



CITY OF PALMERSTON

COMMUNITY **PLAN**

The Plan recognises the importance of valuing and investing in the natural environment, balancing economic imperatives and focussing on innovation to enable social transformation in our city.



Acknowledgement of Country

Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we meet – the Larrakia People - and pay respect to their elders, past, present and future.

The Larrakia people welcome you to our beautiful land and sea country. We have a deep, spiritual connection with our country and are responsible for making sure it is respected by all those that use it. The Larrakia have a vibrant traditional society based on our close relationship with the sea and trade with neighbouring groups such as the Tiwi, Wagait and Wulna. These groups shared ceremonies, song-lines, trade and intermarried across tribal groups.

When the first settlers arrived in the Darwin area, the Larrakia provided them with food. Despite conflict and marginalisation, from the beginning the Larrakia participated in the cultural life of the early settlement, and lived in and around the city, before we were moved out to camps further away from the city.

Today we are a vibrant Aboriginal nation numbering around 2,000 people and are broadly recognised for our strengths in performance, music and art so while you are here, embrace Larrakia land and let Larrakia land embrace you in return. May our ancestors guide and protect you always.

Taken from




(<http://larrakia.com/about/the-larrakia-people/> accessed 6 November 2018).





Our Vision

'A PLACE FOR PEOPLE'

-  **Palmerston is a welcoming vibrant family city that fosters diversity and unity.**
-  **In Palmerston, everyone belongs.**
-  **In Palmerston, everyone is safe.**

These elements are central to our vision for Palmerston as 'A Place for People'.

Achieving this vision involves building upon the many things we love about Palmerston.

We will focus on our strengths to help ensure that our city thrives into the future.

This Community Plan shines a light on the priorities necessary for achieving our vision for Palmerston as 'A Place for People'.

The Plan recognises the importance of valuing and investing in the natural environment, balancing economic imperatives and focussing on innovation to enable social transformation in our city.

How do we know that this plan focuses in on what the people of Palmerston need? The people of Palmerston created it!




Mayor's

Community Plan Message

I am pleased to present the Community Plan, written by the community for the community.

The second largest and fastest growing city in the Northern Territory, Palmerston is a regional hub with a promising future positioning itself as '*A Place for People*' and the Family City of the Northern Territory.



From humble beginnings, Palmerston has grown quickly into a multi-cultural and diverse population of more than 36,000 residents who are immersed in 171 hectares of green retreat with hotels, dining, multiple shopping centres, a PGA tournament standard golf course, swimming and fitness centre, numerous schools and the Palmerston Regional Hospital, all of which support families who choose to call our city home.

This rapid growth presents Council with the challenge of planning for the future in a way that considers the social implications of planning and decision making, including balancing sustainability and progress. Council turned this challenge into an opportunity for Council to demonstrate its commitment to engagement and consultation in a meaningful manner by undertaking an innovative process.

Council undertook an engagement process known as “deliberative democracy”. This process provides participants with facts and information and then challenges them to make the decisions. It allows them to walk in the shoes of decision makers to critically analyse that information and make decisions. This marks a significant departure from traditional consultation methods that too often fail to engage the community at the decision-making stage.


The group that was brought together was known as the ‘The Palmerston People’s Forum’ and comprised people of all ages from across Palmerston. They were provided information from experts to guide their thinking about Council’s role in the community, public safety, economic development, multiculturalism and place making.

Our indigenous community, youth and staff also participated in workshops and their deliberations were considered.


The Community Plan contains 6 outcomes, which in turn provide objectives and criteria for measuring success. These outcomes are:

- Family and Community;
- Vibrant Economy;
- Cultural Diversity;
- Future Focused;
- Environmental Sustainability; and
- Governance.

I would like to thank all those involved in the preparation of the Community Plan, including members of the “Palmerston People’s Forum” especially our young people, representatives of Larrakia Nation, our guest speakers, Council staff who participated and those in our community who provided submissions during the consultation period.



