

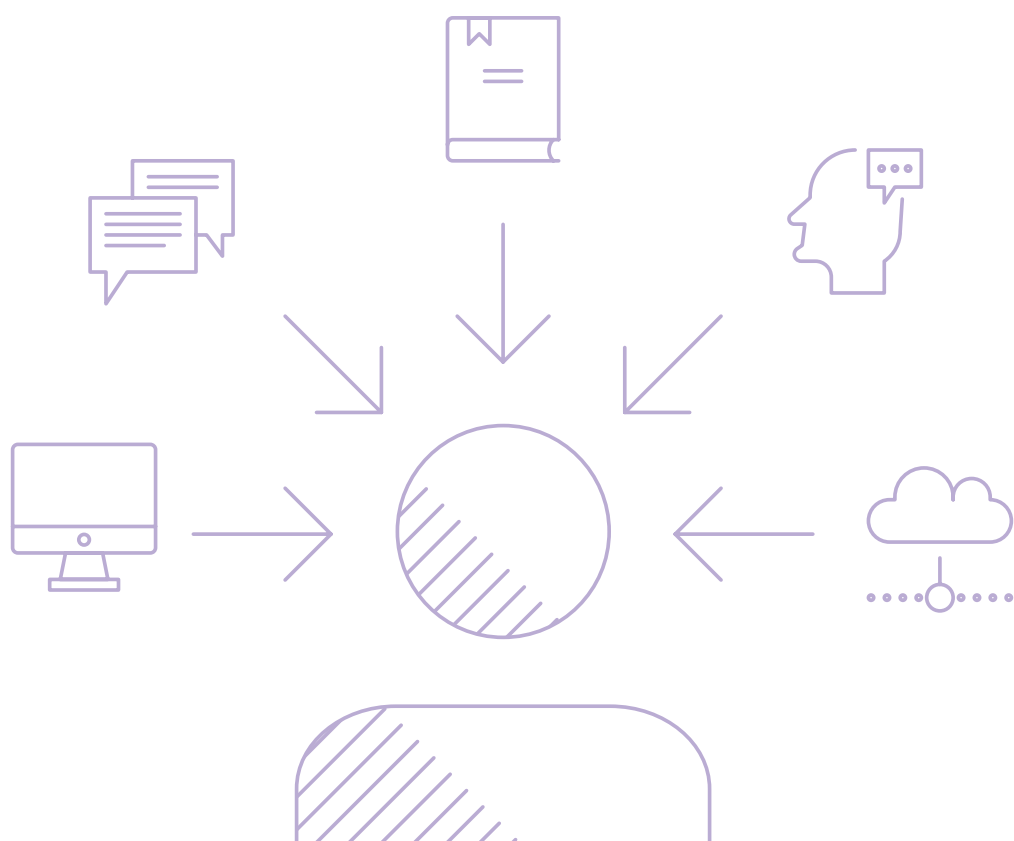
citylibraries



2020-2024

TOWNSVILLE CITYLIBRARIES **STRATEGIC PLAN**







CONTENTS

A message from the Mayor	2
Background	3
Introduction	5
Strategic alignment	5
Community engagement	9
Identified challenges	11
Organising the strategic plan	13
Implementation of this strategy	17
Relevant documents and references	18
Contact us	19

A historical map of Townsville, Queensland, Australia, showing the city's layout, the Ross River, and surrounding areas. The map is rendered in a light orange color on a darker orange background. The city of Townsville is depicted with a grid of streets and buildings. The Ross River flows through the city. The map includes a legend in the bottom left corner and a scale bar. The title 'TOWNSVILLE' is prominently displayed in the center of the map.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Townsville City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Townsville - the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun; and Bindal people. We pay our respects to their cultures, their ancestors and their Elders – past and present – and all future generations.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Townsville CityLibraries has a proud history spanning 80 years, but as our world changes libraries have become far more than simply a repository for books. They are essential community hubs; places where everyone can learn, engage and participate in a network of activity and information that stays up to date with global trends.

Our libraries are places for people of all ages. For children to discover the wonders of literature and take a journey in the marvels of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. For our teenagers to access the latest information to discover themselves and their place in the world. A place where our adults can engage and learn the skills of the 21st century and learn how to navigate technology.

They are places where people of varying levels of education can find empowerment and opportunities to grow. They are a home where our shared, intertwined histories are stored and treasured.

But perhaps most importantly, they are the launching pad for our future. Even in a time of uncertainty due to COVID-19, libraries have been at the forefront of pivoting services online and providing quality information and resources to the community. Libraries provide a space for our community to learn and grow, and I look forward to watching CityLibraries adapt throughout the implementation of this strategic plan.

