of Noosa Shire facilities and services was conducted in 2015. Evidence from the audit, as well as consultations with key stakeholders, indicates that while there is limited demand for additional community facilities in the Shire, the majority of facilities are ageing and require not only increased maintenance but improved functionality to allow them to better respond to changing service needs. Going forward there may be a need to rationalise under-utilised facilities or those deemed to be no longer fit for purpose to meet the changing needs of the population.

A large number of community service providers are headquartered outside of the Shire in regional centres such as Maroochydore, Nambour and Gympie. As a result Noosa Shire residents often have to travel to access services.

Some of these service providers are actively exploring the possibility of creating one stop shops to co locate multiple services across the Shire in order to better meet the needs of their clients, enhance information flow and achieve efficiencies of scale and better use of resources.

The audit also identified that schools and private organisations have facilities that are often under-utilised on weekends, holiday periods or after school hours. The opportunity exists for these facilities to be made available for broader community purposes to help meet some of the excess demand for community meeting spaces.

In order to meet the future needs of the Noosa communities, the Desired Standards of Service for Parks and Land for Community Facilities should be reviewed. While Desired Standards of Service must be applied with caution, they provide a useful guide in ensuring an equitable distribution of public facilities.

## Key Issues

It has become apparent in the development of this strategy that there is a need for improved coordination and collection of local data to better inform evidenced-based social planning, advocacy and resource allocation.

The available data, research and consultations undertaken have identified the following key social issues and challenges for the Noosa community:

- **Providing quality services for our senior population:** Noosa's population is older and ageing at a faster rate than the State average. This will result in increased demands for services targeting seniors, and may require some reprioritisation of resources. However one of our greatest opportunities as a Shire is how to best leverage the skills and experience of our senior population as volunteers, mentors and productive members of our community.
- **Young people leaving the Shire:** As in many regional areas across the State, young people are leaving the Shire due to the lack of local tertiary education and employment opportunities. There is a need to put in place strategies to retain and encourage young people and families to live in Noosa.
- **Mental health and social isolation:** There are an increasing number of vulnerable groups emerging in our community e.g. lone person households, some within the LGBTI cohort, and disengaged young people. To service the needs of these groups will require new and innovative approaches that support those most at risk.
- **Homelessness:** This is an increasing issue in the Shire (particularly for young people); and a priority issue for the State Government. Well documented links between mental health and homelessness highlight a complex issue requiring a multi-faceted, coordinated approach as well as strong partnerships between government, not-for-profit organisations and the community.
- **The availability of affordable housing, rental housing and short-term crisis housing:** Noosa's median house purchase and rental prices are higher than the State average. This, coupled with lower than average incomes, has led to a lack of affordable housing in the area. Shortages in affordable housing and limited housing diversity contribute to rates of homelessness.
- **The rising cost of living:** The recent increase in costs of living has been caused by a variety of factors, particularly the rising cost of utilities such as power and water. These rises impact particularly on people with fixed and low incomes.
- **Unemployment and underemployment:** Noosa has a higher unemployment rate than the State average. Noosa's key industries lend themselves to casual and part-time work resulting in underemployment.
- **Access to government services:** Residents who do not have access to reliable transport have reduced access to health and other services. There is also a shortage of some health services and health-related infrastructure within the Noosa Shire. Government services (such as aged care) are moving to online portals for clients, however users will need to have access and the skills to use this technology.
- **Support, respite and affordable independent living options:** Teenagers and adults with an intellectual or physical disability (and their carers) living in the Noosa Shire have particular needs that are not always being met particularly in living, vocational and study skills.
- **Improved access to public places:** The design and construction of public places and physical infrastructure in Noosa could better meet the needs of people with limited mobility.

- **The impact of reforms in Commonwealth and State Government funding:** This includes NDIS and Aged Care Reform. The rapidly changing policy and fiscal environments are inevitably impacting on Council, the Noosa community, individual residents and organisations servicing Noosa residents.
- **Developing a whole of community response to issues such as domestic violence, alcohol, drug and gambling addiction.** There is a need for more information, community awareness of and support for evidenced based prevention initiatives to address these issues.
- **Different needs and expectations between residents compared with visitors** resulting in conflicting priorities for allocation of resource and use of public spaces. This will be compounded as the population to the north and south of Noosa continues to grow.
- **Gaps in public and community transport** across the Shire have led to high car dependency for Shire residents and restrict access to support services, employment and social options particularly for hinterland residents and young people.
- **Ageing community facilities:** Many of Noosa's community facilities were built more than twenty or thirty years ago and now require maintenance or replacement in a restricted fiscal environment. Many facilities will need to be adapted to address changing and growing community needs.
- **Build and Maintain Social Capital:** In a community where people have moved from afar and children often move away, people can feel isolated or not part of their community, particularly in times of need.