Athina Pascoe-Bell
Mayor



“I would like to thank all those involved in the preparation of the Community Plan, including members of the “Palmerston People’s Forum” especially our young people, representatives of Larrakia Nation, our guest speakers, Council staff who participated and those in our community who provided submissions during the consultation period.”

Mayor Athina Pascoe-Bell



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The Community Plan Journey

THIS COMMUNITY PLAN WAS WRITTEN BY THE PEOPLE OF PALMERSTON IN 2018.

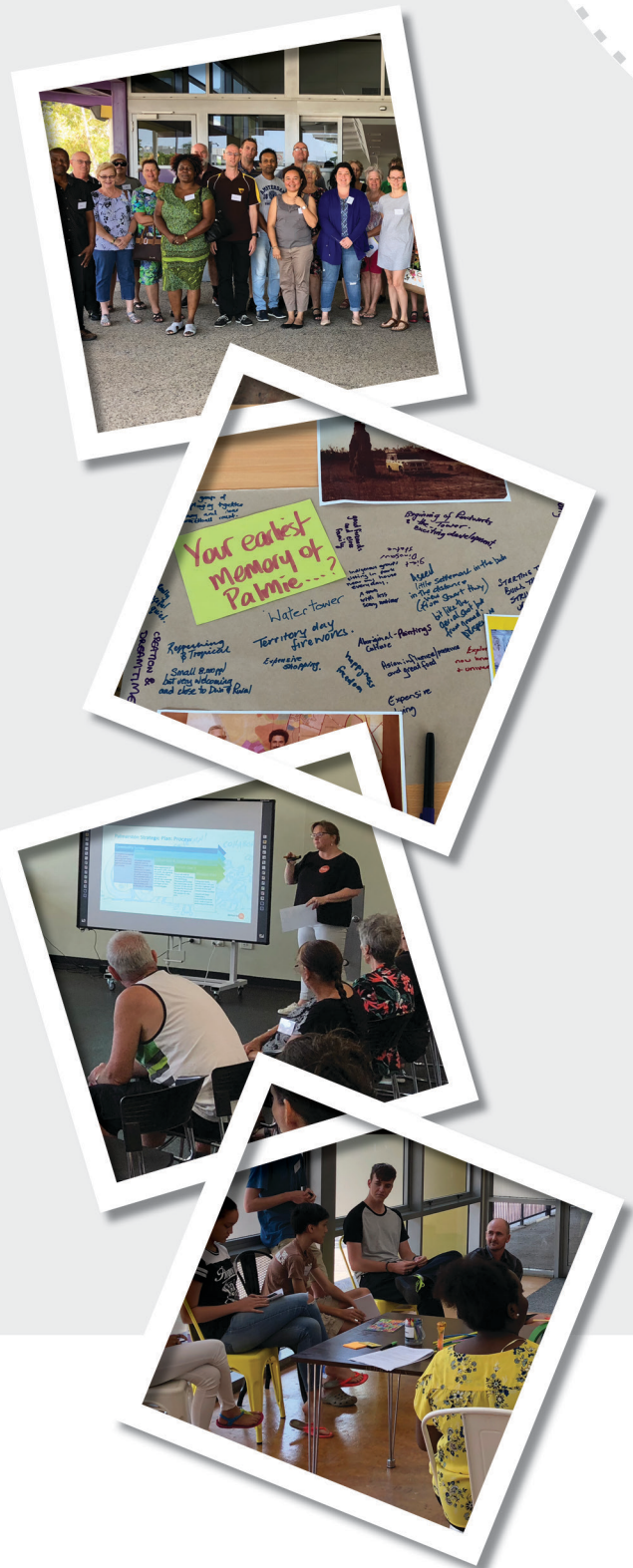
Council undertook a world leading process to develop this plan – ‘The Palmerston People’s Forum’. A diverse group of Palmerston residents worked together across three days to consider what future they wanted for Palmerston. Business owners, parents, young people, volunteers, professionals, tradespeople and retirees came together to make up the Forum, which was held at the Palmerston Recreation Centre.

