



MUNICIPAL | 2021 PLAN | 2022



### COUNCIL RESPECTFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES

the Larrakia People; the traditional owners of the land and waters of the Palmerston Region, and pays respect to their Elders: past, present and future.

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### INTRODUCTION

This municipal plan is the City of Palmerston's 'action plan' on the services, programs, events, facilities and infrastructure we will deliver and maintain in 2021–22. It also contains our annual budget, which outlines proposed Council rates, fees and charges.

This important document also brings together the actions we've committed to in our Community Plan and our Long-Term Financial Plan (which can be accessed from the Council's website: https://www.palmerston.nt.gov.au/council/formsand-publications/publications).

The City of Palmerston's vision is to create 'A Place for People', where we focus on our strengths to ensure our city thrives into the future.

Our community is at the centre of everything we do. In achieving this, we contribute to the vision where:

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

CITY OF **PALMERSTON** MUNICIPALITY

### **OUR VISION**

Our vision recognises the importance of valuing and investing in the natural environment, balancing economic considerations, and focussing on innovation to enable social transformation in Palmerston.

The Community Plan defines this vision and outlines our priorities, which are shaped by the community members who were directly involved in creating it. The Community Plan gives our community, businesses and Territorians certainty and what they can expect from Council over the next 10 years. We will work towards these long-term outcomes our community wants and expects.

# COMMUNITY PLAN OUTCOMES:

- Family and community: Palmerston is a safe and family-friendly community where everyone belongs.
- Vibrant economy: Palmerston is a destination city for employment. It is a place where businesses are encouraged to set up
- Cultural diversity: In Palmerston, we celebrate our cultures in a way that values our diversity.
- A Future focus: Palmerston is an innovative city that sustains itself through the challenges of the future.
- Environmental sustainability: Palmerston is an environmentally friendly, liveable city that promotes renewable practices and
- Governance: Council is trusted by the community and invests in things that the public value.

The outcomes include the objectives we need to achieve and the ways we'll measure our success in achieving them.

39,032
POPULATION

30 MEDIAN AGE



\$737 MILLION
TOTAL ASSET VALUE

S42
MILLION
TOTAL BUDGET EXPENSES

S1.7
BILLION
LOCAL ECONOMY





I am pleased to present the City of Palmerston draft Municipal Plan and Budget for 2021–22.

The Council Municipal Plan and Budget represents our strategic vision and outlines our projects, events, and service priorities over the next year. The plan focuses a range of by Palmerston residents and is a comprehensive document that helps council shape the future of Palmerston. We were honoured to receive the Planning Institute of Australia's (Northern Territory) 2020 Public Engagement and Community Planning Award for our Community Plan and we were nominated for the national award within this category.

This year's municipal plan was drafted with the intent to stimulate the local economy through the implementation of a wide range of projects, partnerships and initiatives. Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, we have continued to swimming pool to help support the Palmerston community. work on major projects including the redevelopment of the Gray Community Hall, SWELL and Zuccoli Community Hub.

Council will be delivering the \$15 million SWELL project utilising loan funding for Council's contribution and funding from the Northern Territory Government. Council is awaiting the outcome of an application to the Australia Government for support funding through their Building Better Regions

Operationally, the SWELL Centre will generate in the order of:

- 350,000 annual visitations;
- 20 direct full-time-equivalent jobs.

Major economic benefits to be generated as a result of the SWELL Centre are:

- Approximately 39 construction jobs and 20 ongoing full-time equivalent operational jobs:
- Total cost related benefits over ten years of \$75,229,195;
- Total economic and social benefits over ten years of \$156,417,883;
- Net present value of benefits of between \$99,402,136 and \$137,012,256;
- Net present value of costs of between \$47,249,320 and \$61,326,646; and
- Benefits Cost Ratio of between 2.1 to 2.23.

A range of social benefits will be generated from the **SWELL Centre, including the following outcome types:** 

- Social interaction;
- Health; and

Council is working with the Northern Territory Government to secure a community purpose site within Zuccoli. If secured Council will deliver the first stage of the Zuccoli Community Hub being a regional dog park.

We continue developing strong partnerships with both the Northern Territory Government and Australian Government and have secured support in the form of grants. This funding will be used to deliver infrastructure for our community, encourage innovation, increase environmental sustainability, and support businesses in a competitive global economy. We would like to thank and acknowledge both the Australian and Northern Territory Governments for their commitments to the well-being of the Palmerston community.

In 2022 we will continue projects such as greening public open space through tree planting initiatives. We will continue to offer free parking across the city and free access to the

Plan whilst providing services and support to our community. With the planned launch of the City of Palmerston Local Economic Plan, Council will be better placed to implement a broad range of strategies to support the local economy.

Council uses the 10-year Financial Plan to forecast and ensure the sustainable utilisation of Council funds to deliver the best possible value to the community.

The organisation itself is strong and financially viable. Through prudent and responsible budgeting, planning and financial management, Council will continue to deliver quality services to the community and replace and renew assets now and into the future, ensuring the same high level of service for each generation.

Palmerston is 'A Place for People', and Council puts our community at the centre of all we do. We take every opportunity to consult with our residents and involve them in decision making and are seeking input from you to assist in refining this draft.

I look forward to working with you, the Palmerston community, local businesses and government to see these goals come to fruition.

ATHINA PASCOE-BELL City of Palmerston Mayor



The City of Palmerston is in the middle of a significant growth, both socially and economically. Palmerston covers an area of roughly 52km2 with our resident population increased to over 39,000. Unlike many other major communities in the Northern Territory, our population of young people and young families is growing with a median age of only 30 years. Despite the adverse global conditions, our local economy has taken a major leap to a sum of \$1.6 billion fuelling prosperity of the region. Our overall Community Satisfaction performance score has increased from last year and is currently at its highest level since 2014. I am excited to lead this organisation at a time of such great promise.

As an organisation we have put enormous effort into making sure that Council is accessible and responsive to our community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Council is conscientiously responsible for ensuring the continued delivery of municipal services to its constituency. We extended our support to local businesses and community members to help the recovery.

Our Municipal Plan focuses on ensuring future sustainability whilst delivering programs and services to deliver our vision of "A Place for People".

### 2021-22 will see Council spend \$20.4 million on capital works programs including:

- Road Renewal
- Greening the City
- Stormwater Drainag
- Playgrounds and open space upgrades
- SWE

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

- Zuccoli Regional Dog Park
- Connectivity Pathways
- Waste Management

We are determined to ensure current assets are kept at an acceptable condition and service level for the community's continual use. For that reason, we are attributing \$5.35M for renewals and \$12.8M for upgrades across all assets in 2021–22. Access to Council assets, parks and buildings will also be improved with \$40,000 to be spent on all ability access projects. Road upgrades and traffic safety will be improved with an investment of \$1.6M this year. Our Archer Waste Management Facility will be witnessing a major upgrade of \$1.1M in addition to a waste education program which will be rolled out this year to provide key information on recycling and waste reduction.

Over the next year, Council will be spending \$500,000 on tree planting. We will improve safety in public places with an additional investment of \$500,000 by lighting dark spots.

Following the Verge Assistance program which was a resounding success in 2020-21 with 260 residents receiving financial assistance, we have allocated additional \$40,000 for the program delivery in 2021-22.

Council has developed an Inclusive, Diverse and Accessible (IDA) Policy Framework with input from local community organisations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, disability groups, seniors, youth groups, parents, and migrants and refugees living in Palmerston. The framework will ensure principles of diversity, inclusion and accessibility underpin how we plan and deliver programs and services with implementation commencing in 2021-22.

In addition to our popular community events, many of Council's important annual events and attractions will also return in 2021–22 such as Australia Day celebrations, Christmas in Palmerston, Brekkie in the Park and On Francis series.

We are expecting to welcome our tenth Council further to the Local Government general elections in August 2021.

Council will work closely with the Northern Territory Election Commission for the conduct of local government general elections and ensure a smooth transition. The recently updated *Local Government Act 2019*, will come into effect from 1 July 2021. Council is actively reviewing the requirements under the incoming legislations to ensure good governance and compliance.

We will continue our efforts to strengthen communication and partnerships with government departments at federal and state levels, local businesses, community groups and other sectors.

It's important that Council continues to plan and prepare in a responsible and responsive manner so that our Palmerston community gets the first-class facilities and services it deserves. The Municipal Plan 2021-22 identifies how Council will work in partnership with our community over the next financial year as we work towards our vision to make Palmerston "A place for people". I would like to thank the community for their support.

LUCCIO CERCARELLI
Chief Executive Officer

### **OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS**



ONLY A 2.4% AVERAGE INCREASE WITH \$30 INCREASE TO THE MINIMUM RATE WHICH WILL BE PARTIALLY OFFSET BY A \$10 DECREASE IN THE WASTE CHARGE

NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE TO FEES & CHARGES \$330,000 FOR THE AUDIO RECORDING STUDIO WITH \$205,000 EXPECTED TO BE EXPENDED IN 2021-22

\$80,000 PUBLIC ART

**PROGRAM** 

\$1.6M FOR ROADS

\$230,000

FOR THE COMMUNITY
BENEFIT SCHEME,
SPONSORSHIPS AND NT
CRICKET

\$20.4M TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS SPEND FREE CITY CENTRE
PARKING FREE ENTRY TO
THE SWIMMING & FITNESS
CENTRE FOR POOL USERS

\$3.4M FOR PARKS AND RESERVES \$15M

AS PART OF SWELL (SWIMMING, WELLNESS, EVENTS, LEISURE, LIFESTYLE)

\$160,000

FOR THE ANNUAL PRE-CYCLONE CLEAN-UP \$1.823M

PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GRAY COMMUNITY
HALL UPGRADE WITH THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT

\$500,000

FOR LIGHTING DARK
SPOTS IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH THE NORTHERN
TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

\$500,000

FOR TREE PLANTING
AND WATERING IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
NORTHERN TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT

A REDUCTION IN INTEREST CHARGED ON OVERDUE RATES FROM 9% TO 8%

\$80,000

WASTE EDUCATION PROGRAM

\$13.8M

PARTNERSHIP FOR CAPITAL WORKS
WITH THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT'S SPECIAL COMMUNITY
ASSISTANCE, LOCAL EMPLOYMENT
GRANT AND OTHER GRANTS