CR JENNY HILL
MAYOR OF
TOWNSVILLE





BACKGROUND

Since the 1960s, three static Townsville CityLibraries branches have serviced customers through facilities in Flinders Street, Aitkenvale and Thuringowa Central. Our library buildings have kept pace with technological changes and refurbished in line with developments in the provision of library services nationally and internationally. These branches are stocked with diverse borrowing collections and provide services and programs that meet the changing needs of the community. Although physical loans via library branches and mobile have declined in the last three years by 10 percent, digital loans of e-books, movies and magazines have increased dramatically by 36 percent. It is an expectation that digital loans will continue to rise and become the preferred option for borrowers in the future. The continued development of an online library branch is important to support this demand. Townsville CityLibraries provides a mobile service

for residents in the outer suburbs and a home library service for housebound residents. A major review of the mobile service was conducted in 2010, and there have been two smaller reviews to inform locations of stops and schedules undertaken since then.

The library delivers a range of programs for children, youth, families and seniors as well as specialised services to the Indigenous community, disability sector, people who are housebound and services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Evidence of attendance at programs and usage of the library as a meeting space suggests that the concept of membership has evolved. There is no need to be a formal member of the library to access the range of facilities, programs and services available. For example, Queensland Health run their popular Newborn Drop-in and

TOWNSVILLE AT A GLANCE

Estimated Resident Population
194,072



Population between 1-15 years of age
20.2%



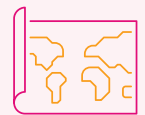
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Population of
7%



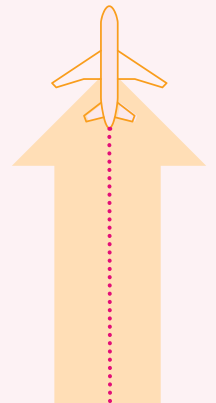
Population over 65 years of age
12%



Population born overseas
13.7%



Overseas arrivals
20%
2016



Unemployment

7.6%

Unemployment rate in the December 2019 quarter according to the Townsville City Council economic profile, a decrease from the ABS 2016 findings of 8.6%

Percentage of disengaged youth
11%



“DIGITAL LOANS OF E-BOOKS, MOVIES AND MAGAZINES HAVE INCREASED DRAMATICALLY BY 36 PERCENT.”

Families Clinic from the Aitkenvale branch. In addition, the library's programs from storytimes to technology classes, author talks and more are well supported and do not require library membership to attend.

Since 2015, a matrix service model has been utilised to plan and deliver programs, services and resources, which is unique to the library industry. In 2016, Townsville City Council underwent a major organisational review and the library now sits within the Cultural Services section of the Planning, Environmental and Cultural Services division.

To keep pace with urban growth and demographic changes, libraries need to think ahead and plan strategically. This 2020 document provides that plan and is based on extensive public and stakeholder engagement, analysis of data and trends within the sector.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Townsville CityLibraries Strategic Plan underpins the libraries annual operational plan and budgeting processes over the next four years. It has community needs at its centre; addressing short, medium and long term opportunities and challenges. Innovation is a key component to the delivery of the strategy as we evaluate and transform our resources, services, programs and spaces while responding to local, national and international trends.

SCOPE

Townsville CityLibraries Strategic Plan 2020-2024 outlines the City of Townsville's goals and objectives in relation to library services into the future.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Through the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), and nationally through the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), CityLibraries have embraced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aligned with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Sustainable Development Goal 5 Gender equity

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Sustainable Development Goal 8 Decent work and economic growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Sustainable Development Goal 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Sustainable Development Goal 10 Reduces inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Sustainable Development Goal 11 Sustainable cities and communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS




Sustainable Development Goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Libraries are well-positioned to advocate and provide programming and resources to ensure that these targets are met. Throughout this strategy, there will be reference to some of the goals to indicate our efforts to improve economic, environmental and social development at a local level. We also look for opportunities to support other countries. What we do at a local level flows on to assist internationally. As an example, the library's homework help program supports refugee and migrant students to overcome language barriers and improve their English literacy. This program has assisted students to gain formal qualifications which has opened up work opportunities in Australia and abroad.