They were supported in their work by information provided through a survey of more than 90 residents and they were joined for a day by 16 young people – who shared their

“We walked in with different views and perspectives, we leave with a common goal”

Sizol, Palmerston Resident

vision and priorities. Aboriginal leaders and community members also met to discuss their priorities for the future of Palmerston and provided these to the Forum. Additionally, City of Palmerston staff and Aldermen contributed to the plan through surveys and workshops.



‘A Place for



The Forum learnt, listened and deliberated to develop this Community Plan - it reflects the aspirations of Palmerston's people.

The outcomes, objectives and measures in this document were proposed by the people of our city – articulating the focus they think is necessary to make Palmerston the very best place it can be.

This plan outlines six core outcomes:

- 1 Family and Community:** Palmerston is a safe and family friendly community where everyone belongs.
- 2 Vibrant Economy:** Palmerston is a destination city for employment, it is a place where businesses are encouraged to set up and to grow.
- 3 Cultural Diversity:** In Palmerston we celebrate our cultures in a way that values our diversity.
- 4 Future Focused:** Palmerston is an innovative city that sustains itself through the challenges of the future.
- 5 Environmental Sustainability:** Palmerston is an environmentally friendly, liveable city that promotes renewable practices and sustainability.
- 6 Governance:** Council is trusted by the community and invests in things that the public value.

This Plan will now set the course for the Council's work – giving continuity and focus to the decisions we need to make on a day to day basis and each year for the next ten years. This plan will help us make sure that we have an eye to the strategic directions our community want for their future.



People'

Our Story...

WRITTEN BY THE COMMUNITY

Palmerston began with creation and the dreamtime. The Larrakia are the first people of Palmerston.

Jumping forward many thousands of years to 1982, our place became known as Palmerston.

This quiet, peaceful town saw children playing on the streets, while the town was growing fast. The commissioning of the Water Tower in the early days stamped the centre of Palmerston and left a legacy that we are all connected to today. As development progressed and the City of Palmerston expanded into bush areas, we saw people from many countries moving into the area and making Palmerston their home. Culture, painting and food were all central to our community as was friendship and tight knit families.

We are grateful for the pioneers of Palmerston who not only built our city but ensured natural bush areas were retained.

Growth has happened quickly for Palmerston with some planning decisions positive, others negative. During this fast growth, our community has also grown. Modern social challenges have also emerged – putting pressure on our community. All the while new developments and construction continue.

The heart and soul of Palmerston however remains: our community spirit emerged when Cyclone Marcus arrived, with people in the street and in their neighborhoods helping each other.

Now we are in a place of opportunity.

The future will be written by the people who live in Palmerston.

Family values will determine everything we do, and we will find new hope in the voices of our children and young people. We will celebrate the richness of our diversity, acknowledge our heritage, heal the past and work as active citizens, under the leadership of the City of Palmerston to create *“A Place for People”*.

How will the Plan be used?

This Community Plan sets the priorities to ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals over the next ten years.

This Community Plan provides stability and direction for decision making. In this respect it provides certainty; providing community, business and individuals alike a sense of what they can expect from the Council over the next ten years.

As a Council we want to make sure that each and every year we are working towards the long-term outcomes that our community wants and expects.

As a consequence, this Community Plan has been developed by members of our community.

The Community Plan prepared by the community enables Council to be certain that when we are making decisions about resourcing on a day to day basis that we have a line of sight to the priorities and needs of residents of Palmerston.

The Community Plan which is Council's strategic governing document, gives us something to report against, to check our performance against and to hold both Elected Members and staff to account. To do that, we have adopted a suite of clear measures recommended by the community and our staff. Proposals will need to ensure they meet the objectives set out in this document otherwise they are not meeting community expectations.

Council's Municipal Plan will be informed to outcomes and objectives of this plan. We will be reporting our success against these measures as part of our Annual Report each and every year.

