



TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Smart City Draft Strategy



1. Introduction

Townsville is the capital of North Queensland, the gateway to mining and agricultural regions, and perfectly positioned as Australia's gateway to Asia. The city holds a number of opportunities for investment, development and business.

To capitalise on these opportunities the Australian Government, Queensland Government and Townsville City Council signed Australia's first City Deal for Townsville in late 2016.

The Townsville City Deal focuses on improving the lives of Townsville residents and provides a roadmap for Townsville's future. It is geared toward growing the economy of Townsville and strengthening Townsville as a prosperous and lifestyle-rich city. This includes identifying specific opportunities for local businesses, researchers, investors, and other community members to assist in delivering the City Deal commitments, or to undertake new ventures which stimulate the economy and bring new people and business to the region.

A key commitment of the City Deal is to maximise the use of digital connectivity to improve service delivery through a Smart City Strategy.

This document is designed to complement other activities underway through the City Deal process and contribute to the transformation of Townsville into a city which is even more vibrant, efficient, prosperous and collaborative.

2. What is a Smart City?

Smart Cities aren't about technology; they are about empowering people to make better decisions. Those decisions may be things like where best to park their car, which road should be prioritised for an upgrade, when to fix a leaking pipe and what type of business to start. In addition to this, smart cities are about creating improved connectivity, the creation of networks and sharing of knowledge and ideas.

While people and councils make these decisions every day, the decisions become much easier when they can be based on evidence.

For instance, a decision on where to park a car becomes a lot easier when you know where the nearest empty carpark is and organising a plumber to fix a leaking pipe is a lot easier when you are made aware of the leak by an SMS on your phone, rather than a huge water bill months later.

While Smart Cities use technology to give those insights, technology for technology's sake does not make a Smart City. The data created by that technology can help people to live in communities that can be more responsive to their needs and improve their lifestyle. It can be used by:

- **Council to ensure it makes the best decisions possible**
- **Citizens providing them with a transparent, easy to use, view of how their community and Council are performing**
- **The community giving them a clear line of sight as to how Council is creating public value from their rates**
- **Council to effectively service the needs of their communities allowing them to provide more personalised services**
- **Businesses allowing them to access the information needed to start, grow and find new markets.**

These technologies also enable a changed relationship between councils and the communities they serve. Instead of Council making decisions and residents being subject to them, these technologies allow an active continual conversation and a partnership.

3. Why Townsville is becoming a Smart City

Citizens are demanding more from their governments than ever before. Beyond paying their rates and receiving services, citizens are now behaving much more like customers and demanding personalised service, value for money and a focus on the things that matter to them and their families.

Governments who are not demonstrating value and providing focus on community outcomes rather than compliance and process are increasingly seen as out of touch by their community. At the same time councils have limited funds to undertake transformational activities.

Townsville City Council is not exempt from these trends and is taking proactive steps to alter operations to meet community expectations and better serve the community.

Council is planning to focus attention on:

- **Stimulating the local economy**
- **Improving the lives of residents**
- **Safeguarding our future**
- **Increasing Council effectiveness.**

Through prioritising action, sharing risk, better using our existing data and making small, targeted investments we will achieve significant community benefit for the lowest possible cost.

4. Our Draft Vision

Townsville has a vision to harness our strengths and uniqueness to be the most liveable, prosperous regional city in Australia.

To fulfil that vision, the Townsville community and Council will work in partnership to:

1. **Harness the next generation of key digital infrastructure to enable new skills and jobs in our region.**
2. **Empower the community, through data and information, to make better decisions in relation to their businesses, employment and lifestyle.**
3. **Drive and amplify our strengths and uniqueness and differentiate Townsville to make positive changes to our economy.**

These aspirations will be enabled by a Council which will:

1. **Drive a culture of service excellence, providing excellent, efficient and effective core services to local residents, businesses and visitors.**
2. **Increase transparency and trust.**
3. **Continually seek feedback from the community about how we can assist to build a better community and find the most efficient way of achieving our community and Council outcomes.**

This vision will be, at least in part, enabled by Townsville becoming a Smart City.