This strategic plan is aligned to the Townsville City Council's Community Plan 2011-2021 – Leading, Creating, Connecting: Shaping a Place to be Proud of and the Townsville City Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024. The Townsville CityLibraries' goals are developed to support Council's vision for Townsville as the capital of Northern Australia. Townsville is a city of opportunity and great lifestyle enhanced by library services providing local infrastructure that surpasses community expectations; it encourages growth, builds resilience and provides for the needs of the community. It is also aligned with Council strategic documents such as the Smart City Strategy, Arts Strategy 2020-2024, Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and the Lifelong Learning Strategic Action Plan 2014-2017 (new version coming), Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2024. It explores how libraries positively affect the community through goals of economic activation, a place for everyone and creative spaces. The State Library of Queensland's strategic document Realising our Potential:



A Vision for Queensland Public Libraries (Realising our Potential) was a heavy influence of the creation of the Townsville CityLibraries Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024. Realising our Potential identified through engagement the following key objectives and enablers:

OBJECTIVES

- Realising our potential
- Deeply local outcomes
- Extending our reach
- Future focused workforce

ENABLERS

- Leadership
- Future ready
- Commitment to improve
- Capability
- Our place in the public realm
- Library spaces
- Investing in learning and literacy
- Advocacy
- Locally connected
- Partnership possibilities

Another strategic document from the State Library of Queensland that was useful in the development of this strategy was The Impact of Libraries as Creative Spaces. This document articulates the value that libraries provide to the community as places where creative practice can occur.

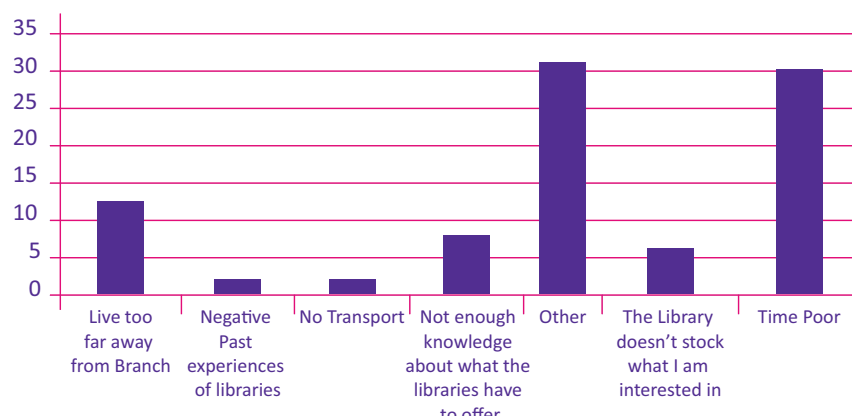
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2018, Townsville CityLibraries ran the ‘We Love Our Libraries’ stakeholder engagement project where the community was asked to provide their feedback about library services. Topics included library usage, branches, locations and activities, programs and services. This survey was an overwhelming success with 1,066 respondents. Some of the conclusions drawn from the survey were:

- The primary reason respondents gave for not visiting a physical library was that they were time poor (fig. 1). Other reasons included the significant preference for using e-resources (e-books and e-magazines).
- When asked what would encourage users to visit the library more, respondents indicated that variations to program scheduling and changes to resources available were significant factors (fig. 2).
- Individuals were asked to identify how they would like to hear about events in the future. 40% of respondents indicated that they would like to hear about library activities through Facebook, following the printed What’s On brochure and e-newsletter (fig. 3).
- Individuals responded favourably when asked if they would use a jointly operated branch at a school, TAFE, university, shopping centre or community centre.
- 33% of those surveyed indicated that public computers were essential to their visit to the library.
- 26% of respondents identified study as a reason for a visit to the library.

Fig 1

Why don't you visit the library?



Staff also met with individuals and groups within the community to discuss how the library could best serve their needs. When the results of the survey were tabulated, staff evaluated the data alongside other library statistics and experiences to identify the challenges to address in the strategic plan. The challenges identified from the engagement process contributed to the development of the goals and objectives

Fig 2

What would encourage you to visit the library more?