\$350,000 FOR ZUCCOLI DOG

PARK

\$1.1M

TO BE SPENT ON THE UPGRADE
TO THE ARCHER WASTE
MANAGEMENT FACILITY

\$5.3M FOR RENEWALS AND \$15M FOR UPGRADES ACROSS ALL ASSETS \$150,000

FOR STORMWATER DRAINAGE WORKS



RATING ZONE	RATE ON UCV	MINIMUM RATE	CHANGE
R, RR (Excluding RR in the suburb of Marlow Lagoon) LR, LMR, MR,HR, CL,FD, PS, SP8, SP9 (<10,000m2), SP9,(>20,000m2), SP10 and SP11	0.611910%	\$1,257	\$30 increase to the minimum and average increase of 2.4%
RR in the Suburb of Marlow Lagoon	0.502705%	\$1,257	\$30 increase to the minimum and average increase of 2.4%
GI and LI	0.490655%	\$1,257	\$30 increase to the minimum and average increase of 2.4%
All Other Rateable Land	0.736097%	\$1,257	\$30 increase to the minimum and average increase of 2.4%

WASTE MANAGEMENT CHARGE	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	BUDGET Year 2021-22
Residential Kerbside Collection	\$510	\$530	\$510	\$490	\$490	\$480
Manual Service Collection (<25 units)	\$510	\$530	\$510	\$490	\$490	\$480
Upgrade to 240L Annual Service Charge	\$143	\$149	\$149	\$149	\$149	\$149
Multiple Dwelling 25 units +	\$231.50	\$240	\$240	\$240	\$240	\$240
Additional General Waste Kerbside Bin 120L	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$250
Additional Recycling Kerbside Bin	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$110
Additional General Waste Manual Bin	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$394	\$290
Additional Recycling Waste Manual Bin	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$245	\$110

### OTHER CHARGES APPLY FOR DIFFERENT SERVICES. FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.PALMERSTON.NT.GOV.AU

### **EARLY BIRD DRAW**

have paid their rates in full by the first instalment date, \$1,500 each. Early Bird Draw Terms and Conditions will be available in August at www.palmerston.nt.gov.au

### CONCESSIONS

Council offers eligible concession holders a Rates Concession on rates. If you have any queries regarding your eligibility, please contact:

NT Concession Scheme: 1800 777 704

Palmerston Community Care Centre: (08) 8999 3344

Financial Hardship: Council offers a Rates Concession for both residential and commercial ratepayers experiencing financial hardship. To be eligible for this concession, please refer to Council's Concession Policy. Residents who are experiencing financial hardship should contact Council's Finance Team as soon as possible to discuss individual circumstances.

Each year, Council runs a draw which gives two lucky ratepayers, who Council also understands that you may be experiencing difficulties in paying your account during the COVID-19 pandemic. If this is your current situation or you are experiencing any form of hardship then we strongly urge you to contact Council so together we can discuss options and/or arrange a suitable payment plan.

> Council offers additional concessions and property owners can apply for more than one concession at a time. If you have any queries regarding your eligibility for any of the concessions, please contact Council's Finance Team on (08) 8935 9961 or email: rates@palmerston.nt.gov.au

### **ELECTED MEMBERS**

The 9th Council consists of the Mayor and seven Alderman who represent the entire city (Palmerston does not have divisible wards). Residents elect their Council every four years, with the next election due on 28 August 2021. At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 17 April 2018, Council resolved to rotate the Deputy Mayor position every five months.



### MAYOR ATHINA PASCOE-BELL

Athina moved to Palmerston in 2004 with her husband, who was in the Defence Force at the time, and bought their home in Marlow Lagoon just a few months after arriving. She is the mother of two school aged children and is currently studying towards a law degree. Prior to becoming Mayor, Athina had an extensive career in the public service and is focused on the good governance of the Council and ensuring that the right decisions are made at the right time.

Following successful development and implementation of the Community Plan, Athina's current focus is ensuring that the Council is delivering appropriate and timely services to the community. Athina has a strong belief that the way to solve issues in our community is by working together, collaboratively. To do this, she has built strong working relationships with both the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments.



### ALDERMAN AMBER GARDEN

Amber moved to the Territory from

Queensland in 2003, and with her eversupportive husband and purchased a property in Farrar in 2010. Amber has a deep understanding of and experience with Council processes, responsibilities, and governance, stemming from her nine years as a HR Manager in local government in the Territory. More recently Amber's experience in commercial construction and maintenance organisations focusing on WHQSE, Talent Management, HR, Finance and Office Management have allowed her to continue to provide key skills to the City of Palmerston. Amber is dedicated to improving safety, accessibility, and communications with the community to make it a liveable city for all to enjoy; and is also passionate and actively involved in animal welfare as the Chair of the Palmerston Animal Management Advisory Committee and Board Member for RSPCA Darwin.



### ALDERMAN BENJAMIN GIESECKE

in Adelaide. He moved to the Territory in 2004 to begin his career as a property professional after completing his Bachelor of Business (Property) degree. Ben bought his first home in Moulden in 2005, however he and his wife now live in Johnston. He has previously worked for two of the largest national valuation firms, but is now with one of the big four banks. He has extensive experience in the real estate market across the Territory and is also active in the local multicultural community.

Ben was born in Melbourne, but grew up



### ALDERMAN Damian hale

Damian came to the Northern Territory in 1974 and has lived in Maningrida, Katherine, Darwin and Palmerston. He currently lives in the suburb of Gunn with his partner, Maria.

Damian was the former Federal Member for Solomon from 2007-2010. After almost nine years Damian resigned from the Australian Workers Union in March 2019. He is employed as an Operations Manager for a local Indigenous company, Sacred Business Services and is the Head Coach of the NT Titans Rugby League team.



### ALDERMAN SARAH HENDERSON

Sarah is a hardworking community advocate and businesswoman who has been an active member of the Palmerston community for three decades. With her husband, she has brought up five children in Palmerston and now her grandchildren are being raised in this community. She has been actively involved in many different Palmerston community groups over the years.



### ALDERMAN DR TOM LEWIS OAM

Tom is a teacher, author and war veteran. An NT resident for 30 years, Tom served with the Australian Defence Force in the Iraq War, and now writes history books and teaches at a local high school. Tom lives in Durack. He is married with two daughters. In what spare time he has left he enjoys playing tournament chess.



### ALDERMAN LUCY MORRISON

Lucy has lived in the Northern Territory since 2008, after moving to Palmerston from Queensland. She has more than 15 years' experience in the media industry and started her career as a print journalist working for newspapers both in the Northern Territory and Queensland. Lucy then steered her career into communications, public relations and media advising. Lucy is passionate about healthy living and enjoying an active lifestyle and wants to get more youth involved in sports and local activities in the



### ALDERMAN MICK SPICK

Mick has lived in the Northern Territory since 2006. During his 11-year career in the Australian Army Mick and his wife Hannah bought their family home in Driver in 2016. Mick currently works in Indigenous health as an education and training officer. Mick is also a current member of local community groups which include the Palmerston RSL and Palmerston Raiders RLFC. Mick's aspiration for Palmerston is to have the most liveable, sustainable and inclusive city within the Northern Territory.



### **ALLOWANCES**

Elected Members are provided with financial support in recognition of the significant amount of work required in representing their community. Council intends to provide the following allowances to Elected Members, in accordance with *Local Government Guidelines*.

ALLOWANCE DESCRIPTION	MAYOR	DEPUTY MAYOR	ALDERMAN
Annual Base Allowance	\$87,635.66	\$32,405.27	\$15,761.63
Annual Electoral Allowance	\$23,065.90	\$5,767.68	\$5,767.68
Professional Development Allowance	\$3,753.17	\$3,753.17	\$3,753.17
Maximum Extra Meeting Allowance	Nil	Nil	\$10,508.15
TOTAL CLAIMABLE	\$114,454.73	\$41,926.12	\$35,790.63

Aldermen are entitled to claim an Extra Meeting Allowance up to a yearly maximum as outlined in the table above and the average claimable allowance is estimated to be \$160 per meeting. Details of other entitlements for Elected Members are outlined in Council Policy "Elected Members Benefits and Support" available on Council's website.

### REVIEW OF CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

On 12 May 2017, following a submission from Council, the Department of Housing and Community Development informed Council that the Minister had approved increasing the number of Elected Members from seven to eight. This took effect at the 2018 General Election and these arrangements are currently suitable for Council. Council's further review of these constitutional arrangements will be undertaken in accordance with the incoming legislations.

### **EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

As per the Northern Territory Local Government Act 2008, Council employs a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and delegates responsibilities to carry out the day-to-day functions of Council. The CEO is responsible for the overall administration of Council and works closely with the Elected Members to ensure Council goals and objectives are met. The CEO is supported in his responsibilities by three Directors who, with the CEO, form Council's Executive Leadership Team. Staff members operate under the CEO's direction across four key areas: Office of the Chief Executive Officer, City Growth and Operations, Lifestyle and Community, and Organisational Services.







### LUCCIO CERCARELLI CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### **RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:**

- · Office of the Mayor
- Flected Members
- Executive Support
- Council Meetings
- Governance
- Strategic Planning
- Partnerships
- Risk Management
- Procurement



**NADINE NILON** DIRECTOR

### CITY GROWTH AND OPERATIONS

### **RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:**

- Stormwater Drainage
- · Waste and Environmental Sustainability
- Transport Network
- Parks and Open Space
- Public Lighting
- · City Planning
- Infrastructure Design and Delivery
- · Emergency Management
- Smart Cities
- City Operations
- City Assets



**AMELIA VELLAR** DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER DIRECTOR LIFESTYLE AND COMMUNITY

### **RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:**

- Arts and Culture
- Placemaking
- Recreation and Leisure
- · Community Events
- Regulatory Services
- Libraries
- · Health and Wellbeing
- Community Facilities
- · Community Development
- Local History and Heritage



SILKE MAYNARD DIRECTOR

### ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

### **RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:**

- Customer Services
- Human Resources
- Technology Services
- · Property and Commercial
- Economic Development and Innovation
- Financial Management
- · Work, Health and Safety

### OUR PEOPLE

The City of Palmerston is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse and talented workforce by offering competitive remuneration and opportunities for personal development.

