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OUR CITY OUR CULTURE

*A draft Cultural Plan for the Redlands
2008 - 2018*



Redland
CITY COUNCIL

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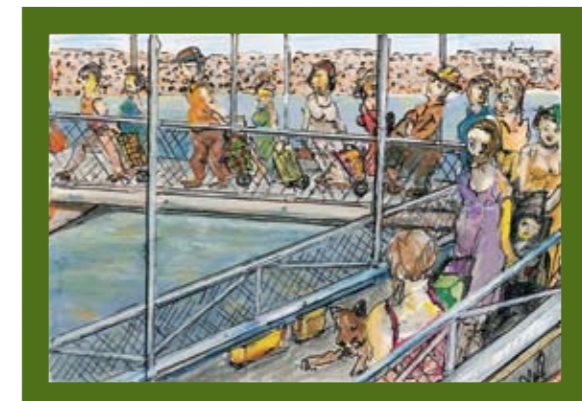
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Island Style | Narelle Renn



Guarding The Future | Ruth Venner



Trolley Brigade | John Piercy



The 'Toondah', painting courtesy of Jenny Fison

INTRODUCTION



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Our culture is precious. It emerges from our values, spirit and creativity. It is forged in our interactions with the unique environment we share. It fosters community identity and pride; reflects our triumphs and challenges; and expresses our links to the past and our dreams for the future. Like air, it is an intangible – but essential – element in a sustainable future.

2008 is an important year for the Redlands. Residents elected a new Council and we passed a key milestone as we transformed from a Shire into a City. Our City status signals our continuing cultural evolution which is evident most notably in the opening this year of the new Redlands Performing Arts Centre in Cleveland.

2008 is also the year the Council commences a major community planning exercise with residents – an undertaking we will enrich by incorporating creative approaches to stimulating civic dialogue. With this in mind, I am pleased to release Our City Our Culture now. It is our ten year strategy to enrich the vitality of our culture that will focus and direct our investment in the 'heart and soul' of the Redlands. It will forge closer connections between this essentially 'cultural' domain, and our wider civic planning and community development responsibilities.

As we till the soil from which our culture grows, inevitably community values and dreams are exposed. Through the arts and heritage (in their many forms) these are expressed and explored, producing a rich source of local knowledge, ideas and skills development opportunities. It is this knowledge and creativity Council seeks to harness in our community engagement activities. Cultural development is itself a critical ingredient in the making and strengthening of community.

Our City Our Culture will nurture an authentic, vital and dynamic culture for all Redlands residents. I urge all residents, and particularly those with creative skills and cultural industry connections, to join with Council in fulfilling the vision outlined in these pages.

Melva E Hobson PSM
Mayor of Redland City



"A society's values are the basis upon which all else is built. These values and the ways they are expressed are a society's culture. The way a society governs itself cannot be fully democratic without there being clear avenues for the expression of community values, and unless these expressions directly affect the directions society takes. These processes are culture at work".

J. Hawkes, "The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning", Common Ground, 2001

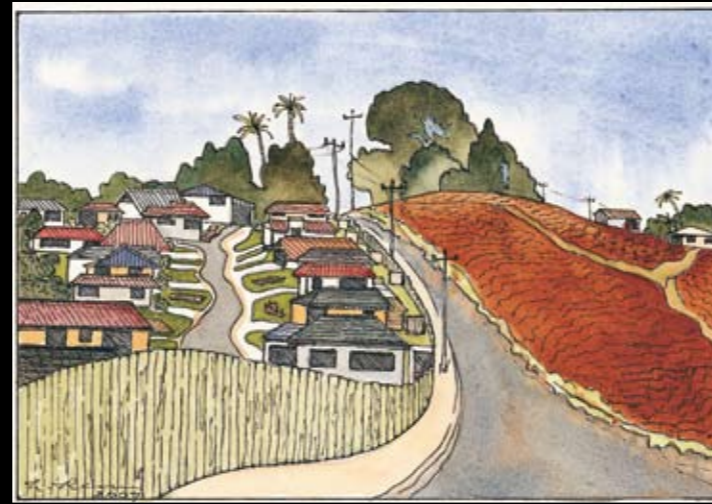
PART 1 - CULTURAL VITALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The unifying goal of sustainability of the Redlands' people and places is at the heart of this Plan. Cultural vitality is acknowledged as both a driver and indicator of local sustainability. The diagram on the opposite page represents the policy framework on which *Our City Our Culture* is built. It is informed by the Redlands' Community Plan, *Vision 2005 & Beyond* (2001) and Council's Corporate Plan 2006 -2010. It aims to show that, as well as being valuable for its own sake, a robust living culture can be harnessed towards achievement of all of Council's strategic priorities:

- Local democracy (good governance and community engagement) relies on curious and informed citizens participating actively in discussions and decisions affecting their lives.
- Social wellbeing relies on shared values, strong connections between people and organisations, and effective support for fragile individuals and communities.
- Economic prosperity relies on creative, skilled, flexible and imaginative individuals and enterprises, building on local assets.
- Environmental sustainability relies on leadership, community education and action, and sound planning to preserve cultural and natural heritage.

A conscious effort to understand and embrace the cultural dimension of these challenges will help co-ordinate Council and community efforts to respond to them. This will require Council, in partnership with its community, to unlock the creative and transformative potential inherent in local cultural assets, skills, and organisations. It will require leadership and integrated, multi-disciplinary approaches to local challenges that strengthen linkages between creative individuals and groups, and the wider community.

The inaugural International conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability in 2005 called for "deeper, longer and wider views" of sustainability. 'Our City Our Culture' seeks to enrich public culture in the Redlands in response to this clarion call. The Plan is informed by 'Agenda 21 for Culture' a policy framework adopted by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), an international local government association.

