

Development & Planning

Strategic Blueprint



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Message from the CEO



Cairns Regional Council is committed to shaping the future of our region for the benefit of our community. We focus on supporting economic growth, enhancing liveability and facilitating sustainable development.

Our Development & Planning Branch is responsible for facilitating residential, commercial and tourism infrastructure that meets the needs of our local area. We are conscious our planning must achieve the right balance between preserving our natural environment, protecting communities against extreme weather and accommodating a growing population. Our topography and natural environment that adds to our unique lifestyle, also provides infrastructure challenges.

Our goal is to continue to promote Cairns an enviable region to live, work and visit. Remaining competitive and getting it right takes ongoing stakeholder engagement, careful planning and a long-term vision.

That is why this Strategic Blueprint is a necessary guide to how we approach development in our region. It has been informed by industry insights and stakeholder feedback and fuelled by an appetite for innovation and efficiency.

Developing Cairns requires ongoing partnerships between Council, community, industry and governments. Together, I am confident we can support a thriving growing community well into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Gouldthorp". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Ken Gouldthorp
CEO

Message from the Executive Manager



As we look toward the future, the Development & Planning Branch remains committed to advancing the Vision and Mission we have set together. Through the collective efforts of our talented and dedicated team and our stakeholders, we continue to foster a culture of collaboration, growth, and excellence. The Development & Planning Strategic Blueprint lays the foundation for our next chapter—one where we will build on our past successes, embrace new challenges, and drive initiatives that optimise our operations. We will create lasting value and impact for our community.

The Development & Planning Strategic Blueprint is our commitment. Our commitment to transforming our business into a high-performing powerhouse, centred around people, purpose, optimisation, and performance. We pledge to foster innovation, uphold our values, and exceed expectations. We vow to lead with collaboration, adapt proactively to change, and deliver exceptional results for our community. Above all, we dedicate ourselves to making a positive, lasting impact on our region and the place we proudly call home.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire Simmons". The signature is a stylized, cursive script.

Claire Simmons
Executive Manager, Development & Planning

The setting

Organisational overview

Cairns is a unique and vibrant region, renowned as the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics Rainforest, two of the world's most iconic natural wonders. As the local government authority for this dynamic region, Cairns Regional Council is focused on positive community impact that reflects local cultures and environments.

Guided by a commitment to positive outcomes for the region, Cairns Regional Council focuses on ensuring long-term sustainability, supporting economic growth, and enhancing the quality of life for all residents. Through strategic partnerships, transparency, and community engagement, the Council works to maintain Cairns as a thriving and connected regional hub that benefits from a collaborative approach to development and planning.

Cairns Regional Council's Development & Planning Branch is invested in providing high quality services and infrastructure that meet the needs of our growing population. We partner with residents, businesses and industry to develop a thriving, inclusive and resilient city. Our approach protects the unique environmental and heritage assets that make Cairns a world-renowned destination.

Construction industry landscape (drivers for growth)

The construction industry in Cairns plays a pivotal role in the region's ongoing growth and development. As the gateway to Far North Queensland, Cairns is experiencing an increase in construction activity across both residential and commercial sectors. The region's attractiveness as a tourism hub, expanding population, and increasing investment in government infrastructure are key factors driving this growth. At the same time, the private sector's contribution is essential to shaping the region's economic future. Private development, supported by Cairns Regional Council's strategic planning and infrastructure goals, continues to respond to the region's evolving needs.

Key drivers of growth

1. **Urban expansion:** Cairns has seen significant urban expansion in recent years, particularly in residential developments that cater to the growing local population and an influx of people seeking to relocate to the region for its lifestyle offerings. With population growth projected at 1.5% annually, the demand for residential housing will continue to rise, supported by both private developers and government investment in affordable housing (*Cairns Regional Council Population Forecast, 2023*).



2. **Tourism infrastructure:** As a major tourism destination, Cairns continues to see construction projects focused on hospitality, commercial spaces, and related infrastructure. This includes developments in hotels, resorts, and amenities to support the growing tourism market. Additionally, major upgrades to public infrastructure and transport networks are underway to enhance the overall visitor experience. Key infrastructure upgrades include:

- **Cairns Esplanade redevelopment:** Enhancing public spaces, new recreational areas, and improved pedestrian and cycle paths along the waterfront.
- **Cairns Airport terminal expansion:** Increased terminal space and improved baggage handling to accommodate growing passenger traffic.
- **Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal:** Expansion and upgrade of facilities to cater to more cruise ship visitors and enhance the cruise experience.
- **Cairns Railway Station upgrade:** Refurbishment to improve accessibility and facilities for tourists, including those using scenic rail routes.
- **Northern Beaches Leisure Trail:** Development of a leisure trail to improve access to tourist destinations like Palm Cove and promote outdoor activities.