The new Enterprise Agreement in December 2020 gives our employees a clear set of benefits and conditions, such as enhanced recreational and parental leave entitlements, salary sacrifice options, employee assistance programs and discounted health insurance.

Council is committed to creating teams that support each other and delivering services efficiently and flexibly, resulting in personalised customer experiences for our residents.

Our strong focus on culture, values and behaviours that support the delivery of the Community Plan ensure council is trusted by the community. These values are set out in our Code of Conduct for employees. They are:

- · teamwork
- · commitment and accountability
- · sustainability and self-sufficiency
- · quality resources
- · a culture of continuous improvement.

In accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 2008 (the Act), the City of Palmerston directly employs a Chief Executive Officer who is ultimately responsible for the employment of all staff, in accordance with Council's approved Staffing Plan.

The Staffing Plan for 2021–22 allows for 96 permanent employees who operate under the CEO's direction and are divided into our four business

- · Office of the Chief Executive
- · Lifestyle and Community
- · City Growth and Operations
- · Organisational Services.

These 96 positions are the equivalent of 89.55 full-time staff (known as full-time equivalents, or FTEs). This does not include casual staff or limited tenure positions of 12 months or less. At last year's budget, the FTE was at 88.35. Additional 1.2 FTE will be created in 2021–22 to support projects and opportunities within Council's Long Term Financial Plan, Municipal Plan and

Short-term projects and vacancies can temporarily change the actual number of FTEs during the financial year.

The total budget for employee costs for 2021–22 is \$10.9M, which includes wages, superannuation and training.

### **OUR PERFORMANCE**

### HOW WE MEASURE PERFORMANCE

Each year, Council conducts a community satisfaction survey to learn about our performance.

We've used a community survey method since 2012, and a 2019 review identified potential improvements, leading to a new format. The most recent survey, in September 2020, assessed Council's performance against the Community Plan objectives, used a simpler scoring methodology and allowed for more detailed respondent feedback.

### **KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2020 SURVEY**

### Overall performance

• Council's overall performance score increased to 6.77/10 (up from 6.56 the previous year)—its highest level since 2014.

### **Highest performing services**

- providing libraries and library services to the community (8.27/10)
- kerbside waste collection (8.33/10)
- providing and maintaining the Archer Waste Management Facility (7.87/10).

### Most significant achievements

- creating more green spaces (19%)
- improved quality of roads/footpaths (11%)
- increased lighting (10%).

Only 11% of respondents couldn't think of a particular council achievement or outcome that was important to them—as opposed to 49% the previous year. This suggests a significantly increased level of communication with the

### **KEY ISSUES**

- When asked what the most important issues are in the local area, more than half of respondents named crime and safety issues (55%).
- The two most important issues to the Palmerston community are crime/ safety and addressing antisocial behaviour, and maintaining/increasing
- Positively, when asked to consider Council's achievements over the past year, residents' most common response was Council's achievements in delivering more green space.



# FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

PALMERSTON IS A SAFE AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS.

### OBJECTIVES:

- · We focus on families
- The wellbeing of our community is a focus for all our work

### WE FOCUS ON FAMILIES

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based around understanding our community's needs, providing engaging and relevant community activities, and empowering our youth to engage and succeed.

We are committed to creating a vibrant and inclusive community with opportunities for all families to enjoy everything Palmerston has to offer

In 2021–22, Council will host a wide range of community events, including many fun family activities.

Vibrant evening events, such as the 'On Frances' series (laneway street party) and Theatrical Nights (outdoor performances), are planned to continue during the dry season. The FlicNics program will again showcase a variety of movies in Goyder Square and this year expand to include the grounds of the Durack Community Centre. The popular Sanctuary Sessions live music events will also be renamed 'Live at the Lake' and incorporate performances at Sanctuary Lakes as well as at the Durack Community Centre. This will give local families more opportunities to enjoy a night out in Palmerston at many venues.

Many of Council's important annual community events and attractions will also return in 2021–22 such as: Australia Day celebrations and Christmas in Palmerston. Following the popularity of 2020's spectacular Christmas Wonderland, we also committed to another year of Christmas activities in Goyder Square and throughout the Palmerston municipality in the lead up to the holiday season. Our commitment to significant community events and activities such as the ANZAC Day ceremony, Seniors Month programs and Children's Week extend our support throughout the

We will continue to run youth-friendly events and programs throughout the year, including a reimagined and rescheduled Palmerston Youth Festival. The 2021 Palmerston Youth Festival

promises to be jam-packed full of activities, including the annual Geekfest, comedy and cooking events, gaming and more. Local youth have been involved in developing the program and will help deliver it.

In 2021–22, Council will deliver the SWELL project (Palmerston Pool upgrade), which is part of our strategic vision to provide Palmerston residents with a contemporary and family friendly, water and lifestyle precinct. The proposed upgrades will include a purpose built learn to swim and wellness program pool and family-friendly activity features for all ages and abilities, as well as an adventure play zone unlike any others in the Top End.

Council will continue to provide and support school holiday activities and youth events to celebrate National Families Week, NT Youth Week and other significant focus events. We will also work with youth support organisations on activities for young people in Palmerston. This will include hosting sport sessions at the Palmerston Recreation Centre, creating a safe hub for our young people and providing diversionary activities for at-risk youth.

City of Palmerston Library will continue its usual high-quality free services and programs to users of all ages. These programs are designed to engage and entertain our community, improve child and adult literacy, support all forms of learning, and encourage participation in free technology so people can upskill, develop and connect. Innovative community outreach methods developed in response to social distancing requirements have been adapted and absorbed into long-term deliverables, further enhancing our community services. Two 'Anytime Libraries' book vending machines were also introduced during the year, making it easier for the community to access their library.

The City of Palmerston provides engagement opportunities for many community-led activities through use of Council venues such as the Palmerston Recreation Centre, Palmerston Library, Gray Community Hall, Driver Family Resource Centre and the Palmerston Swimming and Fitness Centre.

Council also offers all pool users free entry to the Palmerston Swimming and Fitness Centre, and free drop-in activities for youth at the Palmerston Recreation Centre.



### THE WELLBEING OF OUR COMMUNITY IS A FOCUS FOR ALL OUR WORK

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based on working closely with the community and our service providers to make the right decisions.

Council is investing \$660,000 in refurbishing Tiverton Park, Moulden. Concept designs for the playground were developed in collaboration with Moulden Primary School.

Works for the park will begin in July 2021 and will include a 2-meter-high flying fox and an interactive digital climbing frame.

The annual program of playground renewals and refurbishments will continue in 2021–22, guided by the upcoming Play Space Strategy. This Council strategy is being developed with extensive community input and will ensure playground investments are sustainable, equitable and meet the varying needs of the community.

Council will work closely with the Northern Territory Government (NT Government) to plan and prepare for the present and future needs of the Palmerston community. Council has been a key contributor to the City of Palmerston Area Plan, a document that guides future social capital investments for the city. We actively engaged with the NT Government in the plans development to ensure Palmerston's community needs were appropriately represented.

Our collaboration with the NT Government is also evident in the development of the Mitchell Creek Operations and Feasibility Plan. This plan covers the Mitchell Creek catchment area, including the Palmerston escarpment, which is co-managed by Council and the NT Government. It looks at increased activation through ecotourism opportunities and improved environmental management. Ultimately, the plan will result in improved social infrastructure that will allow the community to take advantage of Palmerston's natural assets.

The 'Hooked on Palmerston' fishing competition will continue in 2021-22; another way for the community to get out and enjoy Palmerston's great outdoors.

Healthy, active communities are important, and we are committed to giving residents opportunities to develop healthy habits through our programs and initiatives. Wellbeing is more than physical health; it also encompasses mental, emotional and social health factors.

Council's Palmerston Recreation Centre and the facilitators that operate there offer affordable, accessible programs and activities for the whole community. Council offers in-kind support for the groups and activities using council venues.

Our partnerships with the NT Government, local clubs, volunteers, service providers and other organisations continue to provide opportunities for all ages to be active and healthy.

Our new 'How to Adult' program will help young people with life skills as they transition from school into independent living, with topics like self-care, managing money and healthy eating.

The Activate program gives Palmerston residents low-cost access to a range of physical activities to socialise and improve their physical and mental health. The Council-sponsored Youth Drop-in Sports and Council's School Holiday program also supports and engages young people and those at risk. The return of 'Brekkie in the Park' encourages residents to get out into Palmerston's many parks for a healthy breakfast and social connection.

In 2021–22, Council will continue our Palmerston Safe Communities Committee to strengthen communication and partnerships with government departments, Northern Territory Police, local businesses, community groups and other sectors. Council also contributes to building a safer community through promoting connection through events such as Neighbour Day and Parks Week.

### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

These measures are indicators of our success in achieving these two objectives:

- an increase in the number of people attending Council events and engaging in community activities
- reduced crime rates specifically a reduction in alcohol-fuelled violence
- increased partnerships in place between Council and other levels of government that seek to address crime
- increased accessibility of Council facilities and resources for community activities for all members of our community.





### IMPROVE PALMERSTON'S IMAGE

Council is committed to ensuring that Palmerston remains 'A Place for People' and will continue to enhance the image and brand of Palmerston.

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based around strengthening the image and brand of Palmerston, and promoting the ethos of employ local, buy local.

Our ongoing projects, initiatives and proposed projects developed to support our region's future growth and direction, contain several key social infrastructure projects which will aid to deliver:

- · more open space and family friendly facilities
- · greater lifestyle choice, especially for youth
- local jobs
- · tools to fight crime and anti-social behaviour
- · Smart City opportunities
- lower energy costs and a reduction in carbon emissions
- · an increase in our urban forest.

Delivery of these projects, in conjunction with the Federal and Northern Territory Government, will attract people to live, shop and work in our community.

Council's brand and image are consolidated further by the provision of quality, timely, relevant communications. Council will also communicate strongly to the community about the investment it makes in supporting our community, particularly the not-forprofit sector, as well as investment in infrastructure and other

Council is forecasting to spend \$20.4 million on renewals, upgrades, and new infrastructure over the 2021-22 year.

that it supports local businesses, with every effort made to utilise local suppliers and to ensure that local businesses and industries are given an opportunity to participate in tender or quotation processes. In the last financial year, until March 2021, 84% of Council expenditure occurred in the Top End, resulting in \$50 million being spent locally. A local supplier criterion weighting of at least 20% is applied to the assessment process to ensure value-for-money to Palmerston from procurement activities. Local businesses still need to • More tourists visit Palmerston. be competitive and present value for Palmerston, including how they deliver local benefits.

