

ORDINARY MEETING**27 AUGUST 2025****6.1****CEO MONTHLY REPORT**

EO | 93/1/2 | #7704800

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes:

1. The status of Council Resolutions.
2. The CEO Monthly Update.
3. The Monthly Activity Review – July 2025.

Outstanding Council Resolutions

Since the previous reporting period 28 resolutions have been completed, leaving 2 open resolutions. See below table:

Date of Meeting	Type of Meeting	Report Title	Directorate
11/12/2024	Ordinary	Tropical Innovation Festival Sponsorship Agreement 2026 to 2029 <i>Agreement with proponent for signing</i>	EDA
23/07/2025	Ordinary	Prejudicial Matter - Infrastructure Agreement Between Cairns Regional Council and PPNQ Developments Pty Ltd for the discretionary waiver of levied charges for Catalytic Development Under the development and investment incentive support policy for tourist attraction and tourist park at 4L AND 900L Captain Cook Highway, Kewarra Beach – Division 9 <i>Officers in the process of drafting the IA for the developers to review</i>	PGS

CEO Monthly Update**Major Events**

The 7 Cairns Marathon Festival took place on the Cairns Esplanade on 13 July 2025. With almost 4,000 runners (a sell-out) from 23 countries, including 110 international participants, the 2025 Festival further consolidated Cairns' position as a world class destination for major sporting events. In addition, the Cairns Italian Festival took place during the period 24 July to 3 August 2025 with total attendance in the vicinity of 20,000 people. The 2025 event attracted thousands of attendees across 11 days of food, wine, cultural, and sporting events.

CIAF

The Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) returned to the Tanks Arts Centre from 10–13 July 2025, drawing thousands of locals and visitors to its 16th annual program themed “Pay Attention!”. Featuring 30 Art Fair Showcase exhibitors across Tanks 3 and 4 and 48 Artisan Showcase stallholders along the Promenade, CIAF was an outstanding success, achieving strong sales and showcasing the work of more than 400 First Nations artists from across Queensland over four days.

Program highlights included the new Mark Makers keynote series, roving talks, masterclasses, a dedicated kids’ program and the sold-out Look & Listen Fashion Performances, alongside cultural dance and music activations on the Promenade. The presentation of \$60,000 in CIAF Art Awards across six categories further highlighted the depth and excellence of First Nations arts and culture, reinforcing Cairns’ reputation as a leading cultural destination.

Pictured below is the Tanks Art Centre and CIAF 2025 team.



Cairns Regional Council Annual Careers Day

The first annual Careers Day will be held onsite at CRC in the Civic Reception Room from 4:30-6:30pm Tuesday the 2nd of September. Representatives Councils varied workforce will be present including Engineering, Resource Recovery, Technical and Trades, Community Spaces, Community Life, Planning and Sustainability and Information & Technology and more. The Careers Day provides an opportunity to showcase the many and diverse careers and roles that Council have on offer and provide members of the community an opportunity to connect with hiring managers.

The event is currently being shared through social media and existing school and employment contacts and current registrations are at 262. Cairns Local News has also reached out and will run a story for the event helping to drive participation.

Free Green Waste February and May 2025 - Campaign Analysis

- Transfer station staff monitor vehicles that take advantage of the free green waste incentive. A total of 8,346 vehicles disposed of green waste during the two events.
- Highest vehicle numbers recorded for participation since a three-week campaign held in 2021.
- A total of \$3,094.05 was raised for the Cairns Toy Library during the February and May Free Green Waste Campaign.

Monthly Activity Review – July 2025

The Monthly Activity Review summarises a number of Council's operational activities and associated metrics from the previous month, as well as providing relevant updates on major initiatives and projects. See Attachment 1.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Monthly Activity Review – July 2025 DM# 7704810



Ken Gouldthorp
Chief Executive Officer

Attachment 1: Monthly Activity Review – July 2025 DM# 7704810

Monthly Activity Review

93/1/2 | #7704810 / #7704800

JULY 2025

The data contained within this review relates to the following:

- Community, Civic and Major Events
- Employment Pathways
- Cultural & Community Events
- Vandalism costs
- Cairns Infrastructure and Assets Customer Requests
- Planning Growth and Sustainability Updates
- Major Projects and Initiatives
- Economic Development and Advocacy Highlights
- Economic Snapshot