According to Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ), visitor numbers are projected to grow by 4% annually through to 2027, increasing the demand for tourism-related developments (TTNQ Annual Report, 2023).

3. **Government investment:** A significant driver of growth in the Cairns construction industry is the ongoing commitment to large-scale government projects. These initiatives not only support the region's infrastructure needs but also create a steady stream of work for local contractors and construction firms. Major government-funded projects currently driving growth include:

- **Cairns Water Security Stage 1 Project:** Enhancing water supply infrastructure to support the region's long-term growth and resilience (Cairns Regional Council, 2023).
- **Cairns Marine Precinct:** Expanding facilities for the maritime industry and reinforcing Cairns' role as a regional economic hub (Cairns Regional Council, 2023).
- **Cairns Mental Health Unit:** Addressing the growing need for specialised healthcare facilities in the region (Queensland Health Infrastructure, 2023).
- **Housing Investment Fund projects:** Providing critical housing solutions to meet growing residential demand (Queensland Government Housing Strategy, 2023).

These projects are critical in expanding the region's infrastructure, meeting the needs of a growing population, and ensuring long-term economic sustainability.





Industry landscape (private investment)

While government-led projects play a critical role in Cairns' development, the private sector remains a key driver of growth in our region. Private developers are actively contributing to meeting the increasing demand for residential, commercial, and hospitality developments. These private investments are essential in supporting the region's evolving needs and complementing public sector initiatives. Key areas where private investment is making a significant impact include:

- **Residential developments:** As the population continues to grow, there is an increasing demand for both affordable housing and premium residential options. Private developers are responding to this demand with a diverse range of projects, from large-scale residential communities to boutique in-fill developments, providing more choice for residents.
- **Commercial & industrial spaces:** Cairns continues to experience a steady approach to new commercial developments, including office spaces, retail precincts, and mixed-use developments, and small-scale industrial developments, particularly in the CBD and fringe. These developments activate our high population areas, cater to the growing business activity and provide necessary infrastructure for businesses looking to establish themselves in the region.

- **Tourism infrastructure:** The private sector continues to play an important role in the expansion of tourism infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, and entertainment. These developments not only meet the needs of the growing number of visitors but also contribute to elevating Cairns' status as a world-class tourism destination.

Industry landscape (challenges)

As Cairns continues to experience growth and development, the construction industry faces several challenges that must be addressed to maintain momentum and ensure long-term sustainability. These challenges, including labour shortages, rising material costs, stakeholder engagement, and community expectations, are crucial factors that impact the successful delivery of construction projects in the region.

1. **Labour shortages:** The shortage of skilled workers remains a significant challenge for the Cairns construction industry, and more broadly across the nation. With the region's low unemployment rate of 3.9% (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023*), competition for skilled tradespeople such as electricians, carpenters, and tilers is extreme. In addition to trades-based shortages, there is a shortage of professionals such as civil engineers, town planners, and other development specialists. The closure of local university courses offering qualifications in these fields

has made it more difficult to recruit and retain talent within the region. This shortage is compounded by the growing demand for construction workers across Queensland, particularly in metropolitan areas.

2. **Rising material costs:** Global supply chain disruptions have led to continued volatility in the cost of construction materials, including essential items such as steel, timber, and cement. Over the past year, the construction material price index has risen by 6.5% (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023*), putting pressure on project budgets and timelines and reducing the ability to absorb costs, which threaten the viability of projects.
3. **Stakeholder engagement and community expectations:** With the increase in construction activity, effective stakeholder engagement has become more critical than ever. It is essential for developers and government authorities to actively consult with the community and other stakeholders to address concerns and ensure that projects align with the community's vision. Transparent communication and proactive consultation strategies will be key to maintaining public support and minimising disruption during construction (*Cairns Regional Council Community Engagement Report, 2023*).

Industry landscape (our role)

As detailed above, Cairns is undergoing a period of significant growth, driven by a combination of government investment, private sector development, and the region's unique appeal as a tourism and lifestyle destination. Cairns Regional Council's Development & Planning Branch understands our role is critical in ensuring the long-term success of project delivery across the region.

We recognise the need to actively focus on engagement with key stakeholders, ensuring that projects align with community needs and sustainable practices. Our team is dedicated to navigating the complexities of development while fostering collaboration with developers, stakeholders, and the broader community.

In a rapidly changing environment, we remain committed to business optimisation—ensuring efficiency and consistency in processes and procedures that support the region's growth. From guiding development applications through to delivery and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, our role in every stage of the project lifecycle is integral to shaping Cairns' future.