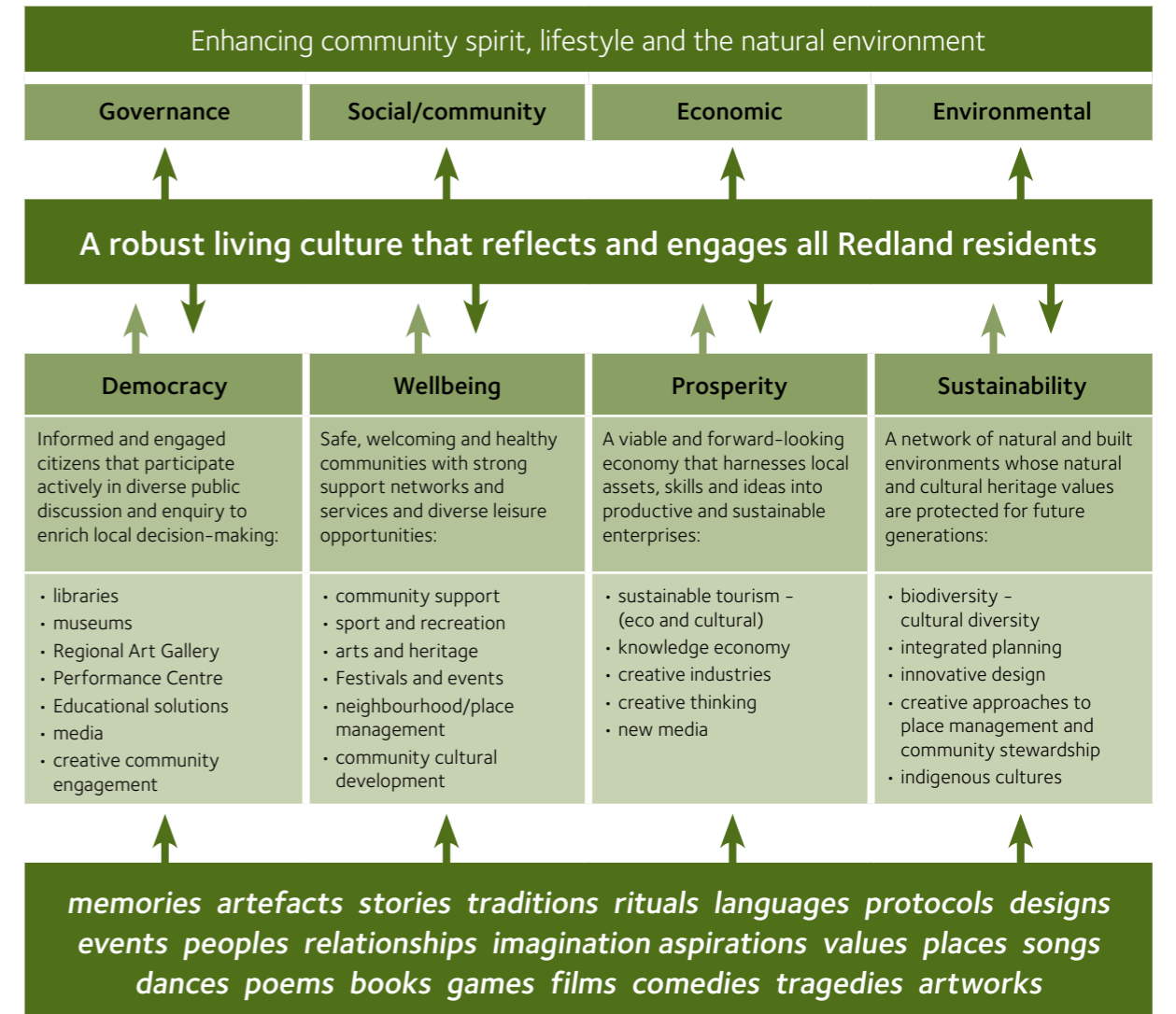


Yesterday and Today | Narelle Renn

"Sustainability, as it has become formally adopted around the world, has not one but three pillars: ecological sustainability, social sustainability and economic sustainability. Some would argue that there should be four pillars and that cultural sustainability should always be included. We agree with this view".

D. Yencken and D. Wilkinson "Resetting the Compass: Australia's Journey Towards Sustainability" CSIRO Publishing, 2000

This Plan articulates principles and priorities for Council action in supporting arts and heritage, and strengthens their links to the wider local agenda. It identifies key goals for management of the City's art galleries, new performing arts centre, and library service (consistent with the 10 year Library Services Plan adopted by Council in 2007). It establishes priorities for future cultural infrastructure, and supports innovation and new partnerships to develop local festivals and events, community arts, heritage and lifelong learning programs.



A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE MISSION: our purpose

To embrace the cultural dimension of the Redlands' sustainability challenge and enhance its:

- Strong community
- Viable economy
- Healthy environment
- Engaged democracy

THE VISION: mission accomplished

A robust, living culture that reflects and stimulates all Redlands residents.

Robust:
healthy, strong, resilient; adapts to change by getting stronger not weaker

Living culture:
a balance between our heritage (that which we inherit) and contemporary practice (that which we create)

"Nowadays, culture lies at the heart of urban strategies, not just due to its intrinsic vocation of promoting human rights, shaping the knowledge society and improving quality of life for all, but also on account of its role in the creation of employment, urban regeneration and social inclusion".