# 3

## Council's Vision, Principles & Priorities

### Vision

Noosa Council's vision focuses on its relationship with the community and is based on the core values of the organisation. The vision is:

*Engagement with our community to protect and enhance our lifestyle.*

### Sustainability Principles

The Noosa Shire Social Strategy, like all of Council's strategy and policy documents, is guided by the following overarching Sustainability Principles:

1. Resources are sustainably managed so that the lifestyle of the community is preserved, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
2. Noosa's economy is prosperous, diverse and protective of its unique environment.
3. Noosa residents belong to a community that values its diversity, accessibility and affordability.
4. Noosa's community is inclusive, connected and resilient and it encourages participation and information sharing.
5. Noosa's community benefits from quality places and programs that enhance wellbeing and support creative, active and healthy lifestyles.
6. Good governance is achieved through effective and efficient decision-making, with decisions being made in the best interests of the community.



# Council Priorities

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Council's Corporate Plan outlines the long-term strategic priorities of Council while its annual Operational Plan provides detail and guidance for the delivery of corporate priorities over each fiscal year. While it is not practical to list all Council's goals and roles within this document, priority areas that directly impact on the outcomes of this strategy are summarised below.

## **Work in partnership with our community**

- to communicate information about activities and services operating within the Shire (provided by Council and community organisations)
- to encourage networking, information sharing and collaboration between government and non-government organisations
- to build the capacity of our communities and the groups that operate within them
- to provide opportunities for meaningful community engagement within a community development framework.

## **Set policy and strategy**

- to ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing social issues of the Shire
- to ensure that broader council strategies consider the social ramifications of their implementation
- to develop a range of related strategic plans with key focus areas such as young people, accessibility, seniors etc.

## **Provide quality service delivery**

- through the effective operation of Council managed public facilities such as libraries, cultural and performance venues, and its recreation and sporting facilities
- supporting community and not-for-profit organisations that provide services to residents and visitors.

## **Look after community assets**

- by developing asset management plans for Council owned and leased facilities
- through good disaster management planning and effective response to disaster events
- by ensuring capital works expenditure is based on evidential need and demand, and that it provides value for money.



## Council's Policy Context

A suite of Council strategies and plans are currently in development and these will further assist in addressing the social needs of the community. These include the Local Economic Plan, the Transport Strategy and a Housing Needs Analysis.

### Previous Noosa Social Plan

The **Noosa Social Plan 2006-2016 (The Plan)** was the Shire's first Social Strategy. The Plan was evidence-based and contained detailed demographic profiling. These profiles were useful in advocating to other levels of government for improvements to community services and facilities. It proposed a holistic approach to social issues.

### Other Recent Strategies

In 2008, Noosa was amalgamated with Maroochy and Caloundra City Councils to form the Sunshine Coast Council (SCC). Over the following years a number of plans and strategies relating to social issues were completed. During this time localised, quantitative data was not collated specifically for the Noosa Shire. This lack of formalised local data relating to social issues in Noosa during that six-year period makes comparative and longitudinal analysis difficult.

However these SCC documents contain valuable information and useful policy direction. Since Noosa Council's reinstatement on 1 January 2014, these inherited plans and strategies are being systematically reviewed and updated in collaboration with community stakeholders.



# 4



## Themes & Aspirations

In the process of consulting and developing this Strategy, four themes have emerged that reflect the sentiment and aspirations of the residents of the Shire. These themes are:

- **Theme 1** - Cohesive and resilient communities
- **Theme 2** - Active and healthy communities
- **Theme 3** - Accessible, diverse and affordable communities
- **Theme 4** - Creative and informed communities.

These themes provide the focus for the Strategy's key initiatives and actions which will be detailed in the implementation plan' after key initiatives.

Embracing new technologies, having innovative partnerships and creating strategic alliances will be key tools in implementing this Strategy. The following section elaborates on each theme by providing a summation of the communities aspirations and visions, and also makes recommendations for initiatives to supplement Council's existing commitments.

# Cohesive & Resilient Communities

Council will continue to provide multiple opportunities for people to move more actively participate in their community. In partnership with individuals, businesses and the other levels of government, we have set ourselves the task of building cohesive and resilient communities.

We will work hard to build resilience in our communities and organisations so that they can recover and learn from unforeseen events - be they a natural disaster, an economic downturn or the loss of key individuals, businesses or sponsors.

Council commits to respectful dialogue with key stakeholders and residents and will ensure that opportunities exist for people to be involved in decision-making processes that affect their community.

