

# MAKING SPACE CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES FROM AUSTRALIA'S FAR NORTH

Making Space explores the different cultural perspectives of five migrant communities who share their views and experiences about their need for creating cultural and spiritual spaces. For them it is not only about buildings and land, but more about creating a sense of place and ownership they feel is essential to their community's well being. The ability to access community spaces is as important to secure the survival of their own cultural identities and future generations, as it is to ensuring the social cohesion of Australia's multicultural society.

But while some communities have through their own resourcefulness, succeeded in fulfilling these needs, others continue to struggle and have been faced with numerous challenges and obstacles.

A Cairns City Council Community and Cultural Development Branch project  
& Local Area Multicultural Partnership (LAMP) production  
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[www.cairns.qld.gov.au](http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au)

Duration: 16 minutes

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Cairns is the main hub of Australia's Far North, with a population of over 130,000 residents and two million visitors a year; it is also one of the fastest growing regions in the country. At a 2.7 percent annual population growth, our social, cultural and physical landscape is rapidly being transformed. Public land, resources and shared community spaces are limited, posing challenges for Council planners and community groups vying for their access. In effect accessing mainstream community facilities has been difficult for many migrant communities who's cultural practices and needs are different to those of the broader community.

Migrant communities have been contributing to the social, cultural and economic development of the Cairns region for over one hundred years. Earlier migrant settlers were comprised of people from South Sea Islander, Chinese, Indian and European backgrounds, who helped build the region's agricultural industries. Presently 18% of the Cairns population is from migrant backgrounds, speaking over seventy languages. New and emerging groups are represented by Pacific Islander, Melanesian, Asian, Middle Eastern and African communities, among many others.

Cairns City Council has responded to this growth by hosting the Multicultural Affairs Queensland Local Area Multicultural Partnership (LAMP) program since 2000. In 2006, the Council adopted the Cairns Cultural Diversity Policy – A Unique Changing – Productive - Vibrant – People, outlining it's commitment to the region's rich migrant history and diverse growing population.

Migrant communities in Cairns are being engaged like never before. Their faces and voices appear in an increasing number of Council publications and resources like this documentary as a tool for helping to raise cultural awareness among the broader community and future policy makers.



DVD  
VIDEO