Agenda 21for Culture, UCLG

GOALS: to focus planning and delivery of services

A firm platform for cultural development

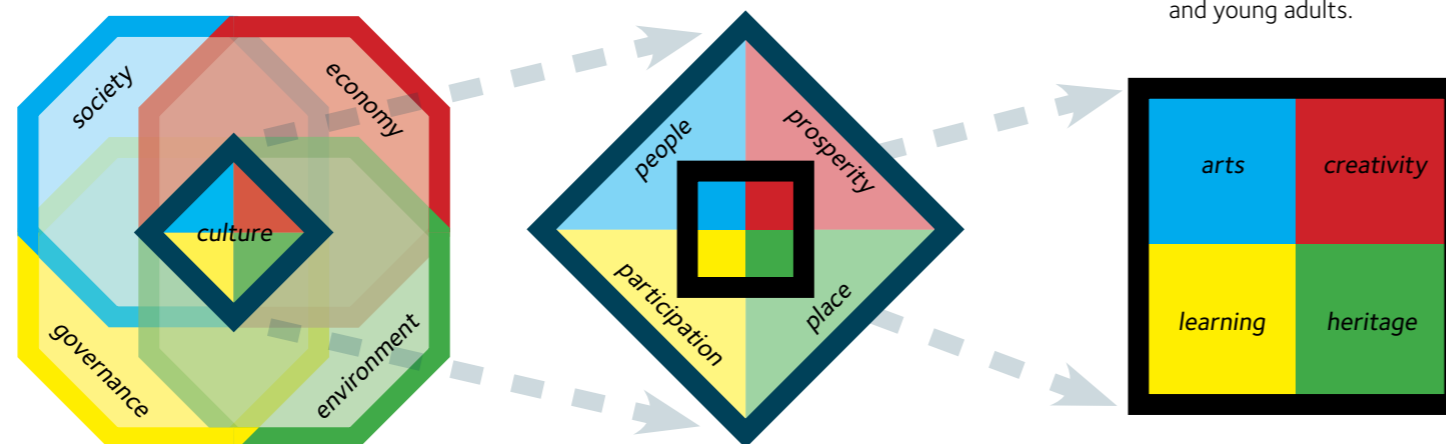
1. Embrace a wide view of culture and affirm its role in protecting and developing the strengths of Redlands' places and communities.
2. Acknowledge and support the living culture of the Traditional Owners, elders and other Indigenous residents of the Redlands, the people of Quandamooka.
3. Acknowledge the central role of creative arts and heritage activities as drivers of cultural vitality in the Redlands.

Building on local cultural assets and strengths

4. Protect and promote expressions of local heritage in place management and community development.
5. Present the work of professional artists in all art forms to inspire diverse audiences and develop the skills and ideas of local artists.
6. Target support for community-based cultural activities to those that best demonstrate exciting and innovative approaches to creative development, community participation and skills development, and which foster strong local partnerships.

Focussing on the future

7. Invest in 'human capital' by providing facilities and programs that develop creativity, innovation, skills and knowledge in individuals, groups and enterprises.
8. Foster creative partnerships between advocates of cultural and natural heritage, and between the arts and sciences.
9. Encourage newcomers to the Redlands to contribute to the cultural life of the City as decision makers, creative practitioners, volunteers and participants in local events and organisations.
10. Nurture the next generation of cultural creators and custodians by supporting the creative ideas, skills and capacities of children, teenagers and young adults.



Culture is central to our quest for strong and sustainable communities.

The arts and heritage are at its heart.



Key Priorities for support

1. Enhanced consideration of cultural values in major planning instruments including: the Redlands Planning Scheme, the Local Growth Management Scheme, the Social Infrastructure Plan, site masterplans and neighbourhood structure plans;
2. Indigenous community efforts to protect and promote the unique living culture of the Quandamooka region;
3. Creative approaches to civic engagement that enrich public exploration of pressing local issues and challenges;
4. Renewal and animation of existing community facilities;
5. Cultural development in communities facing locational, or other disadvantages especially the Southern Moreton Bay Islands;
6. Local and regional partnerships between the arts, heritage, environment, media, and education sectors;
7. Investment in digital literacy as a major driver of cultural development, education and enterprise development in the new century.
8. Succession planning for cultural organisations to engage newcomers, young people, and cross-sector partnerships;
9. Emerging communities' access to cultural facilities and services especially in the south of the City;

FROM IDEAS TO ACTION – KEY INITIATIVES

“There is no power equal to the power of a community conversing with itself about what it wants. Meaningful conversations create the power to change, create or transform communities, organisations, values and worldviews. If we want to affect change we need to convene the community, discover what is important to it, and then connect it with similar conversations”.

Margaret Wheatley, The Berkana Institute

A creative approach to community planning

In 2008/09 Council will begin the process to create a new community plan in collaboration with its citizens. A successor to *Vision 2005 & Beyond*, produced in 2001, the plan will inform Council’s next corporate plan due in 2011. A collective exploration of the values, sense of identity, place, and purpose of Redlands’ people will be the cornerstone of this important civic engagement exercise.

Creative as well as traditional approaches to community engagement will be applied to generate maximum participation and draw on local knowledge collected in the minds, hearts and assets of local cultural groups. The City’s cultural institutions will come alive with a diverse program of creative activities involving hands-on art making, talks, debates, exhibitions, films, and performances that reflect and examine local values, needs and aspirations for the future. Seeking creative solutions to complex local challenges will also be an important focus of the program.

The new community plan will inform detailed planning and review of cultural services and facilities at the City and neighbourhood level, in line with the directions of *Our City Our Culture*.

Respecting Indigenous Cultural Protocols and Practices

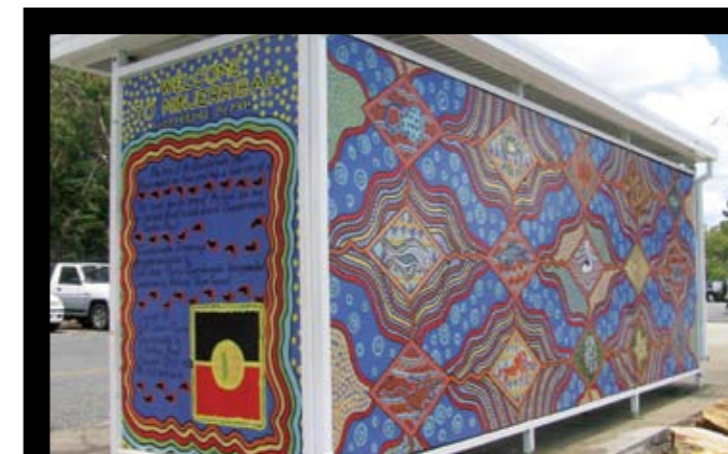
Council acknowledges the core values of local Traditional Owners and Elders, the Indigenous people of Quandamooka (Moreton Bay). In November 2007, the Quandamooka Combined Aboriginal Organisations Forum representing key Indigenous organisations on Minjerribah / North Stradbroke Island endorsed a Community Action Plan it produced with the support of Council and the Queensland and Federal Governments. The Plan identifies the following core values as vital to the health of Indigenous culture:

- Protection and preservation of the cultural and natural integrity of land and sea
- Recognition of and respect for Elders
- Ability to access and enjoy areas of spiritual and cultural significance
- Recognition of inherent rights to natural resources
- Respect for and recognition of Aboriginal decision making processes
- Maintenance of customary law
- Passing on Aboriginal culture to our youth
- Respect for and recognition of the complexity of Aboriginal social structures
- Recognition of and respect for cultural differences



Yulu Burri Ba dancers

Saltwater Murriss mural at One Mile



Council respects these values and, in the spirit of the national reconciliation process, accepts its responsibility to consult widely with all representative Indigenous groups, listen keenly to their views, and work collaboratively towards shared goals in the interest of all residents of the Redlands. It welcomes opportunities to acknowledge the special relationship that Quandamooka people have with the land and waters of the Redlands in civic ceremonies and major events. A policy to guide Council’s relationship with the Indigenous community, informed by consultations with Quandamooka community organisations and the *Quandamooka Aboriginal Community Plan 2007*, will be developed by the end of 2008.