Ken Gouldthorp
Chief Executive Officer

Community and Civic events

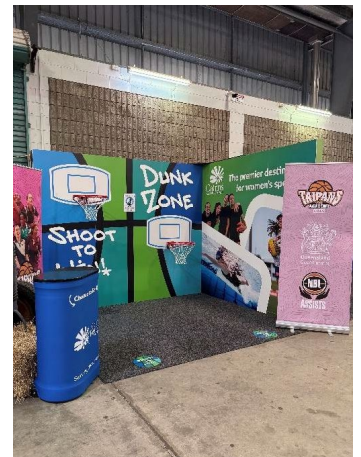
Cairns Show Exhibition Site & Community Stage

Date: 16th – 18th July 2025

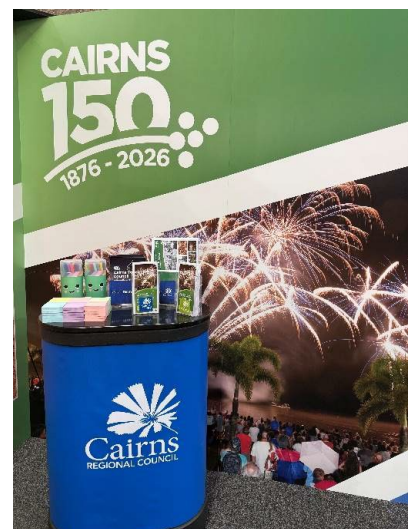
Venue: Fred Moule Pavilion

Attendance: 3,000 over the 3 days visited both activations

Purpose: Council's presence at the Cairns Show includes a dedicated exhibit within the Fred Moule Pavilion, showcasing key initiatives, services, and opportunities for community engagement. This year's exhibition included a soft launch of the Cairns Celebrates 150 program, Disaster Management, Cairns Libraries, Cairns Water Security Stage 1 Project and Cairns Taipans/Women in Sport Initiative. In addition, Council's sponsorship of the Community Stage offers a platform for local entertainment, education, and the promotion of community programs in an accessible and inclusive environment.



3,000 people



Community and Civic events

Monthly Citizenship Ceremony

Date: 31 July 2025

Venue: Cairns Regional Council Civic Reception Rooms

Attendance: 70 conferees and 70 guests

Time: 10:00am – 11:30am

Purpose: A formal ceremony that signifies the final step for local residents in officially becoming Australian citizens. This event is hosted by Cairns Regional Council on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.



140 people



Major Events – July

7 Cairns Marathon

Date: 13 July 2025

The 7 Cairns Marathon Festival is a must do destination event in Australia for all running and lifestyle event enthusiasts. The 2025 event was sold out across all distances making it the biggest event in its history. With almost 4,000 runners from 23 countries, including 110 international participants, the 2025 Festival confirmed Cairns' position as a world class destination for major sporting events.

Total Registrations: 3,923

- Full Marathon – 612
- Half Marathon – 1211
 - 10km – 898
 - 5km – 701
 - 2km – 501

Purpose: Since its inception in 2019, the 7 Cairns Marathon has evolved into a must do marathon event that showcases Tropical North Queensland to a global audience.

The event has continued to grow year on year and to completely sell out in 2025 is a testament to the incredible community support behind it.

The 2025 event attracted thousands of athletes and supporters, reinforcing the event's role in driving visitation, economic impact and national media exposure. Cairns Regional Council has been a proud partner since the events inception in 2019, with future event funding to be negotiated. The 2026 event date has been set for 12th July 2026.

7 Cairns Marathon Wrap Reel -

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/720534174093493>



3,923

registrations



Major Events – July

Cairns Italian Festival

Date: 24 July – 3 August 2025

The Cairns Italian Festival is a celebration rich in Italian history, culture, food, wine, song, and dance. The 2025 event attracted thousands of attendees across 11 days of food, wine, cultural, and sporting events.

Total attendance ~20,000*

Attendance includes the following events - Cairns LGA:

- La Festa
- Opera in the Tropics
- La Dolce Vita – The Long Lunch
- Restaurant program
- Masquerade Cocktail Party

Purpose: Since its inception in 2022, Cairns Italian Festival exists to celebrate the region's rich Italian history, and honours the Italian immigrants that left their homeland in search for a better life and future in Australia

The event attracts national visitation and develops community pride. Cairns Regional Council remains a proud partner, with funding secured through to 2027.