The Community Plan has six outcomes, with objectives for Council to achieve and measures of success to provide indication of whether Council has achieved the outcome desired by the community.

This Community Plan will be reviewed in full following the election of a new Council. This generally occurs every four years.

Our City Today

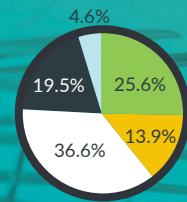
FACTS - KEY DATA ABOUT
THE DEMOGRAPHICS / STATUS
OF PALMERSTON



36,483
POPULATION



ANNUAL POPULATION
GROWTH RATE



■ 0-14 ■ 15-24 ■ 25-44 ■ 45-64 ■ 65+
PALMERSTON
POPULATION BY AGE



1,500
TOTAL NUMBER
OF BUSINESSES



\$44.8M
TOTAL BUDGET
EXPENSES 2019



\$710M
TOTAL ASSETS



170+
COMMUNITY
EVENTS



57
PLAYGROUNDS



10,513
LIBRARY MEMBERS



171ha
OPEN SPACE



\$281,756
IN GRANTS & SUPPORT



218km
OF PATHWAYS
MAINTAINED BY COUNCIL

Outcomes

1 Family and Community

PALMERSTON IS A SAFE

AND FAMILY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS.

Palmerston is a safe, friendly, family city that offers a high-quality lifestyle; a happy sanctuary. As a community, we want to foster the wellbeing of families and of our community. In Palmerston

everyone belongs, and we care for each other. When people feel safe, are secure and supported in their community, they participate actively and can fully enjoy what Palmerston has to offer.

Measures of success

The following measures will provide indicators of our success with regards to achieving this outcome:

- An increase in the number of people attending Council events and engaging in community activities;
- Reduced crime rates - specifically a reduction in alcohol fueled violence;
- Increased partnerships in place between the Council and other levels of government which seek to address crime; and
- Increased accessibility of Council facilities and resources for community activities for all members of our community.

“I’ve engaged more with you than my neighbours – maybe I need to engage more”

John, Palmerston Resident



Objective 1.1:

We focus on families

Our Strategies

- A Palmerston Family and People Plan is developed in partnership with the community. It includes strategies for all types of people and families in Palmerston.
- Engaging and fun activities are available for Palmerston’s families:
 - A hub for children and young people – which offers a sanctuary and promotes belonging; and
 - Support and places to gather for parents, single people and the elderly.
- The youth of Palmerston are visible
 - Positive stories about them are easily accessible;
 - They have a role in decision making and in the provision of services to other young people; and
 - Young people’s voices are included in all aspects of council’s work (*planning, program design and delivery*).

Objective 1.2:

The wellbeing of our community is a focus for all of our work

Our Strategies

- Council considers the social implications of all planning and decision making, including when contributing to Territory planning processes and providing advice on development approvals.
 - Council will work with the community to develop some community impact principles which assist Council to make sound decisions that align with the community’s aspirations about Palmerston.
- Council has strong partnerships and works in collaboration with those who provide social services to the community to better coordinate the delivery and effectiveness of these services.
- Our volunteers are valued and supported for the important work they undertake for our community.

Outcomes

2 Vibrant Economy

PALMERSTON IS A DESTINATION CITY

FOR EMPLOYMENT, IT IS A PLACE WHERE BUSINESSES ARE

ENCOURAGED TO SET UP AND TO GROW.

Palmerston is a new and growing city. Our vibrant economy and business sector contribute in many positive ways to the people of Palmerston. When businesses thrive, families also thrive, and our city

becomes more livable. Jobs enable community members to set down roots – and this means that they are more likely to stay.

Measures of success

The following measures will provide indicators of our success with regards to achieving this outcome:

- The people of Palmerston choose to shop local;
- Occupancy rates – retail shop spaces are full;
- Employment rates increase;
- The population of Palmerston is growing (families stay);
- More tourists visit Palmerston;
- There are more funds available for Council to invest in the community;
- There are more businesses located in Palmerston; and
- Council is committed to ensuring local businesses and industry receive the support they need in order to grow and prosper within our region - measured through the Community Satisfaction Survey.