Inclusion of public artworks celebrating Quandamooka cultural heritage will feature in Council’s revitalisation of the Dunwich streetscape and other place-making projects. Partnerships with Quandamooka community organisations and artists will ensure these projects reflect Indigenous community aspirations and develop creative skills and opportunities for children, young people and adults. Council welcomes the Quandamooka Lands Council’s leadership in initiating and delivering significant funding and expertise to the Dunwich Streetscape project.

Increasing the profile of Quandamooka cultural heritage in learning and cultural development programs on North Stradbroke Island is an objective of a planned Minjerribah Knowledge Centre, a major long term project foreshadowed in Council’s ten year library services plan adopted in July 2007. The project will be developed in close consultation with Indigenous and non Indigenous organisations involved in education and cultural development programs.

Working in Partnership: a new Creative Community Alliance

To realise the goals of *Our City Our Culture* a new and dynamic partnership between Council and the community is envisaged. The cultural sector and Council each have different roles and responsibilities in enhancing local cultural vitality. A clearer articulation of their relative roles and better co-ordination of the efforts of both partners will strengthen the community's many cultural assets. This partnership approach, sustained through open dialogue, imaginative thinking and a can-do spirit will ensure a robust and independent culture for the people of Redlands now and for the future.

Council affirms the importance of free and unfettered creative expression as a key building block of local cultural vitality. Artists, individuals and community groups drive the development of culture with their creative work and activities. Constrained only by the law, their freedom to creatively explore ideas, and seek audiences for their work is acknowledged.

Council's principal responsibility in this is to ensure access to the facilities, resources and opportunities required for this creative work to flourish and find its audience. It is Council's vision that the cultural activities available locally will engage audiences and creative artists of all ages, styles and backgrounds. There should be something for everyone - from classical music to heavy metal; from books to broadband; and from traditional to contemporary cultural practices. Maintaining a close connection between Council cultural development staff and the artists and audiences they serve will help Council plan and deliver quality programs to achieve this goal.

A Creative Community Alliance representing all age groups, art forms and cultural development advocates will be established to strengthen links between local cultural groups and provide a forum for dialogue and opportunities for cooperation. Envisaged as an informal, inclusive network operating independently the Alliance will help Council to stay in touch with the views of the local cultural sector. Council's cultural facilities and programs staff will meet regularly with the Alliance to share information and ideas.

Collaboration towards joint ventures with other spheres of government and the private sector will be a central element of Council's provision of quality cultural infrastructure. A growing interest in reform of inter-government relations will see Council seize opportunities for the Redlands through pursuit of practical creative partnerships.



Hug on Coochie | Kathryn Blumke



BUILDING ON LOCAL ASSETS

Redland Performing Arts Centre

The new performing arts centre, at the heart of a cultural precinct envisaged for the Cleveland CBD, will offer high quality entertainment and cultural development opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. A balanced program presenting both local and touring performances will develop Redland's cultural strengths and stimulate local audiences. Built to the best industry standards the Centre will be a dynamic and lively centre of community life, hosting diverse civic events and activities that bring people together to debate, celebrate and collaborate.

The Centre's highly skilled staff will offer all hirers, visitors, producers, sponsors and participating artists the highest standards of client service and support. Subsidised hire rates will be available for community users along with production assistance and volunteer training for local presenters. Innovative programs to maximise involvement of schools, young people, seniors and Indigenous communities will also be developed as an investment in professional and community development.

Integration of public art works will be a priority in planning, design and construction of the cultural precinct surrounding the performing arts centre. Creative works reflecting unique elements of local culture will link the Cleveland library, Redland Art Gallery and the Redland Performing Arts centre creating a coherent and dynamic public space at the heart of Cleveland's cultural precinct.





Redland City Library Service - a Ten Year Plan

Connecting residents with a world of knowledge and linking lively communities is the mission of Council's library service, enhanced in 2004 with the opening of the Victoria Point library. The mission will be achieved through a mix of strategies and programs designed to:

- Encourage reading for pleasure and learning for people at all stages of their lives through practical, creative partnerships, especially with formal and informal education institutions including schools, tertiary institutions, museums, book clubs, local history groups and the University of the Third Age.
- Strengthen local democracy by nurturing curious, informed, skilled and creative citizens who eagerly engage with ideas, with each other, and with the issues affecting their locality.
- Foster a just and inclusive community by providing free access to information in both traditional and new media formats to all City residents, wherever they live and whatever their means.
- Strengthen social connections between individuals, families, community groups and institutions in the City by developing programs and partnerships to extend and enrich community use of library facilities and resources.
- Encourage participation in the knowledge economy and the rapidly growing creative industries by providing residents and businesses with access to technology, information resources, and professional advice to develop their digital literacy and internet navigation skills.
- Improve the range and quality of information resources and tools available to residents by working towards integrated approaches to public library services in south-east Queensland in partnership with neighbouring Councils and with the State Library of Queensland.

These are the goals of the Council's 10 year library plan adopted in 2007. The plan identified two priorities for new facilities in the next decade for which early planning has already begun. In both cases innovative funding, management and service models will be explored.

To meet the needs of the rapidly growing southern Redlands area an innovative cultural facility model supporting library/gallery/technology centre functions will be explored. An Indigenous-focussed Knowledge Centre at Dunwich is planned to substantially improve library and other cultural services for the whole of North Stradbroke Island. Consultation with potential partners in this initiative (most notably Quandamooka organisations) suggests there is considerable scope for an alliance of community, government, education and business stakeholders to create a ground-breaking knowledge and cultural centre that will support local people and educate visitors.