Cairns Regional Council Reel -

<https://www.facebook.com/CairnsRegionalCouncil/videos/1419797322635571>



20,000*
attendance



* Estimated attendance – pending final acquittal reports

Employment Pathways

CRC is currently supporting

- ❖ **29** apprentices undertaking training to earn their trade in: electrical, horticulture, plumbing, mechanical, fitting & turning
- ❖ **13** trainees building their skills in business, live production/technical services and ICT. This includes two school-based trainees undertaking a 2-year Cert 3 level program

2026 Apprenticeship & Traineeship release – round 1

We are pleased to announce that round 1 of the Intake will be released at the new **CRC Careers Fair event on the 2nd of September**, and will include the following:

- ❖ 2 x Fulltime Business traineeships
- ❖ 1 x School Based Business traineeship
- ❖ 1 x Fitting/Turning apprenticeship
- ❖ 4 x electrical apprenticeships
- ❖ 1 x horticulture apprenticeship

**2026
Apprentice
and Trainee
Intake**

*Kickstart
your career
with
Council!*



Employment Pathways programs

First Peoples Employment Pathways project update

As part of Council's ongoing commitment to the First Peoples Employment Pathways Program, we were pleased to welcome 13 students from AFL Cape York House (AFLCYH) this week for a guided tour of the *Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant* - held over two days.

AFLCYH provides residential accommodation for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women from remote communities across Far North Queensland. These culturally safe and supportive environments help students pursue their education while accessing training and employment pathways.

With the water industry facing increasing challenges in attracting young people—particularly in specialised fields like wastewater—these types of immersive, real-world experiences are more valuable than ever.

A big thank you to Joe for hosting the tours — his passion and enthusiasm were truly infectious! His stories brought the experience to life (especially the one about the false teeth flushed down the loo! 😊).

Thanks to everyone involved in making this visit a success.



Cultural & Community Events

May, June & July 2025

Community Partnerships:

July 2025: 10 events / attendance 80,000

Cairns NAIDOC 2025; Bama Futsal Cup; Cairns NAIDOC Friday in the Park; Edor Carnival; First Nations Football Day; 2025 Cairns Show; Hekili Great Barrier Reef Ocean Challenge; Neighbourhood Day; Cairns Athletic Coral Coast Carnival.

June 2025: 7 events / attendance 25,695

Masters Hockey Women's State Championships; Gordonvale Sugar Solstice Country Fair; Tobruk Long Course Inter-Regional Invitational; Cairns Annual Bat Festival; Marquee AFL Player Event Charlie Dixon; Umi Arts 20th Anniversary Exhibit.

May 2025: 8 events / attendance 7,893

Freshwater Festival, Marlin Coast Community Fun Day; Rotary Beach Vibe; Her Sport Her Future; VEXPO; Great Northern Bullride, Stars in the Tropics; Cairns African Festival.

Active Living Program:

July 2025: 35 classes / attendance 1,1412 5 classes cancelled due to weather

June 2025: 67 classes / attendance 1,584 1 class cancelled due to Ironman

May 2025: 72 classes / attendance 1,783 10 classes cancelled due to weather

Community Spaces (3 months totals – May, June & July period)

- **Esplanade Lagoon:** 260,923 people enjoyed the Lagoon
- **Barlow Park:** 32,558 people attended events in this period
- **City Venues & Parks:** There were 1,712 bookings for the period, includes all parks, foreshores, sporting fields and city venues except Esplanade and Barlow.
- **Go Clubs:** There were no Go Club workshops held in this period.
- **Community Halls:** There were 1,046 bookings across the community halls with 21,490 users attributed in this period.

Cultural & Community Events

May, June & July 2025

Creative Venues: Events include markets, film screenings, launches, exhibitions, rehearsals, art residencies, workshops, classes, performances, meetings, private functions, and community events including CIAF and a music micro-festival.*

July:	79 events	Attendance 33,695
June:	112 events	Attendance 35,669
May:	105 events	Attendance 47,976

- The number of events in July beginning to return to average levels post Children’s Festival and Eisteddfod.
- Attendance figures in July still high but returning to average levels after Eisteddfod, EcoFiesta & Jazz Picnic at Munro Martin Park.
- Cairns Indigenous Art Fair held during July at Tanks
- 4 x sellout shows at CPAC.
- 8 x sellout performances of Shadows from the Past at Pioneer Cemetery.

Libraries: Library program attendance continues to increase compared to previous quarters in line with the number of programs being delivered. Library attendance and loans remain consistent.

