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STAFF OF THE SHIRT

STATE OF THE SHIRE REPORT

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORTING



JOHNSTONE SHIRE COUNCIL



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November 2005



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Message from the Mayor

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Johnstone Shire Council's 'State of the Shire Report'. The Report is a snapshot of the Shire in the year 2005, and evaluates our progress towards improving our interaction with the environment. There have been many positive steps forward, and many people from our community prepared to dedicate their time towards ongoing efforts to making our Shire a better place for today and for tomorrow. There has been recognition of these efforts; in 2005 Council won the Queensland Landcare Award - on behalf of the facilitation of work towards the environment by the community, and for Council's initiatives to improving the Shire.

People today are the guardians of the future, for the sake of our children, and their children, and for the quality of life we will provide for them. Therefore, to protect the future, we have to work in common directions, and we have to work towards the common good.

This is the goal of the State of the Shire Report - to collate information to create harmony in the direction of these efforts by our community, by Council, and by the various State organisations. It has been my privilege to work together with these tireless servants of the people, who dedicate their lives to pursuit of the common greater good. It is continually inspiring to be able to support those residents of our Shire who wholeheartedly pursue their dreams of betterment of the Shire, and who often work far beyond the call of duty.

The State of the Shire Report is based on triple-bottom line reporting, so it describes the environments of Society, Economy and Ecology together. Each of these is interdependent upon the others; for the state of the Shire to be vibrant there has to be balance between all.

The information gathered in this report shows that overall the Shire is in a very good position. We have numerous strengths, based on a high level of conservation of the natural environment, a friendly and integrated multicultural community, as well as the opportunity for future growth of the Shire's economy. At the same time, there are still issues that affect the quality of life we hope to maintain, and that should not be allowed to continue to affect our inheritors. Numerous plans and actions are underway to combat the issues, and the State of the Shire Report commends further recommendations as to how we can direct our efforts in the future.

I thank all those members of the community, and of the many and varied organisations who gave their time to help provide invaluable information, and to help to review the conclusions of the State of the Shire Report. Without your help, this document would not have been possible.

It is my hope that the report will be of great use to decision makers, policy makers and planners, the community's leaders, and to anyone who wants to help to make a difference - be it small or be it great, every step forward brings us closer to a future that is better for us all.

I hope that you will enjoy and find informative Council's State of the Shire report.

Yours faithfully,

Cr. Neil Clarke

Perspective from the CEO

In 1991 Council officially embraced a philosophy that accepted that its planning should embrace social and environmental issues in addition to the provision of infrastructure. This decision put Council at the forefront of an international movement to a more holistic and communicative form of planning known as "Local Agenda 21". Since that time, the Queensland State Government has legislated to have all local government planning schemes prepared in this manner.

The year 2000 saw Council take another proactive step towards integrating social environment and economic issues into its role of service provision. This was done through initiation of our first State of the Shire Report - the Year 2000 Benchmark. The State of the Shire Benchmark collated information from all aspects of the environment, to use as a basis for planning, and to monitor for changes that may affect us all. This report in 2005 continues on from the work established in 2000, building on the information gathered then, and reporting on the changes to the condition of the Shire.

Then and now, there is no legislative requirement for Council to conduct such environmental reporting, but again Council has shown leadership in pursuing what it believes is responsible management of our Shire area.

Key to the state of the Shire, and to the future of the Shire, is an understanding of interdependence between aspects of our environment. These include the social environment, economic environment, and the ecological environment. Balancing progress in these fields is essential to ensure an overall strategy of sustainability - that is, ensuring that resources and opportunities are accessible to us all today, but also indefinitely into the future.

Achieving the public good in the face of complex situations from day to day is the challenge that Council answers, as a leader and as a representative of the Shire's every person, including our inheritors.

The State of the Shire report is Council's commitment to demonstrating this achievement. It has the purpose of helping us to plan, and to respond when problems become evident. The report maintains a record of the state of the environment, so we can see when there are changes. The report is also a demonstration of Council's public transparency, to each of our employers - the members of the community.

We would like to thank all the many staff of organisations and the individuals in the community, who have made possible the process of State of the Shire reporting. I am sure that the State of the Shire Report will continue to ensure communication and progress towards our common goals, for quality of life and opportunity, now and indefinitely throughout the Shire's future.

Yours sincerely,



Peter B Roberts
Chief Executive Officer



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- Bureau of Tourism Research
- Centre for Tropical Restoration
- Centrelink
- CSIRO
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- Department of Environment and Heritage
- Department of Housing
- Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries
- Department of Local Government and Communities
- Department of Main Roads and Transport
- Department of Natural Resources and Mines
- Education Queensland
- Environmental Protection Agency (incorporating Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service)
- Far North Queensland Local government Pest Plan Advisory Committee
- Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- Local Authority Waste Management Advisory Committee
- Office of Economic and Statistical Research
- Planning and Information Forecasting Unit
- Productivity Commission
- Queensland Health
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- Corporate Services
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- Technical Services
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- Barramundi Waters
- Brothers Leagues Club
- Bundaberg Sugar
- CANEGROWERS
- Cassowary Coast Development Bureau
- Clump Mountain
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Cummings Economics
- Growcom
- HASSELL
- Innisfail Chamber of Commerce
- Innisfail Community Support Centre
- Innisfail Historical Society
- Innisfail and Mission beach Visitors Centres
- Innisfail Youth and Family Care
- Local Government Association Queensland
- Ma:Mu Elders Reference Group
- Ma:Mu Health Service
- Paronella Park
- PCYC
- Ports Corporation of Queensland
- Tourism Queensland
- Tropical Fruits
- Urbis
- WBM Oceanics
- Wet Tropics Community Housing

Community Groups

- Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation (C4)
- Community Revegetation Volunteer Group
- Innisfail Art Deco Society
- Innisfail City Wetlands Steering Committee
- Johnstone Ecological Society
- Johnstone Shire River Improvement Trust
- Far North Queensland Natural Resource Management
- Johnstone River Catchment Management Association
- Johnstone Shire Cultural Association
- Landcare

Thank you also to all those individuals who gave their time and effort to make the State of the Shire Report possible.