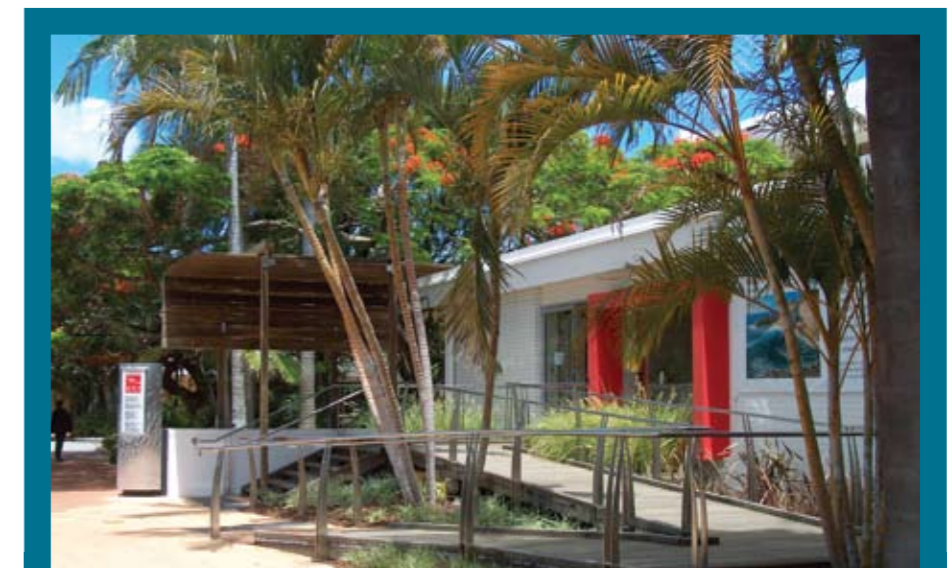


Redland Art Gallery at Capalaba and Cleveland

On Valentine's Day 2008 the Redland Art Gallery celebrated its 5th birthday with a street festival and an exhibition of works about the Redlands from 60 local artists. Some of these works are featured in this Plan. Since 2003 the Redland Art Gallery at Cleveland and Capalaba, has presented diverse visual art works from the Redlands and beyond engaging audiences of all ages and stimulating local artists working in a range of media. The Gallery's exhibition, collection development and public outreach programs are delivered to the highest professional standards. In the next five years, these high standards will continue to ensure Redlands residents and visitors enjoy access to high quality arts programs. An increased focus on collaborative initiatives with other cultural institutions and community organisations will strengthen the Gallery's links with the ideas and imagination of its community.



The gallery at Capalaba, co-located with the Library in a thriving retail centre, will be enriched through a new community development program, established in 2008 delivered through the Capalaba Activity Centre. Cultural development strategies will be among a range of innovative community strengthening activities to be developed through this new program. The needs of young people will be a key focus and linkages will be forged with the library and the Redland Youth Plaza in nearby John Frederick's park.



Redlands' community museums

While Council does not manage either the Redland museum or the North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum, it contributes substantially to the capital and operational costs of both. Council is a proud partner of the voluntary committees that manage local heritage collections and is eager to forge more creative connections between museums and its Local History Program, based at the Cleveland Library. Building on the already strong partnership between the library and local museums Council will encourage contemporary approaches to collecting and sharing the artefacts and stories of local heritage. Extending the reach of museum programs to new audiences, and strengthening its links with other cultural and education organisation is an important goal for Council.



The Redland Museum's new emphasis on children's activities, and the North Stradbroke Island Museum's creative application of new media and oral history signal the kind of innovation required to ensure that local heritage collections and stories engage new and younger audiences. A new museum facility on Russell Island presents opportunities to strengthen links between heritage advocates and educators throughout the southern Moreton Bay islands. A transition from auspiced management by the Redland Museum to local management by Islands' community organisations will be encouraged. A heritage plan to protect and promote significant local sites, artefacts, and stories throughout the Redlands will be prepared in 2010/11.



Animating community facilities through the arts

Creative community celebrations are an essential part of animating public recreation and meeting places as vibrant centres of community life. The revitalisation of the Cleveland Showgrounds will realise this objective through improved infrastructure for festivals and events; creation of a cultural facilities precinct; and contemporary interpretation of the heritage of the site through an innovative public art program developed by Urban Art Projects.

Indigiscapes is already a much loved local institution that demonstrates the intimate connections between natural heritage and cultural heritage in the hearts of local residents. Partnerships with cultural and education groups to nurture a culture of sustainability will be enhanced and will build on programs already in place such as the family-friendly folk music program presented by Folk Redlands. Considerable potential exists to expand the Indigiscapes site to accommodate creative, community education and environmental protection activities. A masterplan for land adjacent to Indigiscapes will be developed to identify priorities for land uses that demonstrate best practice in ecological and community-based cultural development.

Artists and designers working in collaboration with local communities will create new works to enliven public parks and community spaces. Some will be permanent features in the landscape, such as those planned for the Capalaba Regional Park, the Dunwich Streetscape and the Wellington Point Reserve. Others may be temporary or ephemeral works or performances that intrigue, inspire or encourage social interaction.



Young people, culture and public space

The Redlands Youth Plaza at Capalaba has already come alive with skateboarders, bikers and roller-bladers. An active youth culture thrives at this state-of-the-art skate park, launched in 2008. A cultural program to encourage festivals, bands, and hands-on arts activities will be developed to encourage other young people to make the plaza their own.

Active leisure and creative engagement opportunities for young people is an important priority for Council. Youth culture is as diverse as the youth population itself. It is expressed in myriad forms through traditional and contemporary arts practices, sports and leisure, fashion, technology and in young people's particular relationship to public space. Drawing on its 2007 'Viewfinder' youth culture research project, Council will nurture the talents and ideas of all young residents in the Redlands to enrich the vitality of the City.