- July:**
- Library program attendance: 10,107 across 142 inhouse (2,782) and outreach (7,325) programs.
 - All library attendance: 57,537 (door and outreach)
 - All library combined loans: 55,782 (Physical: 46,957 Digital:8,825)
- June:**
- Library program attendance: 9,010 across 148 inhouse (2,208) and outreach (6,802) programs.
 - All library attendance: 58,804 (door and outreach)
 - All library combined loans: 52,127 (Physical: 41,628 Digital:10,499)
- May:**
- Library program attendance: 10,924 across 157 inhouse (2,944) and outreach (7,980) programs.
 - All library attendance: 74,114 (door and outreach)
 - All library combined loans: 50,166 (Physical: 40,064 Digital: 10,102)

Council Assets – Vandalism Costs

2025/26 VANDALISM & GRAFFITI COSTS	JULY	JULY YTD
Business Area	(\$'000)	(\$'000)
Facilities Maintenance	14	14
Community Spaces	25	25
Works	3	3
TOTAL	41	41

Cairns Infrastructure and Assets

Customer Requests – July 2025



79

Footpaths and
cycleways



24%



163

Roads and road
furniture



6%



84

Graffiti removal



25%

Percentages indicate movement on last month.

Planning, Growth & Sustainability

Council Awarded Grant to Streamline Housing and Mature Local Resilience Policy

The State Government approved \$350,000 in funding under the Scheme Supply Fund. The funding will deliver amendments to the *CairnsPlan 2016* in the short term as well as contribute to the development of a new planning scheme in the longer term.

The funding will deliver the following planning scheme improvements:

- Removal of assessment barriers for housing related applications to expedite housing supply
- Reduction in the number of low-risk development applications and referrals to Council
- Efficient and effective categories of assessment for housing development
- Identification of realistic supply of residential land that responds to natural hazard risk
- Updated mapping and land use policy responses for natural hazards, ensuring compliance with the State Planning Policy



Mount Peter PDA Declared – Driving Growth in the Southern Corridor

The Mount Peter Priority Development Area (PDA) was declared on 30 July 2025, and the [Mount Peter PDA Interim Land Use Plan](#) (ILUP) is now in effect.

The PDA covers approximately 2,650 hectares of land in the Southern Growth Corridor.

The Mount Peter PDA will:

- Support the delivery of the 'Securing Our Housing Foundations' policy to give more Queenslanders a place to call home;
- Establish a streamlined framework for land use, infrastructure planning and development assessment in the area;
- Facilitate the construction of the essential infrastructure necessary to support new homes and jobs and enhance liveability in the region; and
- Facilitate job creation and enhance local economic development by providing homes in proximity to the Cairns South State Development Area (SDA).

To view the Mount Peter PDA ILUP or find out further information visit the Economic Development Queensland website at www.edq.gov.au

Planning, Growth & Sustainability

Conservation Partnerships with Treeforce at Kamerunga Conservation Park

Conservation Partnerships is a multi-year initiative managed through our Planning, Growth and Sustainability directorate to revegetate bushland and riparian corridors in the Cairns region for improved water quality and habitat connectivity outcomes, helping to restore ecosystem services in collaboration with local conservation groups, land and sea ranger groups and natural resource management organisations.

Key activities include:

- Native seedling propagation
- Revegetation and weed management
- Community engagement and education
- Supporting the conservation sector's capacity to rehabilitate sites within the Reef catchment.

The Kamerunga Conservation Park on the Barron River is one of the key project sites coordinated by Treeforce, and the work is contributing to flood recovery efforts at this site. Treeforce Association Inc has led three successful community planting events between June - August, planting 2500 trees and involving over 100 volunteers.

Treeforce is a not-for-profit community tree planting group in Cairns and this project is funded through Cairns Regional Council's Reef Guardian Council Program and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (Reef Authority).



Major Projects & Initiatives

July 2025



Resource Recovery 2040 Roadmap

- Kerbside Collection tender closed – evaluation commenced.
- Residual Waste tender documents drafts under review, anticipate market release late August.
- Design commenced for Portsmouth Disaster Waste Aggregation project.

Cairns Water Security Stage 1

- Water Treatment Plant works continue progressing well
- 5ML and 8ML reservoir and DAFF Structure concrete works complete
- Pipeline works are ongoing and approximately 25% complete
- Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) Pipeline installations ongoing



Smart Water Meter Project

- 32,000 + smart water meters installed, out of 55,000 scope
- SWM project rollout team installed 2,250 meters last month
- Potential leaks are being identified by the new smart water meters and customers contacted accordingly

Economic Development & Advocacy Highlights – July

Economic Development

- Cairns Regional Council hosted the Regional Development Australia State of the Region Roadshow on 2 July, which included speakers from Economy .id, Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility, Office of Northern Australia, AusIndustry, Department of Home Affairs, NBN Co, and the National Indigenous Australians Agency
- The Australian Strategic Policy Institute workshopped key findings from their Pacific Engagement Opportunities engagement with Councillors on 23 July 2025.
- The Program Leader for Economic Development spoke on the topic of Pacific Engagement at the Northern Australia University Alliance / Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade symposium for Australia Award recipients on 25 July 2025.