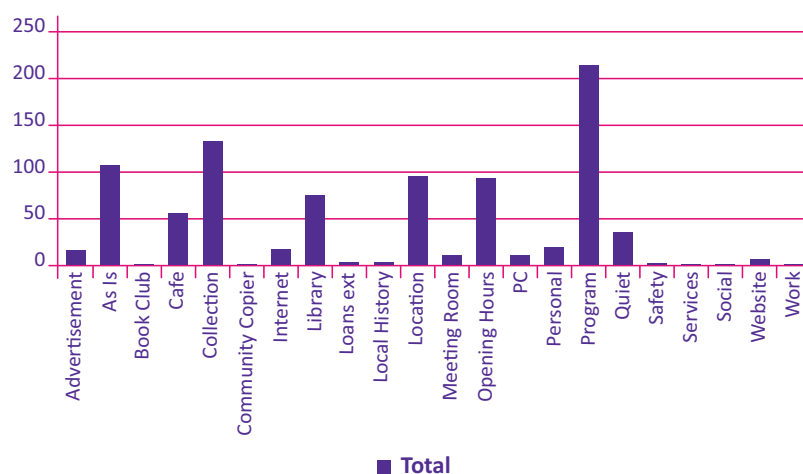
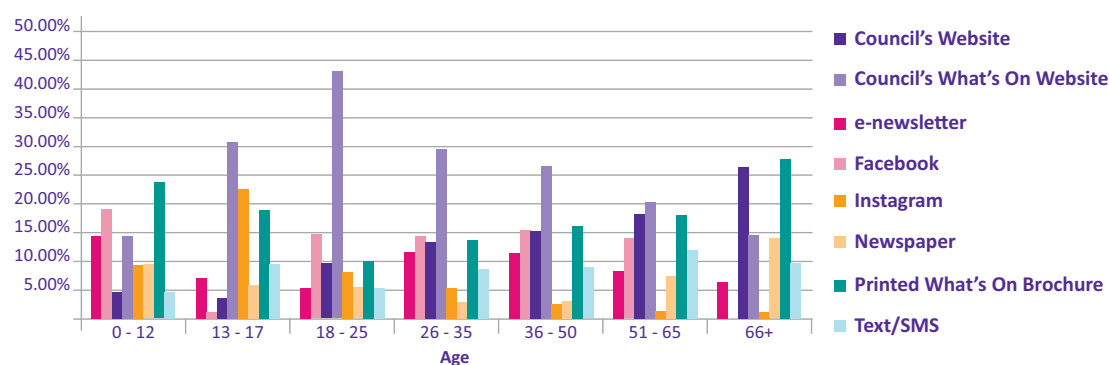


Fig 3

How would you like to hear about future events?



IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

ECONOMIC ACTIVATION

- Responding to high unemployment including youth, compared with state and national.
- Responding to the needs of those seeking work aged over 50 years.
- Responding to changing industries and technologies.
- Responding to changes to ways of working including the gig economy (a labour market characterised by the prevalence of odd jobs, short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to a permanent job).
- Building business resilience to natural disasters and other economic impacts.
- Marketing the library's role in supporting economic activation which is currently not visible and underdeveloped.
- Responding to the local economic impacts of COVID-19



A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

- Providing inclusive and accessible spaces for community members with a disability.
- Providing library physical and virtual spaces that meet future needs of Townsville.
- Planning strategically to continue to preserve and digitise the local history collection to make it discoverable.
- Building and maintaining partnerships with members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to inform provision of library resources and services.
- Responding to changing demographic profile including international migration and tourism.
- Providing an outreach library delivery model that meets the needs of its users including ease of access and in the range of items available.
- Resourcing the strong demand for libraries to attend many events within the community and for libraries to be placed in outer and fast developing urban areas.
- Creating a cohesive online experience via website and other resource platforms.
- Meeting all customer's expectations of library spaces - some people expect quiet, others expect to socialise and engage.
- Overcoming the lack of awareness of the scope of what libraries provide.
- Addressing the demand for greater services on evenings and weekends.
- Providing engaging, safe spaces for children and families.
- Advocating for the library to be a safe and inclusive space, where the community can access information and learn about and discuss challenging topics of social importance.

CREATIVE SPACES

- Defining how the library contributes to the local maker movement due to the variety of different makerspaces (a public collaborative workspace) in Townsville.
- Responding to Townsville's art, craft and maker community who are looking for opportunities to make, showcase works and share skills with others.



ORGANISING THE STRATEGIC PLAN: GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our plan is organised around long-standing guiding principles that underpin the day-to-day operations of the Townsville CityLibraries. The following principles strengthen the goals and objectives developed.

Learn – Townsville CityLibraries is an integral part of Townsville’s lifelong learning agenda. We empower others to improve their literacies, knowledge and skills, by facilitating learning opportunities and providing links to other supporting services.

Discover – Townsville CityLibraries is a place of information, innovation, curiosity, wonder and creativity. Individuals and groups engage and make discoveries through our libraries.

Connect – Townsville CityLibraries is a place for our community where people make connections, share information and skills, and discuss important issues with others. Our library actively promotes our spaces (physical, outreach and online) to meet people where they are and provide for their needs.

Future Ready – Townsville CityLibraries embraces new trends and emergent issues through our people and processes. Our people are at the centre of what we do as a service, and they are agile, dedicated and skilled. We are committed to continuous improvement and future-focused services and processes.



OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

ECONOMIC ACTIVATION

SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 Industry innovation and infrastructure, SDG 11 Peace, justice and strong institutions.

Townsville CityLibraries will support Townsville's economic activation and growth.

Libraries have been called the original co-working space and Townsville CityLibraries will continue to promote, leverage and expand the library resources and community connections to meet the needs of jobseekers, workers, business owners and entrepreneurs. As the business world continues to change rapidly, libraries will lead the provision of resources, programs, spaces and connections that support the community regardless of where they are in their work/life journey.

Strategic objectives

1. Develop and maintain library programs and services to meet the needs of the community with a focus on business development, life skills and resilience.
2. Assist individuals to develop job readiness skills that prepare them for current and emerging industry opportunities.
3. Provide information (online and in branches) to connect people to programs, services and resources for business support, jobs, training and economic activation.
4. Facilitate community and industry connections through Townsville CityLibraries' presence within Townsville's business ecosystem, eg. Smart Precinct NQ.
5. Undertake library business process improvement to ensure our resources meet current and future needs.

ORGANISING THE STRATEGIC PLAN: GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

SDG 5 Gender equity, SDG 10 Reduce inequalities, SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions.

Townsville CityLibraries will be a place for everyone.

Regardless of whether a community member interacts with the library in a branch, online, or through outreach services and events, they will experience a service that is inclusive, friendly and constructive. Our library places and destinations along with the resources and activities that happen within them are created, tailored and shaped by our community, for our community and delivered by professional, knowledgeable staff.

Strategic objectives

6. Identify and action priorities in collection, preservation and access within the local history collection to facilitate learning and discoverability.
7. Review our brand and marketing to increase awareness of library programs, resources and services.
8. Co-design library programs and services with our community to facilitate access and inclusion.
9. Define library membership to improve access to library services and resources, both physical and online.
10. Advocate for the benefits of promoting Council programs and services through libraries.
11. Design outreach experiences to respond to community needs and locations.
12. Improve access to the library in order to meet changing community needs by creating a 10-year Library Services Plan that details current and future requirements for an online library, community access points (static branches and outreach) and local history collection spaces.
13. Provide opportunities for the community to hear from experts and discuss matters of social importance to encourage civic engagement.
14. Work with Council Advisories such as the Learning Communities Leadership Group to facilitate social inclusion through social justice principles of access and equity.



CREATIVE SPACES

SDG 4 Quality education

Townsville CityLibraries will foster creativity.

Creativity in libraries covers a myriad of topics from access to information and materials, exposure to new ideas, cultural participation, health and wellbeing and educational attainment to fostering civic engagement. Townsville CityLibraries has played a part in these domains and will continue to position itself as a place that promotes and celebrates content creation as an important part of Townsville's cultural ecosystem.

Strategic objectives

15. Provide spaces, resources and programs that support and promote creativity in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics (STEAM) and makerspace culture.
16. Collaborate with local writers, illustrators, makers and creatives to create opportunities to support and increase their exposure within the community.
17. Develop sustainable relationships with creative organisations to promote libraries as creative spaces.
18. Deliver the Townsville CityLibraries' Festival of Stories and participate in other arts and cultural festivals.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY

To achieve these strategic outcomes, we will work in the following ways to develop an annual operational plan:

- Highlight the **social, recreational and educational benefits of reading** and promote the library's collection.
- **Incorporate inclusive practice** in library programs and services to respond to the needs of a diverse community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, new arrivals, and people with a disability.
- Embed a **digital life philosophy** across the library service.
- Embed **early childhood literacy philosophy** in the practice of library staff.
- Seek, analyse and use **data and evidence** to inform our decisions.
- Actively seek and work with relevant **stakeholders and partners**.
- Use **enquiry-based learning and facilitation** to help people create their own knowledge and understanding.
- Be **free or low-cost** and connect people to further learning opportunities with other providers.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

- Lifelong Learning Strategic Action Plan 2014- 2017 (new version coming)
- Townsville City Council Corporate Plan 2020 - 2024
- Smart City Strategy
- Townsville Community Plan 2011-2021
- Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2024

LIBRARY DOCUMENTS

- State Library of Queensland, Realising our Potential: a vision for Queensland Public Libraries
- State Library of Queensland, The impact of Libraries as creative spaces
- IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto
- ALIA, Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries

REFERENCES

- United Nations, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Townsville Community Profile, <https://profile.id.com.au/townsville>, 8 January, 2020
- Townsville City Council Economic Profile



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