“I am privileged to be part of this plan. I love living in Palmerston. It’s a beautiful place”

Claire, Palmerston Resident



Objective 2.1:
Improve Palmerston’s image

Our Strategies

- The image and brand of Palmerston is strong and authentic and reflects our vision as a ‘A Place for People’.
- We promote ‘employ local’ and ‘buy local’ where possible.

Objective 2.2:
Palmerston’s economic future is bright

Our strategies

- Palmerston has a long-term vision which builds and encourages a sustainable economy. Areas of growth and development are earmarked in advance.

- The community of Palmerston is involved in all economic planning to ensure we maintain a social capital mindset.
- We investigate alternative income streams and economic pursuits.
- We locate businesses in a strategic way to promote activation and movement in the CBD.
- We involve and engage youth in business development and innovations.
- We encourage, develop and support local business.
- We attract and support new businesses to set down roots in Palmerston.
- We support and encourage entrepreneurs.

Outcomes

3 Cultural Diversity

IN PALMERSTON WE CELEBRATE

OUR CULTURES IN A WAY

THAT VALUES OUR DIVERSITY.

Palmerston's rich mosaic of cultures is something to celebrate. Our community is strong and successful when we live in harmony and tap into the diverse mix of people and cultures to enrich our lives. As proud residents of Palmerston we have

many things in common, and we celebrate, honour and value our differences. We all own the future of Palmerston and all people of Palmerston have the opportunity to contribute to their community. In Palmerston every individual matters.

Measures of success

The following measures will provide indicators of our success with regards to achieving this outcome:

- Council consults with and includes the needs of all people in its programs and planning using a mechanism it has agreed with those communities; and
- Fostering and promotion of arts and culture within our community and the awareness and promotion of our local history is improved.

Objective 3.1:

To celebrate our rich culture and diversity

Our Strategies

- Develop a Culture and Diversity Plan which models how the city values and respects the diversity of the community. This plan builds and enriches our diversity, promotes unity, embraces culture and heals the past.
- Palmerston celebrates cultural diversity with events throughout the year. Our community has opportunities to celebrate, include, understand, learn and accept.
- Council grows support for cultural events.
- Recognition of our diversity and cultural heritage through statements, acknowledgments and publicly visible stories and signs about our heritage.
- Incorporate our cultural diversity into the design and layout of our public spaces (murals, art, paving)
- Cultural and heritage is celebrated through art, exhibitions and education initiatives

“To me,
home is now Palmerston”

Helen, Palmerston resident



Objective 3.2

Recognise and support diversity through our partnerships and leadership

Our Strategies

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders work in partnership with Council leaders to pursue cultural and heritage outcomes.
- Consider development of a First Nations Strategy that recognises, acknowledges, increases awareness, and promotes partnerships with Larrakia Nation.
- Council has strong partnerships in the community which enable it to include diverse views and perspectives in its planning and decision-making processes.
- Planning processes are inclusive of cultural diversity views and input.
- Council works with schools and community groups to celebrate and recognize culture and diversity.
- Establish a mechanism to enable diversity to be considered in all major initiatives of Council (ie a Diversity Advisory Committee).
- When undertaking town planning, Council incorporates needs of all residents of Palmerston.

Outcomes

4 A Future Focus

**PALMERSTON IS AN INNOVATIVE
CITY THAT CAN SUSTAIN ITSELF THROUGH
THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE.**

Palmerston is full of opportunities and is a leading regional community. Palmerston is an inspirational city into the future for generations to come. We forecast and respond to the predictability of change, and in doing so plan the best use of our

human, built and natural resources. We model best practice in smart cities and attract and keep people with the skills we need for the future. Palmerston promotes progress.

Measures of success

Finding specific measures for innovation is challenging; however, we can expect that if we are performing strongly against other measures in this plan – then we will be innovating!