Major Events & Film

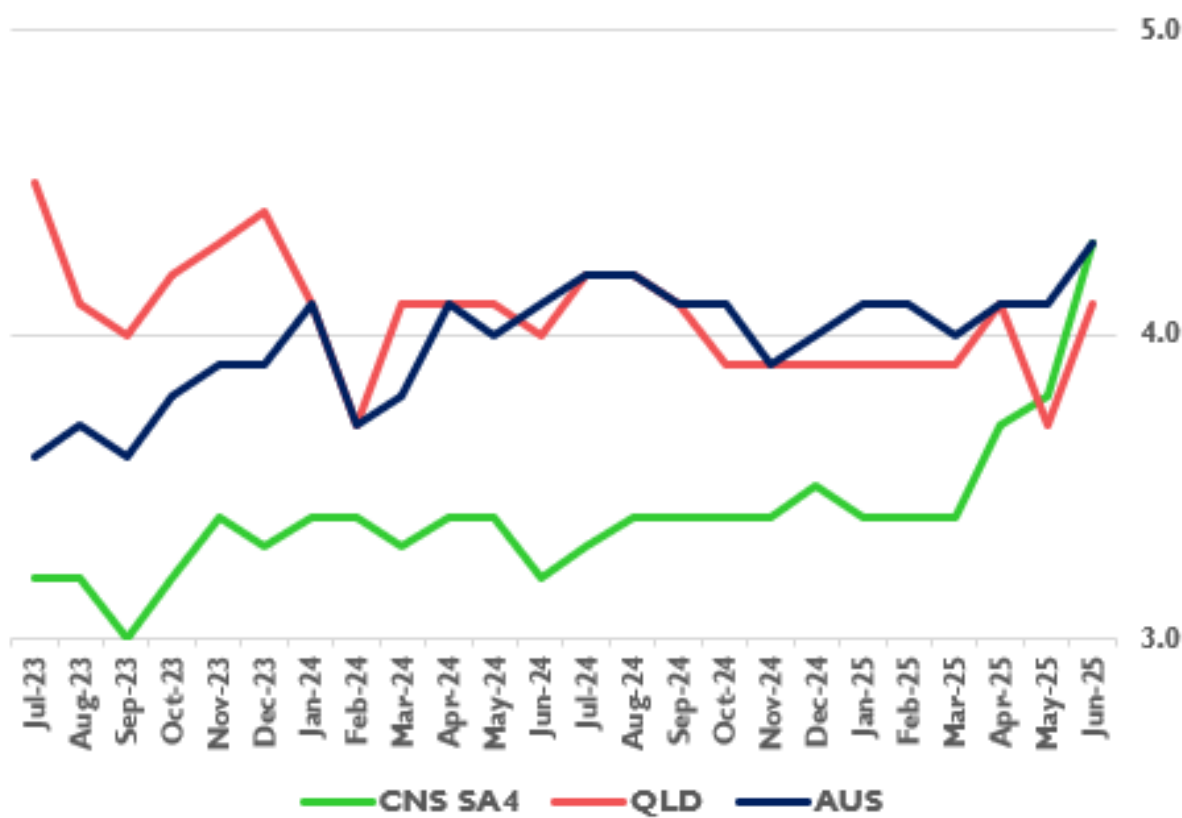
- Assessment of 2025 Australian Festival of Chamber Music's in Townsville to identify opportunities for growth and improvement for Cairns in 2026.
- Cairns & Great Barrier Reef Major Events Strategy – ongoing work on draft Strategy, Implementation plan and alignment to Destination 2045 and TEQ Events Strategy.
- Ongoing work with Cricket Australia on marketing campaign for Men's International Cricket – resulting in very high ticket sales for Cairns T20 match.
- Launch of BE Social tickets, with very strong pre-sales.

Advocacy

- LGAQ Motions submitted for consideration at the 2025 Local Government Association Queensland annual conference on the Gold Coast.
- Declaration by the State Government of a Priority Development Area for the Mount Peter Southern Growth Corridor.
- 2025 Developing Northern Australia Conference was held in Cairns with more than 500 attendees.

Economic snapshot

2- year Unemployment Rate trend (%)



Most recent unemployment rates

Most recent unemployment rates

		Pre COVID
	Mar-25	Dec-19
Cairns LGA	2.9%	4.3%
		Pre COVID
	Jun-25	Dec-19
Cairns SA4 Region	4.3%	4.8%