5. How this philosophy has been used elsewhere

CITY	BUSINESS PROBLEM	SMART CITY SOLUTION
Temora, New South Wales	Significant water leaks impacting a region's water security.	Residents are able to access their hourly water usage via smart phones or tablets to track daily water usage and costs, set consumption targets and receive alerts if targets are exceeded or leaks are detected. This real-time access to water consumption data assists residents to reduce consumption and prevent bill shock.
Latrobe Valley, Victoria	The need to prepare for emergencies.	Real time data is collected on environmental conditions allowing emergency services to detect conditions which are likely to cause an emergency and commence preparations and community briefings sooner.
Rockhampton, Queensland	High unemployment and low participation rates.	The establishment of a Smart Hub, a facility which is focussed on supporting local industries to be more competitive, create support for entrepreneurs and act as a space to increase digital skills.
Milton Keynes, UK	The city is expected to grow from 250,000 people to 300,000, causing substantial pressure on existing road and transport infrastructure.	Milton Keynes implemented a MotionMap, measuring the movement of vehicles across the city in real time and giving insights to commercial and other drivers as to when it is the most efficient time to use the roads and the most efficient route given the current traffic.
Baltimore, Maryland, US	Lower income areas within Baltimore have had the perception that air quality is lower in their neighbourhoods	Baltimore commenced the Open Air Project, drawing on citizen scientists to help place sensors throughout the city and used the data to share insights with the community around their air quality and pinpoint polluters.

6. What we are already doing

Townsville City Council is already investing in this approach to harness the benefits of the information age, to compete better internationally, and to empower the next generation of jobs and industries.

This includes investing in the North Queensland Regional Data Centre, a facility which will allow industries like banks and information technology service providers to locate some of their facilities in North Queensland.

We are extending our existing MiTownsville free Wi-Fi to new locations, and are being more responsive to the community through additional use of social media to provide improved information.

Our Disaster Management Dashboards, which were successfully used during the recent rain event, will soon be supplemented by community dashboards which will allow residents, businesses and visitors to check the performance of the city and the Council.

In addition to these projects we are also actively planning for the future. We are trialling smart water meters and are continuing to support major enhancements in mobile coverage for the community.

7. Towards a Smarter City

Townsville City Council is in the process of drafting a Smart City Strategy which will move the City and Council step-by-step towards our vision of being the most liveable, prosperous regional city in Australia

As part of this we are seeking your views on the type of projects we should prioritise for Townsville. The Strategy will be focussed on economic development, and advancement of a set of actions under a series of strategic areas of:

1. **Amenity**
2. **Tourism**
3. **Digital infrastructure**
4. **Council of Excellence**
5. **Community Empowerment/Resilient Community**

Actions and projects under each of these objectives will look to use digital technology as an enabler to allow the city to access the benefits at a lower cost and enable better collaboration between the community and Council.

Importantly actions identified in the final Strategy may have digital and non-digital components.

Below is a small number of examples on how a smart city approach may be applied in Townsville.

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY	POTENTIAL SOLUTION
Water Security	The use of sensors to detect leaks and inform residents of unusually high water use so they can decide if to reduce their water intake.
Providing local government services at lowest cost.	Using our existing data to make better decisions on behalf of the community and pinpointing the root cause of issues.
	Releasing Council challenges and all relevant data to the community to encourage start-up businesses to develop new ventures to solve those problems.
	Creating prizes for people who are able to provide solutions which increase Council's efficiency in particular areas, for example finding more efficient routes for rubbish collection.
	Using data on the use of our Council equipment in an attempt to use those expensive assets more efficiently.
Enhanced customer focus and experience	Ensuring that every Council service can be easily and simply transacted online.
	Creating a customer-centric approach to connect services, reduce duplication, and provide seamless and easy access to Council services.
Open, transparent and responsive Council	Seeking participation from the community around Council's budget priorities.
	Updating those who have lodged requests with Council on the progress of that enquiry, including when the works have been scheduled, when work is happening and when it's complete.
Promoting Townsville as a destination to visit, study and live	A data-driven campaign to highlight the strengths of Townsville as a place to relocate, study or build a business.
	Increasing the use of our outdoor spaces by using innovative technologies to highlight these advantages.
	Showcasing our diverse indigenous and more recent history through an application which allows the telling of local stories at places around the city.
CBD Activation	Reinvigorating the CBD using innovative technologies, including special event lighting.

8. Next Steps

Once the stakeholder consultation process is complete, the feedback and identified priorities and actions will be incorporated into a final Smart City Strategy for Townsville to be released by mid-2018. Once the Strategy is in place, Council will work with stakeholders and others on its implementation.