In protecting and enhancing our lifestyle, Council will build upon the Shire's history and our status as a Biosphere Reserve under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program.

Connection with community is integral to individual wellbeing. We will encourage people to take part in community life and to use their own creativity to build a sense of place. Our public places will be purpose designed to accommodate a range of different uses and needs.

Opportunities for young people to develop to their full potential will be available within our community. Schools, government and non-government services will aim to provide families with access to formal and informal support structures at the times and locations they need.

## Key Initiatives

- Organise and facilitate a Community Partnership Roundtable. This will systematically identify, consider and aim to address key local social issues.
- Develop an interactive community facility database (including school facilities) with the aim of maximising use of existing assets.
- Review Council managed facilities to optimise usage
- Encourage, promote and provide opportunities and appreciation for volunteerism.
- Encourage events and celebrations that bring communities together and recognise days of national or local importance.
- Partner with key stakeholders to encourage broad community participation in activities that protect and enhance the environmental values of the Shire.
- Partner with schools and support services to develop and encourage initiatives that support young people, their families and carers.
- Undertake a service mapping exercise of providers in order to identify gaps and potential opportunities for partnering in service delivery.
- Partner with Government agencies and service providers to collate and share localised data and statistics to inform social priorities, and advocate for additional resources to the Shire.
- Take a lead role in establishing professional networks that encourage collaborative practice, information sharing and professional development.
- Develop disaster management plans and resilience strategies for at risk local communities and groups.
- Leverage technology to integrate and deliver services.
- Create One Stop Shop Community Hubs that bring multiple service agencies under one roof.

## Active & Healthy Communities

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Council aims to improve our collective health and wellbeing. We recognise that while individuals are responsible for their day-to-day behaviours, governments can influence or enable healthy lifestyle choices. This can occur through the provision of high quality facilities, the delivery of accessible programs and services, and also as a result of environmental protections and regulations.

Council will work with other levels of government and relevant agencies to advocate for essential services such as medical care, power, water, communications and other essential infrastructure to meet the needs of Noosa residents. Furthermore, we will partner with key stakeholders to support initiatives that aim to prevent disease and reduce demand on strained resources.

Council will continue to provide and maintain a range of high-quality sporting, recreational and leisure facilities that promote healthy living, social interaction and individual wellbeing.

Noosa's parks, gardens and public spaces, will enable and encourage incidental and purposeful physical activity to support active, healthy lifestyles.

In partnership with our community we will maintain our physical environment so that it is clean and safe. People will be encouraged to make lifestyle choices that minimise waste and reduce negative impacts on the environment.

Noosa's sports and recreation industry will thrive based on high levels of grass roots participation, high profile events and fostering the emergence of elite athletes, administrators and officials. Opportunities for inclusive participation by all residents will be strongly encouraged

Strong collaborative partnerships and effective planning will be integral to developing measures to improve Noosa Shire's health and wellbeing.



## Key Initiatives

- Develop and implement a Sport, Active Recreation and Open Space Plan.
- Proactively work with government agencies, commercial and not-for-profit organisations to address the risk factors associated with preventable diseases.
- Provide safe and quality play spaces for our children.
- Continue to support and develop the Noosa recreational trail networks.
- Advocate for and encourage low-cost, sustainable community initiatives that promote healthy lifestyle choices across the Shire.
- Advocate for and encourage local programs and services that aim to prevent mental illness and social isolation.
- Enhance community safety through the implementation and application of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Develop and implement behavioural change strategies to help achieve Council's Towards Zero Waste – Waste Minimisation Plan.
- Assist community groups and sporting organisations to maintain their community assets.
- Undertake a review of land requirements to meet the objectives highlighted in the Social Strategy.



## Accessible, Diverse & Affordable Communities

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Council will encourage accessible and affordable spaces and places for people to live, meet and play. Council will aim to influence housing affordability by encouraging a diversity of housing opportunities.

Council values and embraces diversity, be it cultural, spiritual, ethnic or capacity-based. We aim to be a community that is tolerant, inclusive and welcoming. We will strive for social equity by advocating for vulnerable groups to have access to appropriate support to enable their full participation in our community.

People with a disability are an integral part of our community. As a community we will have mechanisms to support residents with disabilities, encouraging participation in community life at a level of their choosing.

The Shire's roads and transport networks are vital to ensure access to and interconnectivity between towns, centres and facilities. Through the Noosa Transport Strategy, in partnership with Translink and other providers, Council will put in place initiatives to make public, community and active transport options more attractive with the aim of reducing dependency on private vehicles.

As well as providing physical infrastructure, Council will invest in building social capital using a community development approach. We will continue to recognise, value and support our not-for-profit sector and its many volunteers.