Capalaba mural, Aerographix



Raw Dance at the Redland Spring Festival 2007

Festivals and Events

Recognising the contribution festivals and events make to the cultural, social, environmental and economic sustainability of the Redlands, Council will develop a strategy in 2008 to strengthen support for local events and celebrations. An audit of more than 70 local events conducted in 2007 has identified priorities for the strategy. The goal is to develop and support an annual program of local, regional and hallmark festivals and events recognised as:

- **Inclusive:** that engages residents from all walks of life whatever their age, culture, background, interests, abilities, location or means, & fosters self-expression and social interaction.

- **Vibrant:** that offers exciting, inspiring, stimulating, imaginative and fun activities showcasing local spirit and culture in places where people want to gather.
- **Sustainable:** that delivers safe, well managed, locally relevant, activities that audiences support, and draws on and enhances local skills, assets, resources and partnerships.

Improved coordination of Council information and support services; regulatory processes and grants provision are among the objectives of the new strategy. Stronger marketing (including on-line techniques) and support for new festivals and events in areas of acknowledged need are also important goals.



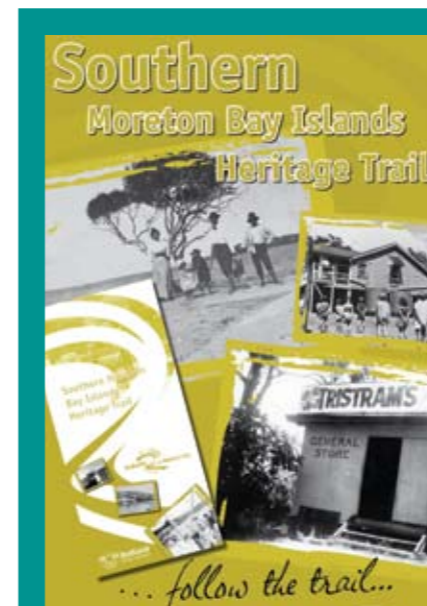
Image: MV Dawn at Russell Island, c.1920. Courtesy State Library of Queensland, neg 82641.

Artists in residence

A new artist in residency program will be established under the aegis of the Redland Gallery to provide temporary studio space to local artists in the Tower of the Council's Administration Building in Cleveland. To be delivered in collaboration with the new Creative Community Alliance, the Tower Studio's extraordinary views of the city and Moreton Bay will inspire visual artists, performing artists, film-makers and writers to create works with a distinct Redlands flavour.

A digital storytelling project in the Southern Moreton Bay Islands will explore and share the Bay Islands unique local culture through an artist-in-residence program initiated in 2008. 'Bay Views' is an integral part of Council's partnership with local community groups and the State Government in the "Place" program. This arts project will illuminate the stories and heritage of the Bay Islands, foster new connections between local people and creative artists, and showcase the skills, history and strengths of Bay Islands communities.

Council will develop opportunities for other artist-in-residence projects in conjunction with local businesses, universities, schools, retirement centres and social service providers. Creative interpretation of local environment challenges such as climate change and koala protection will be an early focus for new arts-based initiatives that integrate local knowledge, scientific research and community education.



Redlands – local responses to regional and global concerns

Today residents face a future with challenges more complex than their forbears could even have imagined. The Redlands’ future prosperity, wellbeing and sustainability are now inextricably linked with regional and global forces driving immense and often rapid technological, cultural, and economic changes. Most of these factors are beyond the control of local authorities, yet they impact directly on local places and people. A keen awareness of these effects and an enhanced understanding of the Redlands’ place in the region will help transform the uncertainties of the future into opportunities. The application of community-based cultural development and research processes alongside economic, scientific and technical innovations will be an important part of Council’s planning to secure our short and long term future. Multi-disciplinary partnerships with research institutions with similar goals will be canvassed to assist Council’s investment in deeper, wider and longer views that will sustain Redland’s communities and our treasured place in the world.

“The arts have always played a primary role in expressing how we relate to each other and to our environment. Given global and local challenges, now is the time to forge a realignment in our thinking and practice that joins environmental sustainability to cultural sustainability. The Moreton Bay region has unique historical, cultural, social and environmental traditions that provide an ideal platform from which to develop new frameworks for a sustainable future”.

Professor Pat HOFFIE, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University

HOW DO WE MEASURE OUR PROGRESS?

The indicators that will be applied to evaluate the success of this plan overall are:

- Consistency with the outcomes of the community plan;
- Inclusion of cultural considerations in place planning and management;
- Profile of Quandamooka cultural heritage;
- Degree of participation in local cultural events and activities;
- Diversity of cultural opportunities available for all age groups;
- Reflection of local issues, debates and aspirations in public cultural development programs;
- Sustainability of local cultural facilities, events and organisations;
- Engagement of young people in cultural development and expression;
- New partnerships formed that foster local cultural vitality and harness its strengths in the wider sustainability agenda.