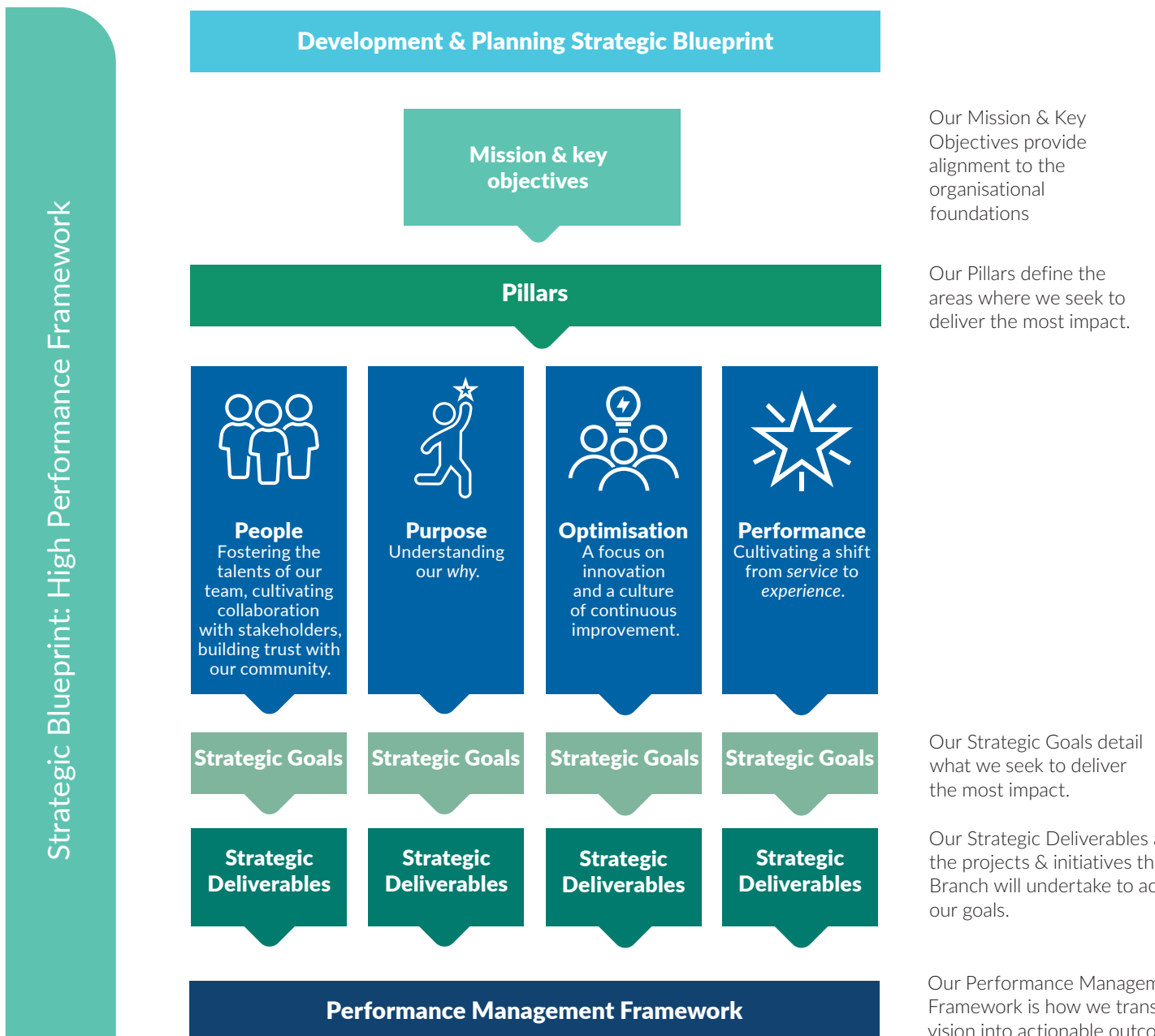


Our Blueprint Composition



Our Vision, Values and Focus Areas define our organisation.

Our team specific vision board



Our Mission & Key Objectives provide alignment to the organisational foundations

Our Pillars define the areas where we seek to deliver the most impact.

Our Strategic Goals detail what we seek to deliver the most impact.

Our Strategic Deliverables are the projects & initiatives that the Branch will undertake to achieve our goals.

Our Performance Management Framework is how we translate our vision into actionable outcomes.

Our Pillars & Strategic Goals

People

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 (SG1): OUR PEOPLE

Foster and nurture a high-performing team with a focus on growth & development of our people.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 (SG2): OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Proactively invest in stakeholder engagement & relationships.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 (SG3): OUR COMMUNITY

Promote a community-centric focus through trust and transparency.

Purpose

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 (SG4): DEFINING OUR PURPOSE

Refine and articulate “our why” and the value we add.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5 (SG5): DEFINING OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Clarify and communicate our unique contributions to stakeholders.

STRATEGIC GOAL 6 (SG6): OUR POSITIONING

Shape our brand within the industry and community, emphasising our commitment to efficiency, transparency, and community-centric practices.