Over the coming year, Council will further engage with local businesses to raise awareness of vendor opportunities.

### PALMERSTON'S ECONOMIC FUTURE IS BRIGHT

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based around building and encouraging a well-planned, sustainable economy that involves youth, entrepreneurs and our wider business community.

Council recognises the importance of supporting development, including by the delivery of infrastructure, while building an identity for Palmerston. We'll continue to ensure the community is involved in decision-making by reviewing development applications and providing comment to the NT Government on the community's behalf.

The global economic slow-down due to COVID-19 affected Palmerston businesses, families and individuals. Council aims to resume our supporting events and activities to attract people to the city to support our local businesses and increase employment and business occupancy rates.

In 2020, we offered free timed parking in the Palmerston city centre to the community to encourage people to visit the city and support local businesses. Free parking was later extended to all-day parking to further encourage shoppers to use city-centre businesses and services. We also initiated several projects to help local businesses and service providers with increased promotion and vendor opportunities in the lead up to the pandemic closedown. In 2021–22, Council will continue to offer free parking to maximise local shopping and support our local businesses.

We will continue our ongoing sponsorship of community events and groups, including the NT PGA golf tournament, which brings more significant economic benefit to our local businesses. Our funding of environmental initiatives and graffiti removal and new public art programs further enhances the city's amenity and attractiveness.

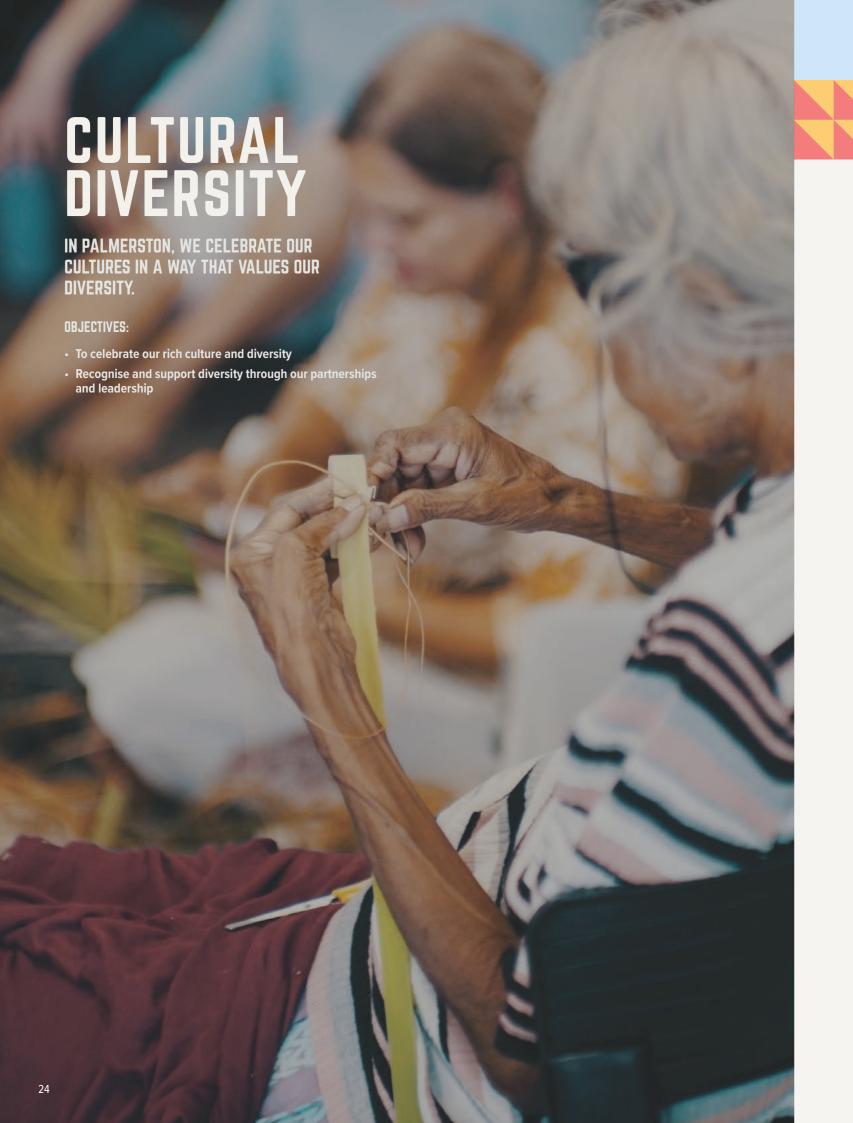
Council has created several opportunities for youth involvement in the planning, development and delivery of events and activities for their peers. These initiatives allow for consultation and commitment from our community and upskill and enable career pathways for individuals. We aim to resume community initiatives such as pop-up dining to support entrepreneurial locals.

### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

As a significant employer and investor, Council will continue to ensure These measures are indicators of our success in achieving these

- The people of Palmerston choose to shop locally.
- Occupancy rates are higher retail shop spaces are full.
- Employment rates increase.
- The population of Palmerston is growing (families stay).
- More funds are available for Council to invest in the community
- An increase in businesses located in Palmerston and commitment from Council to ensure local businesses and industry receive the support they need to grow and prosper. This is measured through the community satisfaction survey.





### OUR CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based around developing a culture and diversity plan and taking every opportunity to recognise and celebrate our cultural diversity and heritage.

Cultural diversity occurs when population differences are well represented within a community. These differences include race, ethnicity, age, ability, language, nationality, socioeconomic status, gender, religion and sexual orientation. Culture gives us our identity; cultural diversity enriches us all.

Council has developed an Inclusive, Diverse and Accessible (IDA) Policy Framework to ensure principles of diversity, inclusion and accessibility underpin how we plan and deliver programs and services. The framework includes creating an updated Disability Inclusion and Action Plan, Youth Inclusion and Action Plan, Reconciliation Action Plan, and Family, Seniors and Children Plan for Palmerston. The IDA Framework was developed with input from local community organisations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, disability groups, seniors, youth groups, parents, and migrants and refugees living in Palmerston.

Council celebrates our residents' final step in the journey to become an Australian citizen with several citizenship ceremonies throughout the year. In 2020–21, 218 people became Australian citizens in Palmerston. With Palmerston being a population growth area, that number is expected to increase in 2021–22.

Council is committed to growing and supporting local cultural events, and we have increased our efforts to support these now pandemic restrictions have eased

Palmerston celebrates our cultural diversity with multiple events throughout the year. Events we plan to run or support in 2021–22:

- Pride Festival we will celebrate and partner with our LGBTIQ+ community in this colourful laneway event on Frances Drive in May 2022
- Multicultural Festival an opportunity to learn about and celebrate our diverse cultures at this vibrant festival planned for June 2022.
- Harmony Day we welcome and support refugees and celebrate cultural and religious diversity in our community on Harmony Day in March 2022.
- NAIDOC Week celebrating the history, culture and achievements
  of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This year, we will
  mark NAIDOC Week in July 2021 by commissioning new works
  by local Aboriginal artists for permanent exhibition around
  Palmerston.
- International Women's Day we work with a consortium of diverse Palmerston women to support events celebrating women, in March 2022.
- Palmerston Youth Festival we will partner with the Northern Territory Government to deliver a dedicated series of events in July 2021 for Palmerston's young people.
- 'On Frances' series we will again partner with local businesses to host this series of entertaining, licensed events in Palmerston's favourite 'laneway'.

The Palmerston Library will continue to offer Drag Queen Storytime and Bilingual Storytime, popular and innovative programs that promote inclusivity and celebrate our cultural diversity.

Expansion of the Durack Community Centre program will include more creative and cultural art-based programs and activities for the community to participate in, including regular art exhibitions and an artist-in-residence program.

### RECOGNISE AND SUPPORT DIVERSITY THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIPS AND LEADERSHIP

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based around building on our strong partnerships with our diverse community and incorporating varied perspectives in all our planning and decision-making.

### OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT IS TO SUPPORT AND FOSTER STRONG COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We will continue our partnership with Litchfield Council to provide library services to their community.

Council actively supports community organisations and groups to deliver community initiatives, programs and events that benefit the Palmerston community. In 2020–21, we awarded more than \$110,000 in Community Benefit Scheme (CBS) grants, donations and sponsorships. In 2021-22 \$20,000 will be allocated to assist environmental initiatives in the community. We also provided more than \$40,000 of in-kind support by way of free venue hire, which included spaces for groups to offer events, activities and programs to the community.

One category of CBS support is to financially support individuals and teams representing Palmerston, the Northern Territory or Australia, which is again proving popular since the easing of travel restrictions.

We will continue to work closely with the Palmerston Seniors Advisory Committee (PSAC) and facilitate opportunities for local seniors to give us feedback to assist Council to meet its community Plan objectives. Redevelopment of Gray Community Hall, an initiative prompted by PSAC, will benefit many community groups, organisations and community members.

We will continue our work with community groups and schools to celebrate and recognise culture and diversity. We recognise the efforts of exceptional young people in our community by providing funds for annual school community awards, as determined by each school.

Council will continue to support the Rural and Palmerston Markets and will expand our vibrant multicultural street food culture through pop-up dining opportunities around Palmerston.

### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

These measures are indicators of our success in achieving this outcome:

- Council consults with and includes the needs of all people in our programs and planning using a mechanism we've agreed with those communities.
- Fostering and promoting arts and culture in our community and awareness and promotion of our local history are both improved.



#### WE SUPPORT AND FOSTER INNOVATION

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based around developing our people and encouraging innovative thinking. Embracing change has helped us to keep delivering services and support the community throughout the pandemic.

### INNOVATIVE PROJECTS WE CONTINUE TO DELIVER IN 2021-22 INCLUDE:

- The Smart Technology program, which provides the community with new, smart technology to improve the liveability and sustainability of our city.
- The new recording studio in the Palmerston Library, which offers low-cost, high-quality rehearsal and recording space for the

Expansion of library services to include two new state-of-the-art 'Anytime Libraries' book vending machines at the Palmerston Swimming and Fitness Centre and the Zuccoli IGA. Library members can borrow and return items using these machines without having to go to the main library.