Yallingbilla and Buangan | Joshua Walker

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

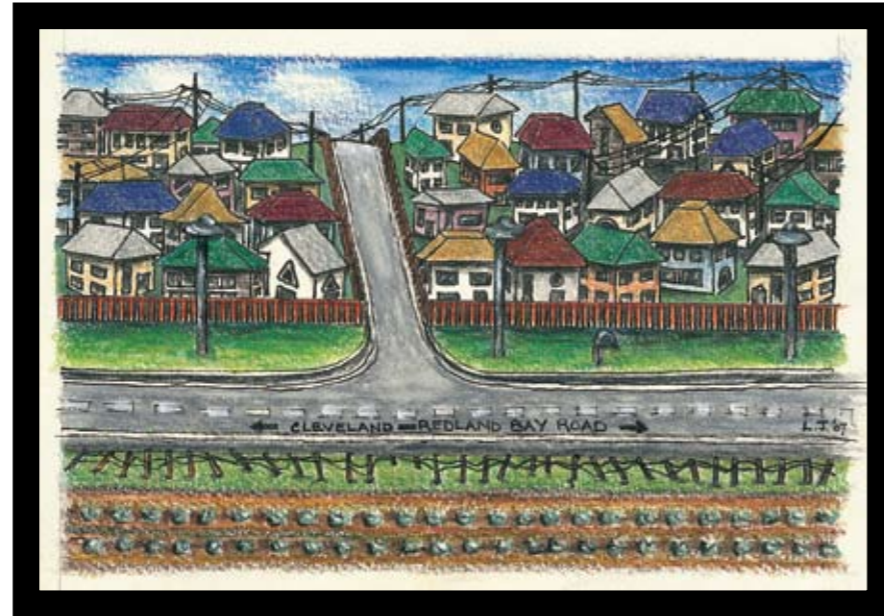
KEY INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE STATED GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF OUR CITY OUR CULTURE	TIMEFRAME		
	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
A creative approach to community planning	Redland City Community Plan Social Infrastructure plan	Master Plans Structure Plans	Redland Planning Scheme Local Growth Management Strategy
Respecting Indigenous cultural protocols and practices	Indigenous policy Public arts projects	Quandamooka Aboriginal Community Plan	Minjerrabah Knowledge centre
Creative Community Alliance	Establishment	Creative Partnerships	Review
Redland Performing Arts Centre	Local and touring arts skills development	Review strategic plan	linkages with Cleveland CBD revitalisation
Redland City Library Service	See 10 yr plan	See 10 yr plan	See 10 yr plan
Redland Art Gallery	Community and arts sector partnerships Tower Studio	Develop strategic plan	Cleveland CBD public art links
Redlands museums	Innovative community outreach and focus on local stories	self management of Russell Island facility	Alignment with new City Heritage Plan
Animating community facilities through the arts	Showgrounds revitalisation - public art projects	Public art programs review Creative civic engagement	Expand Indigscapes in alignment with eco/cultural development Masterplan
Young people, culture and public space	Youth plaza creative programs & youth festival development	Review inclusion of youth culture in all programs and public space master plans	Increased youth representation on local Boards
Festivals and Events	New Strategy and Policy for events Address gaps	Review strategy implementation Review new events	Explore potential for City-wide festival as part of new City Community Plan
Artists in residence	Cleveland Tower studio SMBI stories program	Review arts/environment programs	Integration of arts-residencies in other key projects
Redlands – our region, our world, our future	Scope innovative research partnership	Integrate research across all programs	Evaluate results

PART 2 - CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY LIFE – THE DISCUSSION

The concepts and ideas that underpin *Our City Our Culture* have been strongly endorsed by creative artists and heritage advocates consulted during its development. These ideas are outlined here to encourage ongoing discussion about how Council and its community can ensure that a strong sustainable and vital culture continues to nurture the spirit, lifestyle and environment of the Redlands.

What is culture?

The plan takes a wide view of culture and is intended to reach all City residents not just those for whom the word 'culture' has special resonance. The arts and heritage do have a central place because they play a special role in exploring community values, challenges and aspirations. However, there are many other expressions of culture that reflect the people and places of the Redlands; boating culture, sporting culture, hip-hop culture, Indigenous culture, and enterprise culture are examples. Different age groups and localities also have different cultures that reflect their particular values, heritage and visions for the future. The sum total of this diverse mix of our conscious and unconscious expressions of ourselves, our sense of place and our aspirations, is our culture.



A changing outlook | Linda Jones

In its widest and truest sense culture is that part of our world created by humans in their interaction with nature. There is nature and there is culture. Everything flows from these two forces. Driven by our values and creativity culture is what we make of, and for, ourselves in our use of natural resources. It is evident as much in our social relationships, industries, laws, political institutions, technology, architecture, and trade as it is in our arts, heritage, sports, education and media. Like nature, culture is dynamic. A living force, it is sustained through constant change and infinite variety. Always evolving, it is passed on from generation to generation, changing all the while as it responds to new realities and values. Like nature, the hallmarks of a culture's health and sustainability are vitality and diversity.

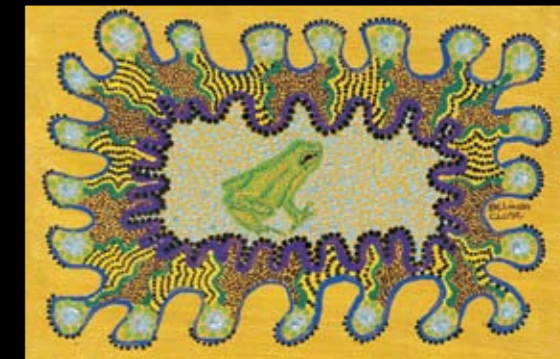
Why should Council concern itself with culture?

Council's job is to manage the public resources of the Redlands to enable residents to achieve their own goals. Many of these goals are distinctly cultural – most obviously, the desire for quality arts and entertainment opportunities and the protection of heritage. Others are less obviously 'cultural' like our desire for safe neighbourhoods or easy access to the waters of Moreton Bay, but all are defined and determined by our values – for which culture is the primary vehicle of expression and transmission.

A community's culture reflects the values of its members and shapes their dreams and aspirations. For Council, local cultural expression offers a rich source of knowledge that can be harnessed towards effective civic planning and good governance. First, culture illuminates community values and visions – the fundamental building blocks of civic life. Second, its processes, (particularly the creative techniques of the arts), can draw out these values making them apparent so they can be explored collectively and embedded in plans for the future. Third, culture is recognised as a key barometer of the health or sustainability of a people or place. Communities whose cultural life is vital, diverse and inspiring are generally those with thriving local economies, healthy social structures and relationships, and sustainable environmental practices and plans.

Understanding and responding to community values is an essential, but often unconscious aspect, of the operation of local democracy. Council's Community Engagement Strategy embodies a vision for a deeper connection between council and its community. By drawing culture more directly and explicitly into the centre of its local planning and service delivery Council has a powerful tool to achieve that goal, and enhance the quality of life for all residents.

Wellington Point Community Arts Precinct



Little Green Tree Frog | Belinda Close



Farming in the Redlands | Richard Taorea



Redland Bay Tomatoes | Helen McKenna

Culture builds community

A strong community where we all feel safe and welcome, where we have the resources, relationships and support systems we need to achieve our goals and ride the rough times, is probably the most important community value we share. Council has a clear role to play in this, in partnership with community agencies, residents and other spheres of government.

A dynamic cultural life where we have the opportunities to play together, create things together, and discover things together is an important dimension in nurturing a strong community. Whether through sports, arts, learning programs, events or nature conservation activities, the cultural dimension of community life provides critical points of connection between us, in places we share. These community activities bring us together, develop our skills and imagination, extend our social networks and nurture a sense of local identity and pride. Sports and recreation promote good physical health and the arts and lifelong learning activities promote good mental health. Both are essential for individuals and their communities to achieve their full potential.