- Council consults with and includes the needs of all people in its programs and planning using a mechanism it has agreed with those communities; and
- Fostering and promotion of arts and culture within our community and the awareness and promotion of our local history is improved.

“I want to ensure not just a future for me but my four children and grandchildren”

Jennifer, Palmerston Resident



Objective 4.1:

We support and foster innovation

Our Strategies

- We focus on developing our people. We develop and foster innovation in the community- through skills development, capacity building, enabling/encouraging and supporting the community to be self-reliant.
- We will support the establishment of a network of experts and innovators who can influence innovation and encourage forward thinking.
- We support and encourage businesses to embrace change and innovate.
- We want to attract and retain businesses and not-for-profit agencies that use innovative approaches to social issues, service delivery, and product development.

Objective 4.2:

Infrastructure is fit for purpose

Our Strategies

- Infrastructure is maintained and managed to meet community need and adopt innovative approaches.
- Our assets have multiple uses.

Outcomes

5 Environmental Sustainability

PALMERSTON IS AN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, LIVEABLE CITY THAT PROMOTES RENEWABLE PRACTICES AND SUSTAINABILITY.

Green spaces invite and encourage our community to connect outdoors – this is good for our health and wellbeing and also allows us celebrate our unique climate. We know that our seasons and climate are changing, so we live within our means

in Palmerston – we know why that is important and we plan and act to prepare for a changing future. Everyone has a role to play to ensure we will have a better future.

Measures of success

The following measures will provide indicators of our success with regards to achieving this outcome:

- The level of recycling / proportion of rubbish recycled is increased;
- There is a decrease in littering;
- Increase the canopy coverage (percentage of areas shaded by trees);
- Reduction in businesses using packaging and wrapping;
- Performance in actively protecting and enhancing the environmental assets and infrastructure of the City of Palmerston, while supporting local businesses and industry in sustainable land use, is improved; and
- Performance in committing to effective and responsible city planning which balances and meets residential and commercial needs in our community is improved.

Objective 5.1:

Reduce our footprint on the environment

Our Strategies

- People are engaged and encouraged to adopt best practice sustainable and environmental practices.
 - Practical ways to be green in Palmerston.
- When Council constructs new buildings they seek to utilise renewable energy efficient technologies.
- Council's processes model best practice in sustainability and environmental management.
- Increase educational and awareness raising initiatives that improve and expand community understanding of how they can have a lower environmental footprint.
- Provide opportunities for community to recycle, reuse or repair all type of waste.
- Council phase out the use of plastic at Council events and in all Council owned and run facilities.
- Council uses locally sourced materials where possible, supported by local labor.
- Council procurement processes promote sustainability.

Objective 5.2:

Palmerston is a cool, shaded, green city

Our Strategies

- Council develops and implements a Green Plan which incorporates our vision for:
 - Green, shaded and cool city;
 - Biodiversity and habitat health;
 - Better management and appropriate plant species selection; and
 - Future focused and innovative environmental approach.

- Council promotes, encourages, and where possible pursues sustainable development/or sustainable building for the climate that assists in reducing ambient temperature in houses, public buildings and private developments.
- Make sure Council's planning interfaces with other plans for our region – for a whole of landscape approach.
- Planting of native, localised species that minimise water, promote shade and can withstand cyclones.
- Support residents to manage trees, especially palm fronds and removal of unsafe trees.
- Council explores how waste water can be collected into the future and reused for watering.
- Greening and cooling initiatives – tree planting, shade structures and the freedom for citizens to take initiative and green up their verges and neighborhoods.
- Explore opportunities for the creation of a large area of green in and around the centre of the city (ie botanical gardens) which could also become an educational facility for tropical urban species and tropical biodiversity education.

Objective 5.3:

Encourage personal action and taking a leadership role

Our Strategies

- Encourage greater use of recycling bins by reducing general waste collection fees/rates.
- Participate in and encourage NT Government to develop planning guidelines that promote green infrastructure.