In 2020–21, Council developed asset management plans for all major asset classes. These plans are a guidance tool to ensure we can meet current and future infrastructure needs in a sustainable way. We expect to reach significant milestones in asset management in 2021–22, including innovative upgrades to Council's asset management system to a cloud-based system, condition surveys and revaluations of open space and stormwater infrastructure, and expanding the asset rich open data hub for the community.

### INFRASTRUCTURE IS FIT FOR PURPOSE

Council develops and maintains strategic programs for capital and maintenance works that are designed to prioritise expenditure and deliver the most beneficial outcomes for the community.

We will continue to improve pathway network connectivity and pedestrian safety in 2021–22 with \$300,000 to be spent on new pathways, \$200,000 on pathway replacements and \$50,000 on laneway renewals. Access to Council assets, parks and buildings will also be improved with \$40,000 to be spent on all ability access projects.

We will continue to upgrade lighting in public places in 2021–22 with an investment of \$500,000 on identified dark spots. This will improve safety and reduce electricity consumption, contributing to both financial and environmental sustainability.

Council is working to secure a crown lease from the Northern Territory Government in Zuccoli to deliver a community hub and maintain the Mitchell Creek corridor for conservation and passive recreation purposes. Council will be undertaking further consultation with the public on its proposed concept design however Council expects to deliver a regional dog park in the first stage at the site in

Council's SWELL project (Palmerston Pool upgrade) is an iconic project for Palmerston with the construction period spanning the 2021-22 year. An independent Economic and Social Impact Analysis Report identified that SWELL operationally will generate in the order of 350,000 annual visitations, \$3.5 million indirect expenditure, and 20 direct on-going full-time jobs.

Council buildings provide numerous valuable services to the community. In 2021–22, we will invest some \$366,833 on building maintenance. Stormwater safety and functionality will be improved with the investment of \$150,000. Road upgrades and traffic safety will be improved with an investment of \$1.6M in these areas.

To ensure our playgrounds are fit for purpose, Council is developing the City of Palmerston Play Space Strategy. This strategy provides a strategic, equitable and sustainable approach to playground renewals, ensuring all ages and abilities are catered for. The strategy will be implemented in 2021–22.

Stage 1 of the Archer Waste Management Facility refurbishment will start in 2021–22 to ensure it is fit for purpose and future proofed for generations to come. The facility is a key community asset, with up to 300 users each day. The project will include installing best practice waste management infrastructure and will cost around \$2.3 million to complete over three years. \$1.1M will be spent in 2021–22 of which \$400,000 was funded out of the Priority Infrastructure Fund. The upgrade will result in improved safety for our users and improve access to recycling drop off.

Palmerston has high growth rates through its new southern suburbs, and the City of Palmerston is committed to effective and responsible city planning that balances residential and commercial needs. Through growth comes an increased asset base for Council to manage. In 2021–22, we expect to receive an estimated 1km<sup>2</sup> of developed land, 140 lots, 1.5km of roads, 1.5km of paths, 1.5km of stormwater infrastructure and 5650m<sup>2</sup> of open space. These assets will be incorporated into the asset register for budgeting, operational maintenance and future asset management planning.

Although Council has a young infrastructure asset base, we are determined to ensure current assets are kept at an acceptable condition and service level for the community's continual use. For that reason, we are attributing \$5.35M for renewals and \$12.8M for upgrades across all assets in 2021–22. An additional \$2,240,693 is budgeted for the development of new assets.

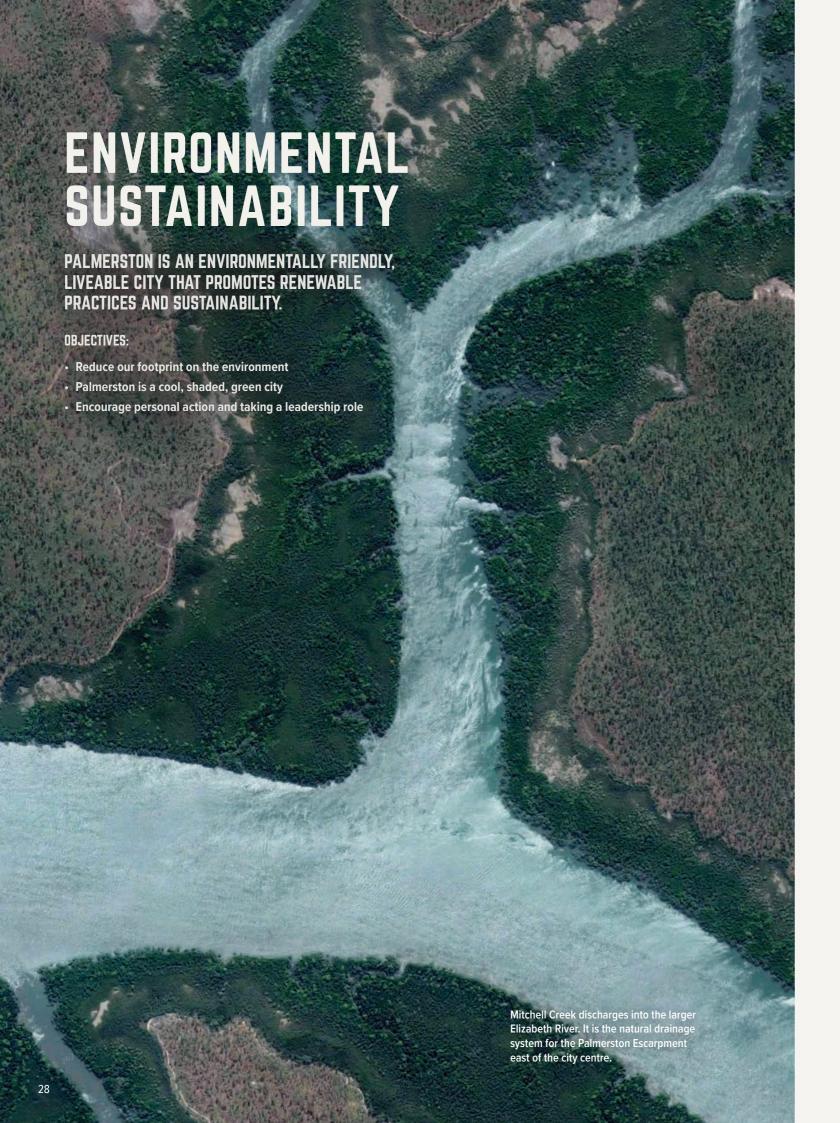
To ensure Council's assets continue to reach their expected lives, we have budgeted \$28M for regular maintenance and operational activities such as road patching, building repairs, mowing lawns, waste management, cleaning streets, irrigation repairs, utilities and

Maintaining and replacing Council's irrigation infrastructure is also planned for 2021–22 at a cost of \$300,000 which will facilitate replacement of aging irrigation infrastructure across the Municipality. Our irrigation systems are located across 240ha of open space and maintain the amenity of more than 60 parks. A staged replacement programme (starting with the worst performing systems) is anticipated to result in operational savings for Council. Savings are expected to be realised by reducing requirement for repeated attendance to repairs and maintenance. Asset renewal also resolves undetected inground leaks leading to reduced water usage and potentially eliminating excessive water bills.

### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

These measures are indicators of our success to achieve 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.
- Fostering and promotion of arts and culture within our community and the awareness and promotion of our local history is improved.



#### REDUCE OUR FOOTPRINT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Council continues its commitment to reducing its environmental impact.

The 2021–26 City of Palmerston Sustainability Strategy provides mechanisms to ensure sustainability outcomes are embedded in our decision making. This strategy will improve the sustainability of our operations, which in turn will influence sustainable living practices in the community. The strategy includes high-level objectives around the four common pillars of sustainability (such as governance), economy, environment and community. Council-specific sustainability indictors were developed to assess our achievement of these sustainability objectives, with targets and actions to implement it.

One example of the sustainability actions we will undertake in 2021–22 is tracking all electricity and water use through a data management company, which will identify high-consuming facilities. These buildings will then be incorporated into a \$150,000 capital improvements program to increase water and electricity efficiencies. Initial scoping for the program proposes the installation of solar panels at the Driver and Durack community centres, retrofitting older buildings to include LED lighting, and investigating options to harvest and reuse storm water

The irrigation infrastructure program for 2021–22 will also result in a significant improvement in water efficiency. The recent audit of irrigation assets investigated system usage, with a review and modification of irrigation run times for each park. This review, along with the \$300,000 to be spent in system upgrades, aims to achieve up to 25% reduction in water use for irrigation in 2021–22 without compromising the high amenity of our open spaces.

### THE PALMERSTON LAKES MANAGEMENT PLAN, COMPLETED IN FEBRUARY 2021, WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN 2021-22.

Outcomes from the Lakes Management Plan proposed for delivery in 2021–22 include a revised vegetation management program for weed harvesting, continuing the quarterly water quality monitoring program, developing an irrigation management plan and reviewing and implementing sediment control measures.

### PALMERSTON IS A COOL, SHADED, GREEN CITY

Council's greening of the city will continue in 2021–22 with \$500,000 to be spent on tree planting. Tree planting programs will be coordinated through a 'Greening Plan', which will look at mitigating known heat sinks, improving connectivity between public open spaces, improving the 'walkability' of our main transport links and increasing urban biodiversity across the municipality.

Trees will also be planted in natural areas as part of this program, including areas in Marlow's Lagoon and the Palmerston Escarpment. This will increase fauna habitat, reduce erosion, aid carbon sequestration and increase canopy cover. This natural area tree planting program will be supplemented by an extensive gamba grass management approach, reducing the fire risk for properties that back on to bushland.

#### ENCOURAGE PERSONAL ACTION AND TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE

Council's Verge Assistance program will continue in 2021–22 with \$40,000 allocated for delivery. This program provides the materials for residents to green their verges. The program was a resounding success in 2020–21, with 260 residents awarded financial assistance.

### COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE WAYS FOR THE COMMUNITY TO RECYCLE THEIR WASTE IN 2021–22.

The renovated Archer Waste Management Facility will have a dedicated recycling shed, which will encourage and enable people to separate their waste to allow for greater recycling.