Optimisation

STRATEGIC GOAL 7 (SG7): FLEXIBILITY & ADAPTABILITY

Refine and strengthen our ability to adapt and respond to changing market conditions and external factors.

STRATEGIC GOAL 8 (SG8): LEAN PRINCIPLES

Optimise resource allocation by applying lean practices, focusing on value-driven activities which enhance productivity and eliminate waste.

STRATEGIC GOAL 9 (SG9): OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Establish a culture of operational excellence by consistently evaluating and refining our processes, with a focus on enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

Performance

STRATEGIC GOAL 10 (SG10): PERFORMANCE CULTURE

Nurture a performance-driven culture.

STRATEGIC GOAL 11 (SG11): CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Enhance communication & engagement strategies to foster transparency and responsiveness.

STRATEGIC GOAL 12 (SG12): EXPERIENCE V SERVICE

Transform the focus from service delivery to customer experience.



Performance Management Framework

Ensuring success through implementation

The Performance Management Framework establishes a structured approach to translating our strategic vision into actionable outcomes. While the Blueprint defines our long-term aspirations and the Strategic Deliverables detail the actions required to achieve them, this framework ensures effective implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The Strategic Deliverables will be incorporated into the *Development & Planning Branch Project Program*, owned by the Executive Manager Development & Planning, and managed by the Coordinators for Development Services. They will be delivered through the Branch Project Office and the Branch more broadly. Each deliverable will align with our organisational values and vision, reinforcing their importance to our team, stakeholders, and community.

To support consistency and measurable success, each deliverable will be accompanied by specific Project Plans, developed and implemented in accordance with the *Development & Planning Project Framework (#7493193)*. This framework outlines the detailed processes, including risk management, roles and responsibilities, KPIs, and capacity building, necessary to deliver results effectively. By managing these operational details through the Project Framework

and associated Project Plans, this Performance Management Framework focuses on strategic governance, alignment, and evaluation.

Stakeholder engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement is fundamental to the success of the Development & Planning Branch and the delivery of the Blueprint. The development industry, community members, elected members, and internal partners, are at the heart of what we do. Building and maintaining strong relationships with these groups ensures their needs, expectations, and concerns are understood and addressed, fostering trust and collaboration.

Throughout the delivery of the Strategic Deliverables, engagement will be ongoing and tailored to specific needs. Feedback loops, including regular updates and opportunities for input, will ensure stakeholders remain informed and heard. Round table discussions and workshops will provide a collaborative platform to address challenges, share insights, refine approaches, strengthen partnerships and drive continuous improvement.



Reporting and accountability

The progress of these Deliverables will be reported through the organisation's Operational Plan reporting framework. This aligns the Blueprint with the organisation's overarching governance structures, providing visibility and tracking of progress against strategic priorities. Regular reporting will ensure milestones are met, challenges are addressed and the Branch remains focused on delivering outcomes that benefit our team, stakeholders, and community.

By embedding robust project and reporting mechanisms into the Performance Management Framework, we ensure that every step toward achieving our vision is purposeful, transparent, and aligned with Council's broader objectives.

Ongoing evaluation

Ongoing evaluation of the Strategic Deliverables is crucial to ensure they remain fit for purpose. As needs evolve and new challenges emerge, the operational adjustments to these Deliverables will be managed through the Development & Planning Project Framework and associated Project Plans. Priorities have been carefully factored into the short, medium, and long-term Deliverables, with high-payoff initiatives and critical actions embedded in the short-term timeframe.

These priorities will continue to be identified and reviewed through monthly Branch project meetings, where operational progress is tracked, performance is monitored, and alignment with the Blueprint is evaluated. Changes and updates to Deliverables will be embedded in the Strategic Deliverables of the Blueprint and reflected in the Development & Planning Branch Project Program.

Figure: Strategic Delivery Lifecycle



Our commitment for the future

As we look toward the future, the Development & Planning Branch remains committed to advancing the Vision and Mission we have set together. Through the collective efforts of our talented and dedicated team and our stakeholders, we continue to foster a culture of collaboration, growth, and excellence. The Development & Planning Strategic Blueprint lays the foundation for our next chapter—one where we will build on our past successes, embrace new challenges, and drive initiatives that optimise our operations. We will create lasting value and impact for our community.

The Strategic Objectives and Pillars outlined in the Blueprint will guide us in achieving our goals and fulfilling our commitment to our region. Aligning with our values and operating principles, we will ensure that our work resonates with purpose and integrity, paving the way for a legacy that honours the community which we serve.

Integral to our journey forward is the Performance Management Framework, which will help us measure progress, ensure accountability, and align our efforts with the strategic objectives outlined in this document. By using this framework to guide our work, we will continuously improve, refine our approach, and track our achievements against key outcomes.