## Key Initiatives

- Actively encourage the establishment of social enterprises in the Shire.
- Improve and advocate for inclusive access to public places, spaces and services.
- Work with traditional owners and the local indigenous community and value their needs and views in policy development.
- Develop a social procurement policy and incorporate social benefit criterion into Council's procurement processes.
- Advocate to Federal and State Governments for increased support for social service provision where need and gaps arise.
- Plan for an increased numbers of elderly people living independent.
- Advocate for increased flexible respite opportunities for the frail aged and people with a disability.
- Work with the community and relevant Federal and State Government agencies to assist the implementation of major social reforms such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Domestic Violence initiatives.
- Undertake a Housing Needs Analysis to inform planning and future advocacy
- Work with government agencies, not-for-profit organisations and the business sector to explore innovative ways of tackling housing affordability.
- Encourage inclusive practices in community and commercial activities to ensure everyone, regardless of their abilities or challenges, is able to participate in community life.
- Continue to facilitate improvements in public transport, walking and cycling facilities to lessen dependency on private vehicles.



## Creative & Informed Communities

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Council understands that knowledge, creativity and innovation are key components to a flourishing community. They enrich individual lives and community environments, assist with problem solving and help create a shared identity.

Council places a high value on innovation, not only in the economic but also in the social and cultural spheres.

Council recognises that the arts and creative industries play a central role in the way we view ourselves through music, books, film, theatre, art, festivals, fashion, design and architecture. Cultural pursuits generate a sense of pride, help reflect our special place to the rest of the world, and support our local economy. We will value and encourage opportunities to highlight the creative talents and unique cultures that exist in our local community.

Council respects our past from our Indigenous Aboriginal heritage to our contemporary culturally-diverse heritage. We will help preserve our heritage and provide opportunities to better understand our shared history.

Understanding the importance of information, knowledge and education, Council will facilitate access to quality information and support life-long learning.

We will respect community debate and commit to transparent decision-making. Our libraries, cultural venues and galleries will continue to act as community and cultural hubs and centres of learning.



## Key Initiatives

- Develop and implement an Arts, Cultural and Heritage Plan.
- Work with creative businesses, not for profits, government and cultural organisations to develop and expand the Shire's creative industries.
- Support local artists and arts organisations to provide a range of arts and cultural services and activities.
- Use social media and emerging technologies for information sharing and lifelong learning purposes.
- Encourage local innovation and creative responses to community issues.
- Facilitate the co-location of community groups for the purpose of resource and information sharing.
- Respect Noosa's history and heritage and identify opportunities for preservation, interpretation and celebration.
- Encourage the provision of local festivals, events and celebratory activities.
- Develop and implement a five-year Library Strategic Plan.
- Explore opportunities to better utilise the Noosa Regional Gallery.

# 5

## Implementation

### Council's Role

Council will continue to play an important role in helping the community achieve the best social outcomes through:

- **Policy development** that recognises community needs
- **Working in partnership** with residents and local organisations in the best interests of the community
- **Providing** services, facilities, funding and programs that meet community expectations within Council's financial sustainability guidelines
- **Regulatory functions** such as land use planning, local laws and public health
- **Educating** residents to assist them to understand Council actions and Council's role, and
- **Acting as a catalyst** and an **advocate for changes** that will benefit our community.

The cost of implementing all of the key initiatives in this strategy is beyond the capacity of Council alone. To this end, Council will be seeking partnerships and strategic alliances with external agencies, businesses, community groups and individuals to achieve our goals.

# 6

## Measurement, Reporting & Review

In order to ensure that this Strategy is a useful document for Council, the community and stakeholders, Council will:

- Develop a detailed implementation plan to address the existing commitments and identified key initiatives of the Strategy
- Identify responsible agencies and partnership opportunities
- Undertake and appropriately resource the initiatives within this implementation plan
- Report against the implementation plan every twelve months
- Monitor and respond where appropriate to emerging issues and opportunities
- Monitor progress against Council's community key indicators
- Review the implementation plan every three to five years.





# 7

## How you can be involved

Individuals can be involved in various consultations that Council conducts. A good place to start is through our online engagement portal <http://www.noosa.qld.gov.au/get-involved>.

Residents can also:

- Volunteer with a community organisation and thus contribute to community life
- Reach out to neighbours to enhance connectivity and wellbeing in neighbourhoods
- Help keep Council informed about the needs and aspirations of residents.

Council would welcome approaches from businesses and community organisations who wish to partner on any of the proposed key initiatives in this strategy and would encourage organisations and government agencies to consider becoming involved in the community partnership roundtable initiative.