Kerbside collection of household recyclable material will continue, with a new bin tagging program giving residents clear information on when their bins contain 'contaminated' rubbish.

The pre-cyclone clean-up will be offered to residents again in 2021–22 as part of the residential Waste Service Charge. The recycling component of this service will be advertised extensively, encouraging residents to separate their hard rubbish into recyclables.

These programs will be presented to residents in a Waste Services Guide, which provides tips on best practice recycling.

We acknowledge the support received from Northern Territory Government in the form of grants, to help us assist in delivery of waste services program.

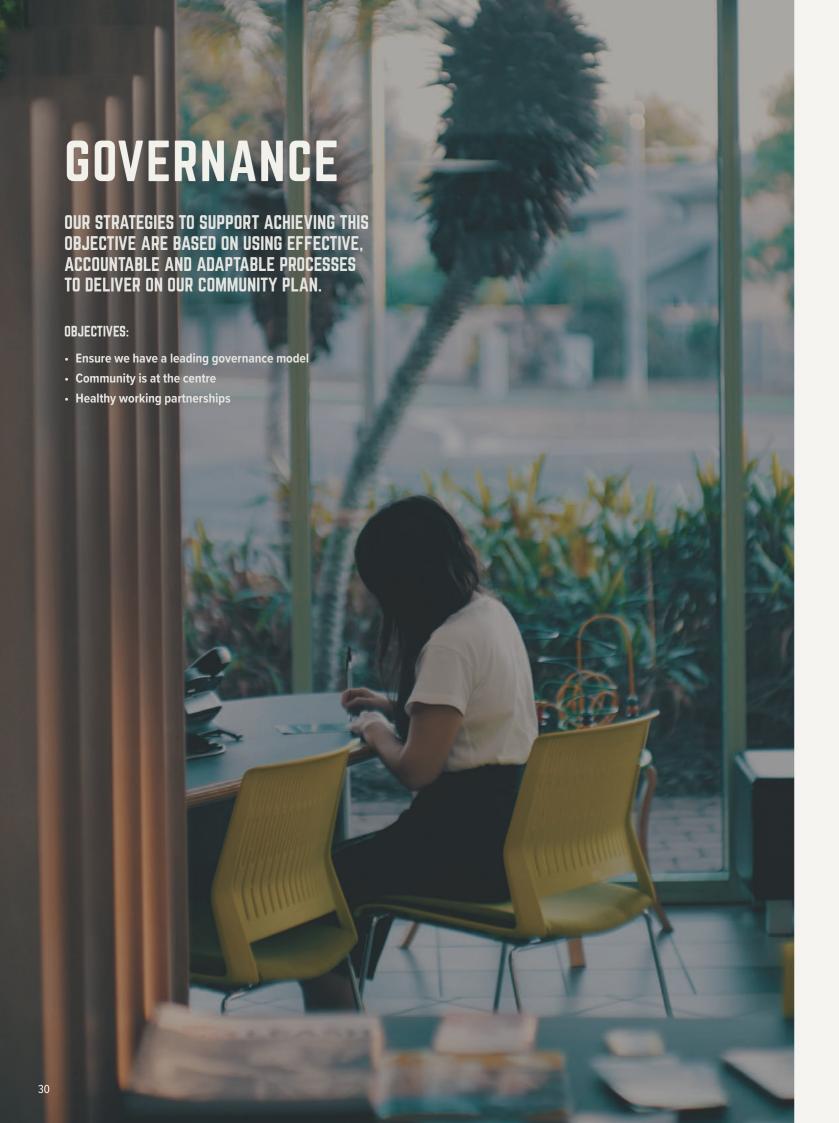
### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

These measures are indicators of our success to achieve this outcome:

- The level of recycling/proportion of rubbish recycled is increased.
- · A decrease in littering.
- Increase in 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.
- Performance in committing to effective and responsible city planning that balances and meets residential and commercial needs in our community is improved.







#### ENSURE WE HAVE A LEADING GOVERNANCE MODEL

As a dynamic, multi-disciplinary organisation, the City of Palmerston delivers, facilitates and coordinates activities using modern, innovative and contemporary methods that consider public and political implications.

Last year, we introduced a Governance and Strategy division to manage our strategic and operational direction. The division's role is to promote Council's vision to meet community expectations, deliver organisational key performance indicators and maintain accountabilities in line with the Community Plan

We will continue to run training for our team to ensure effective delivery of the six outcomes in the Community Plan. In 2021–22, Council will offer training to elected members and staff on governance, reporting and compliance requirements in accordance with the incoming Local Government Act and Guidelines

In 2021–22, Council will review our Strategic Risk Register, which was developed in consultation with KPMG. This register identifies and rates the major strategic risks to Council and controls that could be put in place to help mitigate them. Also, it sets the direction of internal audits to be undertaken. In 2021–22, we will audit our policy framework, human resource management systems, data analytics and reporting. This information will be reported back to Council through the Risk Management and Audit Committee, ensuring transparent oversight of our operations.

In 2021–22, we will develop a new Digital Strategy to take advantage of new technology and become a data-driven organisation, which will help improve the liveability of our city. The previous Digital Strategy provided direction for the implementation of our Smart Cities projects and its benefits, which were delivered to the community.

We will launch several large projects in 2021–22. To ensure transparency and fairness in procurement and governance for these projects, independent experts will prepare and ensure appropriate probity processes are in place. The procurement process will be fair, equitable and transparent for all applicants. With a review of the Procurement Plan and the tendering procedure, a new procurement procedure and training for procurement staff, we continue to focus on a culture of transparent and fair buying processes.

Council continues to update all our policies in line with the requirements under the new Local Government Act 2019. A Policy Revision Plan was drafted to monitor the review of existing policies and implementation of new policies required under the incoming Act within the stipulated timeframe.

Council reviewed its insurance strategy to enhance understanding of City of Palmerston's current insurance program and identify potential gaps or enhancements. We will use these reviews to create a City of Palmerston Insurance Program Strategy for 2021-22 and beyond.

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced new challenges that called for a measured, practical and informed approach. In response, we established a Business Continuity Plan to minimise disruption of operations and maximise the safety and wellbeing of staff. In 2021–22, the Business Continuity Plan will assess changes implemented during the pandemic and which changes should be adopted for good, ensuring risks are appropriately managed.

In 2020–21, council implemented a meeting management system to streamline meeting procedures and reduce meeting paper use. In 2021–22, we will improve our management processes to enhance the efficiency in managing contracts, deliverables, deadlines, and contract terms and

### COMMUNITY IS AT THE CENTRE

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based on using all methods possible to include the community in all aspects of council business.

Palmerston residents can participate in council's decision-making in several

 Council meetings are open to the public to attend. Ordinary Council Meetings are generally held in Council Chambers on the first and third Tuesday of every month. A 30-minute public forum before the meeting encourages the community to discuss any issue with Council in an informal environment. Members of the community can also lodge written questions to be answered in Council meetings.

- Council updates are communicated through our website and social media channels such as Instagram and Facebook. Residents have the opportunity to engage with Council through these platforms.
- Council seeks to involve the full diversity of Palmerston residents and will ensure they are engaged through several different tools, approaches and processes that are inclusive to their needs. Council will continue to advertise and provide public consultation in excess of its legislative requirements, to ensure the community has every opportunity to participate.
- Each year, Council conducts a Community Satisfaction Survey to gauge feedback from the community on how Council is performing through a series of questions aimed around the services Council provides. It is an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the things which matter to them.
- We aim to maintain a high degree of community involvement by delivery of clear and effective communication, working to identify and overcome concerns and barriers to involvement and actively seeking commentary and feedback. Developing the skills, confidence, and knowledge of the public in community matters, and evaluating engagement outcomes, will ensure we continue meeting the requirements of national standards and improve
- Council has a strong record of listening to its residents. In 2020-21 Council undertook several major community consultations including for the SWELL project, Animal Management By-Law review and the Gray Community Hall redevelopment. Council will continue to gain its community's view through meaningful consultations commencing in 2021-22 with the Zuccoli Community Hub proposal.

### **HEALTHY WORKING PARTNERSHIPS**

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based on maintaining our strong partnerships and networks both internally with our staff and externally to achieve the best outcomes for Palmerston residents.

Our pr6jects plan identifies six major initiatives to support the growth of Palmerston over three years. We will work with other levels of government in 2021–22 to deliver several important projects:

- The Youth Festival will see the NT Government and Council work in partnership to organise and host events and activities over six days. Palmerston youth aged 9 to 17 are the target participants of this exciting event, which features visual and performance arts, home economics, sport and recreational activities
- Council continues to facilitate diverse community collaboration and communication networks and advisory groups. Advisory groups include Youth Inspiring Palmerston (YIP), Palmerston Animal Management Advisory Committee (PAMAC), Palmerston Seniors Advisory Committee (PSAC) and Palmerston Australia Day Awards Selection Panel. Networks include Palmerston Safe Communities Committee (PSCC), Palmerston Kids Network (PKN) and Palmerston and Rural Youth Services Network (PARYS).

Council is looking forward to establish the City of Palmerston Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility Community Advisory Committee for the efficient implementation and monitoring of the Inclusive, Diverse and Accessible (IDA)

These groups continue to advocate for the interests of sectors of the community and provide a direct link for the community to Council's decisionmaking processes.

In 2021–22, we will continue to invest in our staff through group and individual training and professional development.

### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

These measures are indicators of success for objectives:

- · The community is satisfied that Council values and encourages their participation in Council activities and is committed to delivering the highest possible levels of service and community engagement.
- The community is satisfied that Council has the right systems and processes in place to deliver services to the community.
- The community is satisfied that council values its people and the culture of our organisation.
- The community is satisfied that Council shows corporate and social responsibility, ensures the sustainability of assets and services, and plans effectively, reporting performance to the community.



#### **ONGOING PROJECT INITIATIVES:**

- SWELL (Swimming, Wellness, Events, Leisure, Lifestyle) revitalising the Palmerston Swimming and Fitness Centre
- Liveable Cities cooling and greening the city
- It's Always Brighter implementing solar and renewable energy initiatives to create a clean, green and energy-neutral community.
- Zuccoli Dog Park

### CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS:

- Marlow Lagoon dog park
- · Palmerston Library music and recording room.
- · Where we Live Matters supporting our growing community by developing new community facilities and amenities
- · Gray Community Hall redevelopment

### COMPLETED PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES:

- Smart Cities focussing on using smart technology to make our community safer and more liveable
- Making the Switch installing smart LED lighting to create a safer and more sustainable environment for the community.