The Development & Planning Strategic Blueprint is our commitment. Our commitment to transforming our business into a high-performing powerhouse, centred around people, purpose, optimisation, and performance. We pledge to foster innovation, uphold our values, and exceed expectations. We vow to lead with collaboration, adapt proactively to change, and deliver exceptional results for our community. Above all, we dedicate ourselves to making a positive, lasting impact on our region and the place we proudly call home.

Challenge the Ordinary. Build a Legacy.

Appendix A

Strategic Deliverables (short, medium and long term)



Strategic Deliverables

SHORT TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 12 months

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of change	Measure of success	Strategic Goal alignment
Educational partnerships	Strengthen relationship with James Cook University (JCU) & Central Queensland University (CQU) to retain the remaining graduates in the region. Explore partnership opportunities with universities beyond the region to encourage graduate interest in the region.	Moderate implementation, High impact (subject to stakeholder engagement & investment, and output subject to budget).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal and formal engagement opportunities with the universities to inform students and graduates of opportunity in local government. Explore the creation of a Graduate Program to enable the transition of graduates to employment pathways (medium to long-term deliverable). 	SG1, SG2, SG3
The engagement hub	Consolidate informal and formal stakeholder forums and engagement platforms to a single point of contact on Council's website to encourage utilisation of same.	Easy implementation, High impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with The Industry Initiative and The Industry Reference Group and explore other opportunities for engagement. Ensure existing forums are fit for purpose. Increase in utilisation of service offerings. 	SG2, SG4, SG5, SG6, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11, SG12
Refreshed commitment to customers	Refresh the Customer Service Charter in line with the Development & Planning Vision Board. Pledge our commitment. Update website content accordingly.	Easy implementation, High impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear alignment of our Vision, Mission, Values and Operating Principles and our service offering. Stakeholder awareness. Improved public profile. 	SG1, SG4, SG5, SG6, SG10, SG11, SG12
External stakeholder engagement portfolio	Maintain relationships with the industry & establish new relationships to ensure opportunities to provide ongoing support to the service delivery of the Branch (assessment, advice etc). Include engineering, planning, experts (heritage, economy etc), legal.	Easy implementation, High impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of an external stakeholder engagement portfolio, based on skills and need/gaps within the team for reference. Note, does not replace the ROPS. Internal document only. 	SG2, SG9, SG10
Establish the FNQ DA Manager's Forum	Build on the existing data, expertise & experience across Councils through the creation of the FNQ DA Managers Forum with a focus on operational and strategic initiatives, and capacity building.	Moderate implementation, Medium impact (time investment, stakeholder investment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved relationships with neighbouring Councils. Sharing of knowledge to inform optimisation opportunities. Collaboration in joint challenges and opportunities. 	SG1, SG2, SG3, SG6, SG8, SG9,
Pre-lodgement service refresh	Review the pre-lodgement process and ensure it remains fit for purpose. Seek feedback and opportunities for improvement from external stakeholders. Improve information on Council's website regarding development enquiry types.	Moderate implementation, Medium impact (time investment, stakeholder engagement).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved customer experience. Process efficiencies. Continued meaningful stakeholder engagement. 	SG2, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11, SG12

Strategic Deliverables

SHORT TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 12 months

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
Decision ready lodgement for applications	<p>Enhance the quality of applications and processes across all Development & Planning functions to improve customer experience, streamline internal workflows, reduce unnecessary congestion, and achieve timely, consistent, and high-quality outcomes. This overarching initiative will consist of several targeted mini projects, each focused on specific application types and key stages of the development lifecycle.</p> <p>Seek feedback and opportunities for improvement from internal & external stakeholders, where appropriate.</p> <p>A focus on decision ready lodgement.</p>	Difficult implementation, High impact (time investment, stakeholder engagement, process refinement).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved customer satisfaction and overall reputation. Improved guidance material and collateral on Council's website to clarify expectations. New or refined internal processes and tools to create 'hold points', to clarify outstanding requirements with Applicants prior to progressing assessment. Team satisfaction and reduction in unnecessary congestion and risk of burn-out. Improved submission quality. Improved timeframes for assessment. 	SG2, SG3, SG5, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11, SG12
Review of Infrastructure Incentive Policies and delivery of an Infrastructure Agreement Framework	<p>Review existing infrastructure incentive policies to identify opportunities for improvement and alignment with current Council aspirations.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive Infrastructure Agreement Framework (including collateral) to streamline the negotiation, implementation, and monitoring of Infrastructure Agreements.</p>	Difficult implementation, High impact (time investment, internal & external stakeholder investment, budget considerations).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear alignment of Infrastructure Incentive Policies with current Council priorities and aspirations. Development and implementation of a streamlined Infrastructure Agreement Framework. Improved customer experience through improved guidance material and collateral. Improved customer satisfaction, and team satisfaction through the reduction in time and complexity for negotiating and finalising Infrastructure Agreements. 	SG2, SG3, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11, SG12
Creation of a General Policy to manage bonds, bank guarantees, and superbonds held as security for development activities.	<p>Develop a comprehensive General Policy that outlines clear processes and governance for managing bonds, bank guarantees, and superbonds. This will ensure consistency, transparency, and compliance across all development activities. Review best practices and consult with stakeholders to ensure the policy is fit for purpose and supports both organisational and customer needs.</p>	Moderate implementation, High impact (stakeholder engagement & investment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear, well-communicated policy that is easily understood by all stakeholders. Improved governance and reduced administrative burden. Enhanced customer experience through streamlined processes and transparent guidelines. Clear expectations outlined for both internal teams and external stakeholders regarding roles, responsibilities, and timeframes. Compliance with relevant legal and financial requirements. 	SG2, SG3, SG9, SG10