STRATEGIES THE COMMUNITY, INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES
COULD USE TO SUPPORT THIS OBJECTIVE

Sell coffee more cheaply where
people bring their own cups

Op Shop at transfer station, or honesty box, where people
can use something that someone no longer wants.

Outcomes

6 Governance

COUNCIL IS TRUSTED BY
THE COMMUNITY AND INVESTS
IN THINGS THAT THE PUBLIC VALUE.

Local government must be closely connected to its community, working in partnership to deliver what is needed to support people's lives. In doing so, Council is actively pursuing its communities' trust, through being open, accessible and accountable.

Measures of success

The following measures will provide indicators of success¹ in relation to this outcome:

- Community are satisfied that Council values and encourages participation in Council activities by the community and is committed to delivering the highest possible levels of service and community engagement.
- Community are satisfied that Council is committed to ensuring that the systems and processes of Council support the organisation in delivering the best possible services to the community.
- Community are satisfied that Council values its people and the culture of our organisation. Council is committed to continuous improvement and innovation whilst seeking to reduce the costs of Council services through increased efficiency.
- Community are satisfied that Council is showing corporate and social responsibility, ensuring the sustainability of Council assets and services and undertaking effective planning and reporting of Council performance to the community.

¹ Measured through the annual
Community Satisfaction Survey.

“The fact that they have asked people for their opinion says a lot about their integrity”

Mick, Palmerston Resident



Objective 6.1:
Ensure we have a leading governance model

Our Strategies

- Be effective – do what we are supposed to do, and deliver our Community Plan.
- Be accountable – open and transparent and also report back on our progress.
- Be courageous – try new solutions, take measured risks, adopt new technologies, be flexible and adaptable.

Objective 6.2:
Community is at the centre

Our Strategies

- Bring community into all aspects of the business
 - Citizens are active and participate in the business of Council.

Objective 6.3:
Healthy working partnerships

Our Strategies

- Contribute strategically to decisions others make for Palmerston (ie. planning) to ensure our strategic direction is being achieved
 - Prioritise the ‘health’ of Council’s partnerships and networks – and make sure they are working well
- Work in partnership with staff to achieve the very best outcomes. Enable frank and open dialogue.



Our Commitment

TO INVOLVING
OUR COMMUNITY

We are committed to working alongside our community in planning our city's future.

Council sees significant value in expanding the understanding of the community about Council's work and tapping into the 'wisdom of the crowd' to consider complex challenges and issues we face.

We will seek to involve the full diversity of Palmerston residents and will ensure we reach our diverse communities by using different tools, approaches or processes that work for them. This may involve, but not be limited to;

- Holding young people's forums – to more deeply understand what young people want and need for their future.
- Spending time with specific groups (older citizens, cultural groups, interest groups) to understand their needs as well as bringing them together so that they can understand each other better.
- Conduct more deliberative type forums (like the one that developed this plan) – to bring together people with knowledge (about topics/issues), those who are passionate about the same, and people who might not normally engage with Council to consider issues in depth.
- Change the council feedback process into one of learning – complaints provide an opportunity to connect with the community, so we want to use them to improve how Council works.

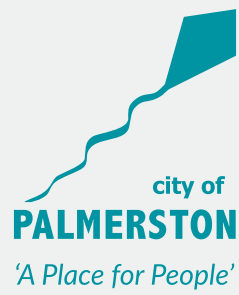
Most importantly we will seek input from the community to review future updates of this Plan.

We are also committed to improving how we share information with our community.

We will be seeking to improve the connection between Council and the community and provide more timely and relevant news and updates on Council's work.

In addition, young people of Palmerston have told us that they want to see Council adopt a more relevant and inspiring social media approach; so we will be exploring how we use social media more effectively to share information and engage with residents.





www.palmerston.nt.gov.au

Civic Plaza, 1 Chung Wah Terrace ● 08 8935 9922 ● palmerston@palmerston.nt.gov.au