These projects complement the ongoing replacement and renewal of existing social and physical infrastructure such as footpaths, playgrounds, community facilities and road network.

In line with the 2020 community survey, our community values our work in providing libraries and library services to the community, kerbside waste collection, and providing and maintaining the Archer Waste Management

Over the next 10 years, Council will spend \$93.3M, inclusive of Council Pr6jects. The Long-Term Capital Plan will continue to be refined and improved, including the finalisation of Asset Management Plans.

### **SAFER COMMUNITIES**

Our customer satisfaction survey in 2020 revealed that the most important issue to the City of Palmerston community are crime/safety and addressing antisocial behaviour. While Council does not have the authority to act or investigate crime, we have embarked on a series of projects to improve safety and reduce antisocial behaviour.

To strengthen Palmerston's position as a safe and inviting place to live, the smarter cities project has increased the number of high-definition cameras and the available Wi-Fi technology. This has allowed us to assist NT Police in monitoring and responding to criminal and antisocial behaviour. 'Making the Switch' has improved public safety by providing brighter, better focussed light and improved the reliability of the public lighting network.

In 2021–22, Council will also continue to work with the NT Government to provide programs that support and engage young people seen to be at risk of offending. These include the Youth Drop-In Sports program, school holiday and Library programs. The Palmerston Swimming and Recreation Centre will undergo substantial redevelopment, which includes the new Palmerston Youth Centre, to offer better facilities to at-risk youth.

Council is committed to proactive initiatives to promote responsible animal management in the Palmerston area. Some of our most effective methods are outreach events where Council staff and elected members attend major community events and promote key messages around dog registration, microchipping and de-sexing. This includes offering free microchipping events, distributing dog leads and toys, and running community information campaigns. We run these activities not just in Palmerston but across the Top End because we recognise that members of the Palmerston community attend events outside our municipality and people may move to Palmerston too.

#### FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Council's Long-Term Financial Plan, reviewed annually, demonstrates that Council's financial position is improving every year, with the operational deficit decreasing from \$4.9M in 2019–20 to \$2.8M in 2030-31 (https:// www.palmerston.nt.gov.au/council/forms-and-publications/publications). This represents an improvement of a reduction of 56% of Council's current deficit. The lower forecast average annual rate increase of 3.3% is to ensure Council's cash reserves remain at a stable level throughout the planning period and that there is adequate working capital available, while maintaining service levels and increasing the capital spend.

Council is forecasting to spend \$93.3M on infrastructure over the next 10 years. This represents a significant infrstructure injection for the community and will affect the balances in council reserves. The reserve balance is anticipated to reduce to a low of \$8.6M in 2026-27 representing an adequate balance to fund council's day-to-day operations, with a modest safety net for unforeseen circumstances.

The previous Long-Term Financial Plan was prepared conservatively and aimed to generate an operational surplus (inclusive of depreciation) within 9 years. Considering the current economy, the challenges raised by the pandemic and community recovery from that debilitating event, and to minimise the cumulative burden on the community, this goal has been delayed beyond the length of the Financial plan.

#### COLL AROBATION

Council will grow its collaboration with other councils and other levels of government

- Council maintains active membership of Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) and actively participates in all reference groups, working parties and forums created through LGANT.
- Council participates in Top End Regional Organisation of Councils (TOPROC), with the City of Darwin, Litchfield Council, Belyuen Community Government Council, Wagait Shire Council and the Coomalie Community Government Council to consider issues unique to the Top End and collaborate with these Councils.
- Council attends Australian Local Government Association meetings and functions to consider and seek solutions to local government issues on
- Elected members and Council officers will regularly hold meetings with government representatives, attend briefings and discussions regarding Northern Territory local government and wider government issues.
- Council will actively explore initiatives to support economic recovery and development at all levels of government.
- The Executive Leadership Team will look for increased opportunities for regular and ongoing dialogue with senior executives of the Northern Territory Government. These high-level discussions will address issues where Council and the NT Government can work together on solutions.

Consistent with good governance and financial management, each year Council will review its membership of external organisations to ensure the community is getting maximum benefit from our participation. We will also look for new avenues of collaboration that will benefit the community

#### POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE REGULATORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE **FRAMEWORK**

The following have been identified as having the potential to influence or enhance Council's Regulatory and Administrative Framework:

- refining the Risk Management Framework
- incoming Local Government Act 2019 and associated legislations
- ongoing review of the Palmerston (Animal Management) By-Laws
- ongoing review of policies

· ongoing review of administrative procedures.

## REVENUE STATEMENT

Council collects revenue from five main sources. General rates and waste management charges provide 87% of Council's revenue, the remainder is provided by grants, fees and charges and investment income.

Council has increased rates by a moderate 2.4% with a \$30 increase to minimum rates. With a saving of \$10 in the waste charges, the majority of ratepayers will see only a \$20 increase to their rates. Over the term of this Council, there was only a total increase of \$40 in the last four financial years. Council continues to provide free parking, pool entry and facility hire. In addition, Council has reduced interest charged on overdue rates from 9% to 8%. Council continues to maintain levels of service along with continuing to look for opportunities for continuous improvement and efficiency.

#### VALUATION

City of Palmerston uses Unimproved Capital Value as the basis for all land valuations in the City of Palmerston area. Unimproved Capital Value is the value of the land without any improvements.

The Valuer-General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, sets the Unimproved Capital values of land. The value of land is reviewed by the Valuer-General every three years to take affect the following financial year. The 2021 revaluation occurred in July 2020 and has been applied for the 2021-22 financial year.

Council does not play a role in the assessment of Unimproved Capital Value. If a ratepayer is dissatisfied with their valuation, it is a matter to raise with the Valuer-General. Rates must be paid in accordance with rate notices unless otherwise notified by Council.

### **WASTE SERVICE CHARGE**

Council charges a fixed amount for waste management and collection. Where multiple residential dwellings exist on the allotment of land, the fee is multiplied by the number of residential units on each allotment.

The Waste Service Charge is levied for the provision of a 120 litre, twice weekly domestic collection, a fortnightly recycling 240 litre bin, free access to the Archer Waste Management Facility and waste management and cleaning across the city. Commercial use of Archer Recycling Centre and Waste Transfer Station is not supported as there is no direct waste charge against either commercial or industrial properties.

#### CONCESSIONS

Eligible NT Concession card holders may be entitled to a concession on rates. City of Palmerston receives a listing from Territory Families (Northern Territory Government) of all the ratepayers eligible for concession at the time of levying the rates, in which the rebate is deducted and noted on the annual rate notice. If a ratepayer becomes eligible part way through the rating year, they must pay the rates in full to Council and then contact the NT Concession and Recognition Unit to obtain a refund.

Contact details for NT Concession and Recognition Unit - Territory Families are:

Postal: PO Box 37037 Winnellie NT 0821

Telephone: 1800 777 704

Email: ntconcessionandrecognition@nt.gov.au

Website: https://ntconcessions.nt.gov.au

Applications for other concessions on rates and charges will be considered upon application to Council in line with ouncil Policy "Rate Concession".

### LATE PAYMENT OF RATES

Any ratepayer who may, or is likely to, experience difficulty with meeting the standard instalments and due dates can contact Council to discuss alternative payment arrangements. It should be noted that interest would still be levied in accordance with the Act under any payment arrangement. Current COVID-19 arrangements may include the waiving of interest for a limited time.

Council's determined interest for late payments will be imposed in accordance with the Act. Ratepayers can apply for a remission of interest under the Act provided they agree to a repayment arrangement to the satisfaction of Council. Council has determined the interest rate for overdue rates will reduce by 1% from 9% to 8% per annum. Pursuant to the Act, if rates have been in arrears for at least three years, Council may sell the land to recover unpaid rates and associated costs.

### FEES AND CHARGES

Council has only made minimal changes to fees and charges for the 2021-22 year. These changes include the reduction of fees for an additional bin service to multiple dwellings. The Schedule of Fees and Charges can be viewed at Council's Civic Centre, as well as on Council's website: www.palmerston.nt.gov.au.

### **RATES & CHARGES**

NT PLANNING ZONE		LEVIED 2020/2021	BUDGET 2021/2022	AVERAGE Change
R, RR (Excluding RR in the suburb of	Rate on UCV	0.53%	0.61%	2.40%
Marlow Lagoon), LR, LMR, MR, HR, CL,	Minimum Rate	\$1,227	\$1,257	\$30
FD, PS, SP8, SP9 (<10,000m2), SP9	No of Properties	13423	13,583	
(>20,000m2), SP10 and SP11	Estimated Income Rates	\$18,146,914	\$18,810,034	
RR in the Suburb of Marlow Lagoon	Rate on UCV	0.41%	0.50%	2.40%
	Minimum Rate	\$1,227	\$1,227	\$30
	No of Properties		251	
	Estimated Income Rates	\$450,206	\$458,870	
GI and LI	Rate on UCV	0.44%	0.49%	2.40%
	Minimum Rate	\$1,227	\$1,257	\$30
	No of Properties		279	
	Estimated Income	\$923,307	\$995,219	
All Other Rateable Land	Rate on UCV	0.77%	0.74%	2.40%
	Minimum Rate	\$1,227	\$1,257	\$30
	No of Properties		450	
	Estimated Income	\$2,208,865	\$2,353,552	

### **WASTE SERVICE CHARGE**

The Waste Service Charge for customers with a regular waste service has dropped from \$490 to \$480. Additional General waste bin and Recycling Waste bins have also dropped to \$290 and \$110 respectively.