Strategic Deliverables

MEDIUM TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 2 years

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
Revenue recovery for accepted development (infrastructure charges)	Undertake an analysis of infrastructure charges for accepted development (e.g. Warehouses, Low Impact Industry etc.) in accordance with the adopted infrastructure charges resolution.	Difficult implementation, High impact (time investment, stakeholder investment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and integration of a streamlined process to identify and capture relevant applications, and ongoing tracking. Identification of necessary resources (personnel, tools) to prepare and issue infrastructure charges notices efficiently. 	SG3, SG8 & SG9
Growth & Development investment strategy	<p>Create an internal framework for the continuous growth and development of employees, aligning individual career goals with organisational objectives while fostering both individual and collective growth within the Branch.</p> <p>Provide clear role definitions, structured performance review processes, and personalised mentoring and coaching opportunities, supporting skill enhancement, leadership development, and role progression. The strategy encourages internal knowledge-sharing events and debriefs to improve collaboration and technical understanding across specialists within the organisation and industry.</p> <p>Additionally, it should highlight our employee value proposition to attract and retain talent, and identify professional development opportunities through networking, mentoring, and debriefing, ensuring team members have the tools and support to thrive and contribute to the organisation's success.</p>	Difficult implementation, High impact (time investment, internal stakeholder engagement).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved role clarity and skills as evidenced by performance reviews and individual staff feedback. Greater internal knowledge sharing and collaboration. Improved staff satisfaction and retention. Marketing collateral to support recruitment packages when advertising for positions. 	SG1, SG2, SG3, SG5, SG10 & SG12

Strategic Deliverables

MEDIUM TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 2 years

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
<p>Workforce planning to strengthen capacity and technical expertise & improve service delivery</p>	<p>Conduct a comprehensive workload and resourcing analysis using tools such as task tracking and performance data to identify gaps and opportunities.</p> <p>Develop a workforce planning framework and prepare robust business cases to secure additional support and technical staff, ensuring alignment with organisational goals and budget constraints.</p> <p>Define role requirements, key responsibilities, and desired outcomes for new positions to enhance efficiency, reduce process burden, and deliver high-quality service outcomes.</p>	<p>Difficult implementation, High impact (subject to budget).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a detailed workload and resourcing analysis, with clear identification of gaps and resource requirements. • Development and submission of business cases where appropriate to support workplace planning, and service delivery. • Reduction in application handling times as measured by key performance indicators. • Improved efficiency and reduced workload for Technical Staff, as evidenced by feedback and time-tracking data. • Enhanced team satisfaction and improved service delivery outcomes. 	<p>SG1, SG2, SG3, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11 & SG12</p>
<p>Expansion of fast track approval pathways</p>	<p>Identify and explore additional fast-track approval pathways for other application types to further streamline processes and improve service delivery.</p> <p>Conduct a review of the existing Express DA program to ensure it remains fit for purpose, identifying opportunities for refinement and alignment with current and future needs.</p> <p>Engage with stakeholders to understand barriers and opportunities for efficient assessment and implement improvements to enhance the applicant experience and reduce timeframes.</p>	<p>Difficult implementation, High impact (subject to stakeholder engagement and resource allocation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and development of new fast-track approval pathways for additional application types. • Completion of a comprehensive review of the Express DA program with actionable recommendations implemented. • Improved assessment timeframes and applicant satisfaction, as measured by feedback and performance data. • Enhanced alignment of fast-track processes with organisational objectives and community needs. • Increased utilisation of streamlined pathways across application types. 	<p>SG2, SG3, SG5, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10 & SG12</p>

