

Putting our best foot forward



Cairns Regional Council is responsible for maintaining approximately 500km of concrete or asphalt footpaths, 113 connecting footbridges, and numerous boardwalks and off-road recreational walking tracks. This number continues to grow as more pathway networks are linked and population growth increases demand.

Footpaths are important community assets, providing a safe and convenient way for people to get around, especially in urban areas. A safe and effective footpath network also helps the environment by enabling people to walk or jog to their destinations rather than drive, improving physical activity levels.

Paths and cycleways make a significant contribution to the Cairns region's built environment, local character, tourism appeal and outdoor lifestyle. The Cairns region also boasts high rates of commuting to work on foot and by bike, and strong community interest in pleasant places to walk and cycle for sport, recreation, fitness and tourism.

Annual footpath cleaning programs

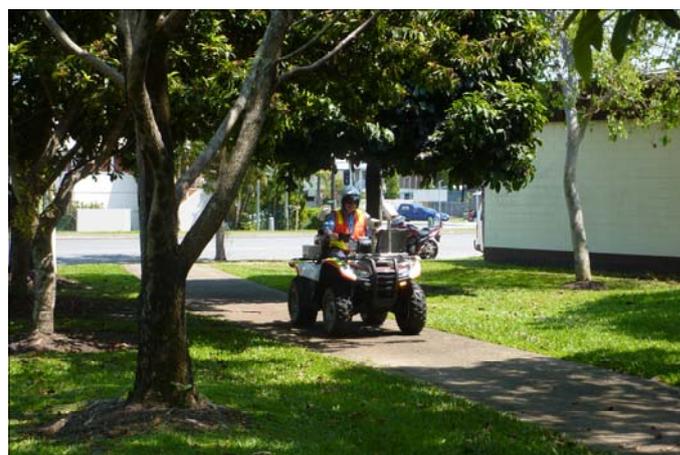
Council has a street sweeper cleaning program for the CBD which operates 365 days a year, commencing at 3am each weekday and 2am each weekend. Depending on the location, whether it is a residential area or not, footpaths are cleaned with a broom or electric blower. The rubbish is directed into the gutter and then the gutter is cleaned by the street sweeper truck.

Footpaths in the CBD are cleaned by a high pressure gurney. This cleaning schedule is undertaken based on the level of foot traffic. For example, the busy Shields Street spine that runs from the Esplanade to Cairns Central shopping centre is pressure cleaned up to three times per year, while Florence Street and Wharf Street are pressure cleaned approximately once every two years. Every footpath in the CBD is also attended to as part of the chewing gum removal program.



Did you know?

- Each year, Council allocates:
 - ⇒ **\$1.5 million** for constructing new pathways;
 - ⇒ **\$500,000** for renewing damaged existing pathways;
 - ⇒ **\$767,000** for concrete or paved footpath maintenance;
 - ⇒ **\$112,000** for high pressure footpath cleaning; and
 - ⇒ **\$54,000** for the annual chewing gum removal program for CBD footpaths.
- Inspections carried out on footpaths last year recorded **152 minor defects** which were prioritised for repair.



Footpath condition assessment process

Council's maintenance officers inspect footpaths annually and address any concerns received from the public. A comprehensive condition assessment is carried out on all paths every five years. This involves riders driving quad-bikes, fitted with mounted cameras, capturing footage of footpath infrastructure as part of region-wide inspection program. Cameras capture one frame of footage every four metres.

The footage is reviewed by Council officers, to check for trip hazards including cracking, displacement and missing segments. The footage is also used to identify any hazards and assist in prioritising maintenance and repair work and in delivering the objectives outlined in the Cycling and Walking Strategy to improve connectivity, mobility and safety. Maintenance and repair works are then prioritised using a nationally accredited scoring system which takes into account a variety of factors including the location and severity of the defects.



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Cycling and Walking Strategy

Council has a long-term plan to improve pathway connections within and between communities, including both new and older suburbs. The Cycling and Walking Strategy 2010-2030 is a 20-year program to deliver more than 400 footpath and bikeway links to create a safe, accessible and integrated network.

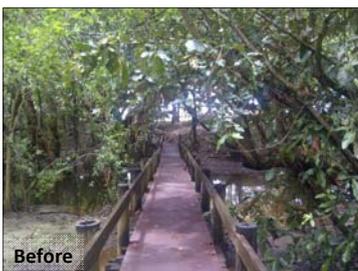
The Strategy provides strategic direction for the delivery of paths and bike lanes and aims to ensure that future walk and cycle networks continue to be relevant, realistic and reflect the community's diverse needs - whether it's a trip for fun, fitness, training, travel to work or school, or to visit a local park.

Highest priority is given to upgrading and constructing paths that will establish continuous corridors and community links, create more walkable neighbourhoods and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists in high-use areas such as school zones and business/shopping districts.

Go to Council's website to view a copy of the strategy.

Some completed major capital works pathway improvement projects include:

- Deadman's Gully boardwalk:** A timber pedestrian boardwalk in Clifton Beach was replaced with environmentally-friendly recycled plastic decking produced directly from kerbside pickup waste. The new boardwalk, which leads from Upolo Esplanade through the Deadman's Gully environmental reserve to the beachfront, is slightly higher to help reduce flooding events and wider to accommodate wheelchairs and prams to pass each other.



Before



After

- Lake Street streetscape upgrade:** This project included renewing the footpath and kerb and channel on the western side of Lake Street, from Spence Street to the Corporate Tower. A city centre master plan project, the footpath has been reinstated in exposed aggregate concrete and new street furniture installed, including seating and bins. Interpretative displays that celebrate the history of this section of Lake Street have also been introduced.

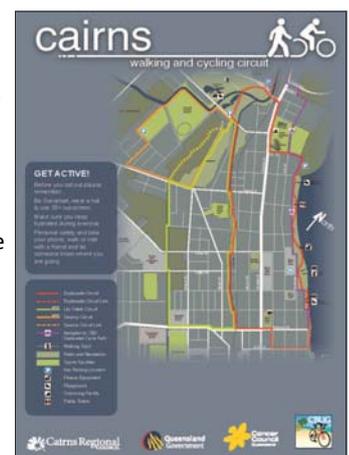


Before



After

- Cairns Walking and Cycling Circuit:** The Cairns Walking and Cycling Circuit was developed to provide enjoyable recreation activities within central Cairns through off-road walking and cycling paths. The routes take in the Esplanade lagoon, the foreshore to the Cairns Botanic Gardens, Cairns Central Swamp, along scenic waterways including Lily Creek and Saltwater Creek, and past regional sporting centres. Three rides have been marked on the maps as well as an unformed hiking track through Cairns Central Swamp. Contact Council for a copy of various cycling and walking guides and maps.



What can you do to help? If you notice a footpath that needs attention, please report it by contacting Cairns Regional Council's customer service team on 1300 69 22 47. Alternatively, details can be logged via the Contact Us Online section of Council's website. It helps if you include a good description of the problem and the location of the path.