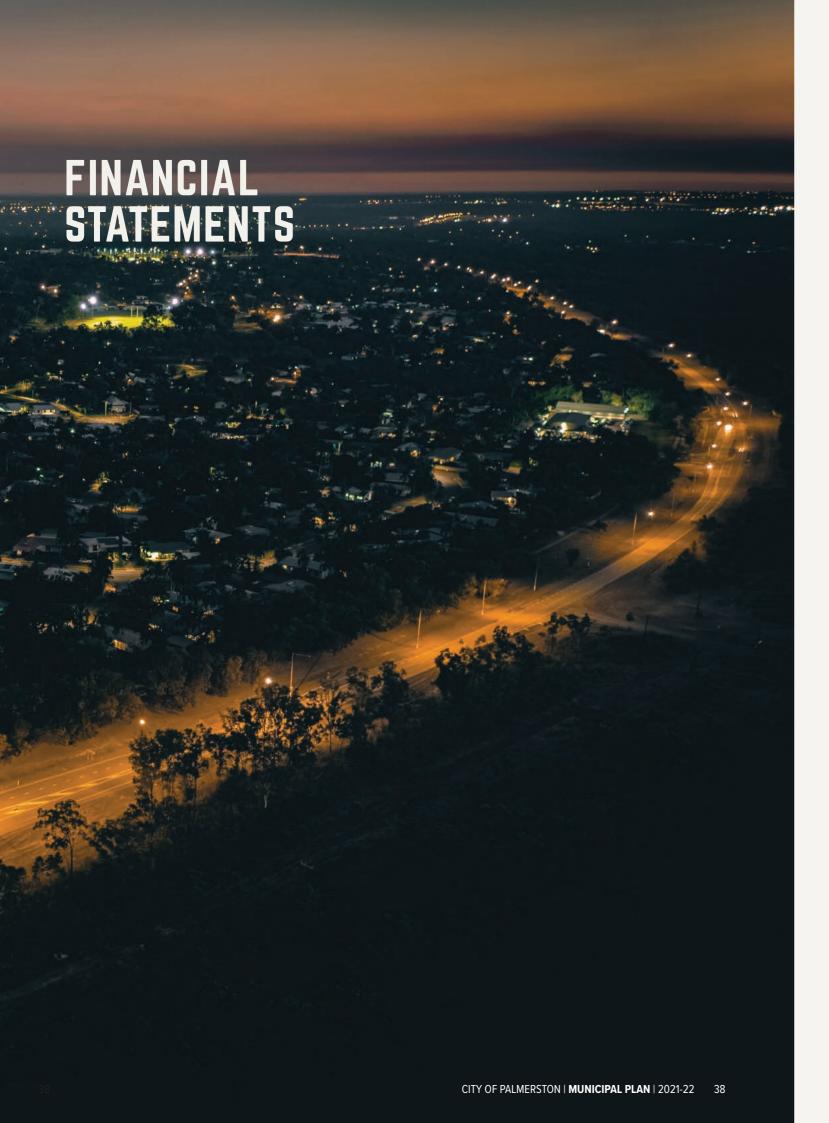
WASTE MANAGEMENT CHARGE	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	BUDGET YEAR 2021-22
Residential Kerbside Collection	\$510	\$530	\$510	\$490	\$490	\$480
Manual Service Collection (<25 units)	\$510	\$530	\$510	\$490	\$490	\$480
Upgrade to 240L Annual Service Charge	\$143	\$149	\$149	\$149	\$149	\$149
Multiple Dwelling 25 units +	\$231.50	\$240	\$240	\$240	\$240	\$240
Additional General Waste Kerbside Bin 120L	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$250
Additional Recycling Kerbside Bin	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$110
Additional General Waste Manual Bin*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$394	\$290
Additional Recycling Waste Manual Bin*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$245	\$110

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF RATING POLICY

City of Palmerston is committed to levying rates in a consistent, transparent and equitable manner, while ensuring that both financial and social considerations have been made when determining the most appropriate rate mix. Council's Community Reference Group on Rates Strategy determined that the rating system and methodology utilised at City of Palmerston should follow the principles of Administrative Simplicity, Economic Efficiency and Equity.

The methodologies are easy to apply, understand and comply with. They make it difficult to avoid paying rates while being practical and cost-effective to administer. The rating methodology and rate mix consider and account for impacts of the rate burden between the differential categories and whether these will have a significant negative effect on economic behaviour. Considered fair and equitable, the methodology considers the benefits received by the ratepayer as well as their capacity to pay.





# STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

Statement of Comprehensive Income	Revised Budget 2021 \$	Proposed Budget 2022 \$
Operating Income		
Rates	22.000.494	22 474 475
	22,009,684	22,674,675
Waste Annual Charges	6,900,590	6,801,273
Statutory Charges	168,940	140,450
User Charges & Fees	659,823	687,637
Interest & Investment Revenue	993,160	636,804
Reimbursements	125	0
Other Income	375,729	331,000
Grants, Subsidies & Contributions	2,019,921	2,757,877
Total Operating Income	33,127,972	34,029,716
Operating Expenses		
Employee Costs	9,960,867	10.568.781
Employee Costs Insurance	203,523	234,052
FBT	150,000	130,000
Professional Services	768.676	976,106
Consultants	1,132,455	958,968
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Auditor's Remuneration	35,000	35,000
Operating Lease Rentals	27,423	22,423
Materials & Contractors	10,674,950	10,965,969
Depreciation, Amortisation & Impairment	10,400,000	10,608,000
Elected Members Expenses	356,558	391,511
Legal Expenses	299,906	258,200
Other Expenses	1,719,214	1,784,578
Telephone & Other Communication Charges	265,474	259,889
Software, hardware, stationery, subscriptions	957,647	1,215,345
Other Expenses	234,523	474,816
Donations, Sponsorships & Grants	370,000	250,000
Utilities	2,651,797	2,460,628
Insurance (Exc Employees)	440,975	505,621
Borrowing Costs	46,000	39,585
Total Operating Expenses	40,694,985	42,139,472
Not OPERATING CURRILIC //DEFICIT	(7.5 (7.012)	(0.100.757)
Net OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(7,567,013)	(8,109,756)
Capital Income		
Net gain (loss) on disposal or revaluation of assets	60,856	50,000
Developer Contributions	219,194	288,750
Grants received	4,575,679	16,442,312
Total Capital Income	4,855,729	16,781,062
Canital Evanances		
Capital Expenses	2707224	7.500.040
Asset Purchase	3,797,234	7,590,049
Asset Upgrade	8,730,713	12,800,000
Total Capital Expenses	12,527,947	20,390,049
Removed Non-Cash Depreciation Expenditure	10,4000,000	10,608,000
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) excluding non-cash items including capital	-4,839,231	-1,110,743
Porrowings	0	1,000,000
Borrowings		1,000,000
Repayment of Borrowings	-228,223	-234,634
Reserve Movement	5,067,454	345,377
NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	0	0

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

\$ '000	2021/2022
	Draft Budget
Assets	
Current Assets:	
Cash & cash equivalents	4,000
Investments	12,674
Receivables	2,154
Non-current assets classified as 'held for sale'	-
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	18,828
Non-Current Assets:	
Infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	578,408
nvestment property	5,305
Work in progress	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	583,713
TOTAL ASSETS	602,540
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities:	
Payables	4,413
Unearned Grant Income (AASB 1058)	1
Borrowings	241
Provisions	1,419
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	6,074
TOTAL CORRENT LIABILITIES	6,074
Non-Current Liabilities:	
Payables	-
Borrowings	2,035
Provisions	1,888
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	3,923
TOTAL LIABILITIES	9,997
NET ASSETS	592,544
Equity	
Retained earnings/(accumulated deficit)	225,553
Other Reserves	12,754
Revaluation Reserves	354,237
Council equity interest	
TOTAL EQUITY	592,544

# STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

\$ '000	2022/202 Draft Budget
Cash Flows from Operating Activities	
Receipts:	
Rates & annual charges	29,395
User charges & fees	828
Investment & interest revenue received	637
Grants & contributions	2,758
Bonds, deposits & retention amounts received	-
Other	331
Payments:	
Employee benefits & costs	(10,787)
Materials, contracts & other expenses	(20,575)
Finance payments	(40)
Bonds, deposits & retention amounts refunded	-
Other operating payments	-
NET CASH PROVIDED (OR USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	2,547
Cash Flows from Investing Activities	
Receipts:	
Sale of investment securities	3,761
Sale of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	-
Amounts specifically for new or upgraded assets	13,317
Payments:	
Purchase of investment securities	-
Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	(20,390)
NET CASH PROVIDED (OR USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(3,312)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities	
Receipts:	
Proceeds from borrowings & deposits	0
Proceeds from borrowings & advances	1,000
Payments:	
Repayment of borrowings & advances	(235)
NET CASH PROVIDED (OR USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES	765
plus: CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS - beginning of year	4,000
plus: NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS	0
Total CASH at Bank	4,000
plus: INVESTMENTS ON HAND - beginning of year	16,435
Increase/(Decrease) in investment securities	(3,761)
Total Investments on Hand	12,674
TOTAL CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS & INVESTMENTS - end of year	16,674
NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH, CASH EQUIVALENTS & INVESTMENTS	(3,761)

# STATEMENT OF RESERVES

OTHER RESERVES	Opening Balance 01/07/2021 \$	Budget Reserve Balance EOY 2022 \$
Externally Restricted Reserves		
Unexpended Grants Reserve	456,846	710,693
Externally Restricted Reserves	456,846	710,693
Internally Restricted Reserves		
Election Expenses Reserve	150,000	150,000
Disaster Recovery Reserve	500,000	500,000
Unexpended Capital Works Reserve	2,597,173	-
Developer Funds In Lieu of Construction	1,786,459	1,634,763
Waste Management Reserve	2,142,278	1,884,719
Major Initiatives Reserve	614,949	614,949
Internally Restricted Reserves	7,790,859	4,784,432
Unrestricted Reserves		
Working Capital Reserve	9,546,226	5,831,302
Unrestricted Reserves	9,546,226	5,831,302
TOTAL RESERVES	17,793,931	11,326,427

# DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

	Capital 2021/22 Budget \$	Maintenance 2021/22 Budget \$
	2021/22 Budget \$	2021/22 Budget \$
Buildings	12,909,393	366,833
Parks & Reserves	2,070,000	2,229,500
Shared Paths & Driveways	934,000	250,000
Roads & Street Beautification	1,611,656	600,000
Stormwater	150,000	185,000
Waste Management	1,100,000	-
Trees	500,000	822,000
Fleet	355,000	197,278
IT Equipment	70,000	1,122,134
Public Lighting	690,000	275,000
	20,390,049	6,047,745