Strategic Deliverables

MEDIUM TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 2 years

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
Internal integration & engagement	<p>Promote knowledge sharing across the organisation and industry by encouraging regular engagement, debriefs, and collaborative sessions.</p> <p>Reinforce a structured feedback loop to the policy team to ensure opportunities for improvement are effectively identified and addressed, improving alignment between policy development and practical application.</p> <p>Utilise internal platforms and forums to share insights, lessons learned, and industry trends to create a culture of continuous learning and collaboration. Explore additional formal and informal engagement opportunities.</p>	Easy implementation, Medium impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation in knowledge-sharing sessions, evidenced by attendance and feedback metrics. • Enhanced alignment between policy updates and operational feedback. • Improved understanding of organisational and industry processes, reducing inefficiencies and improving decision-making. • Strengthened collaboration across the organisation, as measured by stakeholder satisfaction and engagement levels. 	SG1, SG2, SG3, SG9, SG10 & SG12
Self-service certification	<p>Investigate opportunities to introduce self-service certification pathways for post-approval journey, focusing on low-risk operational works.</p> <p>Define eligibility criteria, develop clear guidelines, and ensure appropriate checks and balances are in place to maintain legislative compliance and quality standards.</p> <p>Engage with industry stakeholders to explore feasibility, gather insights, and co-design an effective self-service framework.</p>	Moderate implementation, Medium impact (focus on low-risk operational works).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a feasibility study with recommendations to explore particular self-service certification pathways. • Development and implementation of clear guidelines, processes, and eligibility criteria. • Increased uptake of self-service certification for eligible projects, reducing timeframes, and ensuring a focus on value-add tasks. • Positive feedback from stakeholders on the usability and effectiveness of the framework. • Demonstrable improvements in efficiency and customer satisfaction. 	SG2, SG5, SG6, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10 & SG12

Strategic Deliverables

MEDIUM TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 2 years

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
<p>Leveraging automation to streamline administrative tasks and enhance efficiency</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to integrate established automation and AI programs, such as Microsoft Copilot and Power Automate, into day-to-day work processes.</p> <p>Identify repetitive, time-consuming administrative tasks and evaluate how automation can reduce congestion, eliminate duplication, and improve overall workflow.</p> <p>Work with relevant teams to ensure smooth integration of automation tools, with clear training and support mechanisms for staff.</p>	<p>Moderate implementation, Medium impact (subject to organisational support).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful identification and automation of administrative tasks, reducing manual effort and time spent. • Positive feedback from staff on the usability and effectiveness of automation tools. • Reduced administrative workload, allowing staff to focus on higher-value tasks. • Clear improvements in process efficiency, as measured by key performance data. 	<p>SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11 & SG12</p>
<p>Mentoring program</p>	<p>Develop and implement a structured mentoring program to improve networking and mentoring opportunities between industry stakeholders and team members.</p> <p>Facilitate knowledge-sharing and skill-building through formal mentoring relationships, while also promoting informal networking events and forums for team members to connect with industry stakeholders.</p> <p>Ensure that the program aligns with the team's career development goals, providing both guidance and opportunities for growth.</p>	<p>Difficult implementation, High impact (time investment, team and stakeholder engagement & investment, subject to budget).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful launch of the mentoring program with clear structure and guidelines. • Increased participation in both formal mentoring relationships and informal networking events. • Positive feedback from participants regarding the value of mentoring and networking opportunities. • Demonstrable improvement in team member development, as evidenced by career progression and satisfaction levels. 	<p>SG1, SG2, SG3, SG4, SG5, SG6, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11 & SG12</p>

Strategic Deliverables

LONG TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 3 years

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
The Industry Initiative Investment Program	<p>Develop a comprehensive development program designed to nurture emerging talent across both the private and local government sectors of the development industry.</p> <p>The program will provide structured support and guidance, facilitate skill development, and create pathways for career progression for participants.</p> <p>Engage key stakeholders, including industry leaders and organisations, to ensure the program meets the needs of both emerging talent and the broader industry.</p>	<p>Difficult implementation, High impact (regional significance, high stakeholder engagement & investment, governance, potential budget considerations).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful establishment of the development program with clear structures, guidelines, and outcomes. • Positive engagement from stakeholders, including private and government sector partners. • Increased number of emerging talents participating in the program, with evidence of career progression and skill development. • High program satisfaction rates from both participants and mentors, measured through surveys and feedback mechanisms. • Demonstrable impact on regional workforce development and industry growth, evidenced by improved recruitment and retention of skilled professionals. 	<p>SG1, SG2, SG3, SG4, SG5, SG6, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10, SG11 & SG12</p>
Brand consistency	<p>Enhance organisational identity & strengthen relationships through ensuring consistency across all internal and external platforms (including, the customer service charter, branch profile, web content, and Regional Development Updates).</p> <p>Standardise branding guidelines to create a unified and professional image that reflects the organisation's values, mission, and objectives.</p> <p>Collaborate with internal teams and external partners to maintain brand integrity across all touchpoints, ensuring alignment in visual and messaging elements.</p> <p>Note: This initiative will be progressively advanced through the delivery of the short and medium-term deliverables, ensuring that foundational elements are in place to support long-term branding consistency.</p>	<p>Moderate implementation, High impact (time investment).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a branding asset portfolio (templates etc) for internal and external communications. • Positive feedback from internal teams and external stakeholders regarding brand consistency. • Improved public perception and recognition of the organisation. • Streamlined content creation processes, ensuring all materials align with organisational brand standards. 	<p>SG2, SG3, SG6, SG11, & SG12</p>

Strategic Deliverables

LONG TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 3 years

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
Internal referrals	<p>Review the current internal referral function to identify opportunities for improvement, with a focus on streamlining processes, increasing efficiency and improving customer experience.</p> <p>Consider insights from team structures and practices in other local governments as potential areas for optimisation.</p> <p>Explore whether structural adjustments could further support cross-departmental collaboration and smooth the referral process.</p>	Difficult implementation, High impact (subject to stakeholder engagement & investment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in customer satisfaction and experience as a result of more streamlined referral processes. Positive feedback from customers on the clarity, quality and efficiency of the internal referral process. Increased internal team satisfaction in supporting a more seamless service to customers. 	SG1, SG2, SG3, SG4, SG5, SG6, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10 & SG12
Review of roles & responsibilities for advertising device applications	<p>Explore opportunities for refining the current approach to the assessment of advertising device applications. This could include reviewing roles and responsibilities to ensure optimal resourcing and alignment with business priorities.</p>	Difficult implementation, Low impact (subject to stakeholder engagement & investment, budget considerations).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved clarity and efficiency in the assessment process, and appropriate resourcing allocation. Positive feedback from internal teams on any refinements made. Improved service delivery and customer experience for advertising device applications. 	SG9, SG10 & SG12
Improve availability of customer information	<p>Enhance website content and usability to better serve customers, focusing on the distinct needs of applicants and consultants.</p> <p>Update and improve factsheets and guidance materials to ensure clarity and relevance.</p> <p>Ensure the website is easy to navigate and provides accurate, accessible information tailored to various customer types.</p> <p>Note: This initiative will be progressively advanced through the delivery of the short and medium-term deliverables, ensuring that foundational elements are in place to support long-term branding consistency.</p>	Moderate implementation, High impact (time investment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved customer satisfaction and engagement, as measured by user feedback and website analytics. Increased usage and accessibility of online resources, including factsheets and guidance materials. Reduction in general enquiries and customer requests, measured by performance data. Reduced congestion in service delivery, enabling a focus on value-add services. Streamlined customer experience with clearer, more user-friendly online content. 	SG2, SG3, SG4, SG5, SG6, SG8, SG9, SG10 & SG12

Strategic Deliverables

LONG TERM DELIVERABLES - targeted for delivery within 3 years

Deliverable	Detail	Impact of Change	Measure of Success	Strategic Goal Alignment
Investigate Development.i platform (or similar)	<p>Explore the opportunity to transition to a Development.i platform or similar solution to enhance the accessibility of information for applicants, the public, consultants, and internal stakeholders.</p> <p>Assess the feasibility and alignment of this platform with the needs of various customer groups, while considering budget and resource requirements.</p> <p>Note: This platform has been proven effective in other local governments for improving customer engagement and streamlining service delivery.</p>	Difficult implementation, High impact (subject to budget).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved customer experience through faster, easier access to relevant information. Reduced congestion in service delivery, enabling a focus on value-add services. Positive feedback from users (applicants, consultants, public, internal teams) on the platform's usability and efficiency. 	SG2, SG3, SG8, SG9, SG10 & SG12
Investigate PlanTech (or similar)	<p>Collaborate with the Planning Institute of Australia and the PlanTech working group to understand the options and capabilities of emerging technologies in planning.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for implementing PlanTech technology, focusing on how it could enhance service delivery and streamline planning processes.</p>	Difficult implementation, High impact (subject to organisational support to investigate, budget, change management etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced assessment functions and improved customer experience through the adoption of relevant emerging technologies. Successful collaboration with industry stakeholders (e.g., Planning Institute of Australia) to explore and assess potential technologies. Streamlined workflows and reduced administrative congestion as a result of implementing new technology solutions. 	SG1, SG2, SG3, SG8, SG9, SG10 & SG12
Investigate the implementation of a Chatbot for Council's website	<p>Explore opportunities to implement a Council chatbot to handle simple customer enquiries, improving response times and providing 24/7 access to basic information.</p>	Difficult implementation, High impact (subject to technical capacity, budget, comprehensive website content).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved customer experience through faster, automated responses to common enquiries. Reduced congestion in customer service channels. Reduction in general enquiries and customer requests, measured by performance data. Increased customer satisfaction with enhanced accessibility and immediate support. 	SG1, SG2, SG3, SG6, SG7, SG8, SG9, SG10 & SG12