Alexandra Hills community garden

“The more you look at the ills of contemporary society – alienation, fragmentation, isolation, depression – the more compelling the need for community participation in the arts seems. What better way of fostering a sense of community, promoting mental health and wellbeing, and reducing the pressures of a competitive, materialistic society than by encouraging widespread participation in the arts?”

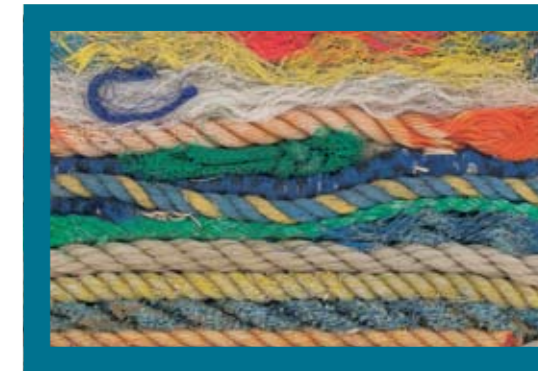
(Hugh Mackay, Advance Australia Where, 2007)

Evidence of the positive impact of active participation in the arts has on community wellbeing is steadily growing. Researchers have demonstrated that hands-on participation in creative arts activities improves individuals’ health, literacy, skills and confidence and strengthens their connections with each other. The Editor of the *British Medical Journal* published an editorial in 2002 contending that “diverting 0.5% of the healthcare budget to the arts would improve the health of people in Britain”. Though deliberately controversial, his article sought to demonstrate how much the quality of our lives depends of the strength and vitality of our communities and, how central a rich cultural life is to both.

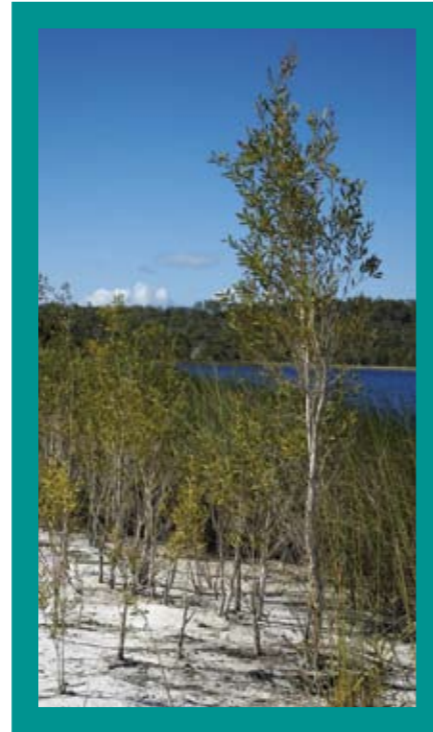
The ‘Treasures of the Redlands Cultural Mapping Report’ prepared by Council in 2005 identifies an extensive network of cultural organisations, events and activities that, along with other recreation and social groups, promote social connections and creativity and bring our parks, community halls and cultural institutions alive. An audit of festivals and events conducted by Council earlier this year profiled more than 70 events in the city that reach many thousands of residents with performances, competitions, food, fashion, exhibitions, talks, and other activities that affirm and celebrate the spirit and skills of our community. All these provide diverse opportunities for people to participate in local cultural life – a core part of sustaining a strong community. According to Canadian Heritage’s *Accounting for Culture: Thinking Through Cultural Citizenship* (2005):



“Cultural participation is one of the key tools people use to build their sense of attachment and connection to each other. Cultural participation also bridges fault lines and builds common understandings where only difference existed. Engagement with culture is hard to distinguish from community development and the growth of citizenship. When people engage with culture, they necessarily engage with each other, with people like them in some way, and inevitably with people who are different”.



Debriscape 2 | J. Andrew Blackwell



Culture and nature

"We need to recognise that the relationships between our identity, our culture, our wellbeing and the natural values of this country are crucial to our future. We should never forget that the health of our communities is related to the health of landscapes, and the relationship flows both ways. You can't have a healthy community without a healthy landscape, and you can't have a healthy landscape without a healthy community."

Professor Ian Lowe, Emeritus Professor Griffith University, 'How Can We Create a Sustainable Future for Australia?' 2006

Culture embodies our values and shapes, as well as reflects, our relationship to nature. With the weight of evidence about the fragility of our natural systems growing daily, the need to generate a culture of sustainability to preserve our natural heritage for the next generation is now urgent. A convergence of our creative efforts in arts education, science and planning will help to move us closer to another fundamental goal of Redlands residents – a sustainable local environment.

We know now that the prevailing view of our relationship to nature in Australia through much of the last century fostered behaviours that dangerously skewed the fragile balance between our needs and those of the natural environment. With the benefit of hindsight it is now clear that the unsustainable practices of the time were encouraged by cultural values that elevated human needs above the rest of nature. Today our values are changing in response to new scientific knowledge and widespread community concern about our impact on nature. Acknowledging the cultural dimension of our challenge in relation to sustainable development and sound natural resource management can accelerate and focus our efforts.

The Redland Spring Festival in 2007 launched an initiative that does exactly this in relation to our waterways. Its Watershed project linked professional artists with a school-based environmental education and community action program in which children creatively explored water management issues, and translated their learning into a hands-on clean-up campaign of local waterways. A public presentation of performing arts devised through the project entertained and educated visitors on the opening night of the 2007 Festival. The performance, *Earth Fire Air Water – An Oratorio*, heralded a new era for the city's oldest hallmark event.

There is tremendous potential to develop similar cultural change programs in the Redlands, and a strong network of local groups, facilities, skills and imagination to build on. Strengthening links between Indigiscapes environment centre, schools, clubs, libraries, museums, businesses and creative arts programs will help incubate new ideas. Council has a wealth of technical and educational information about our progress on the road to sustainability. In the hands of creative artists this information could be illuminated and interpreted to improve local knowledge and inspire positive community action. Promoting a koala active community through creative arts-based education programs is an early priority.



“Those communities that are richest in their artistic tradition are also those that are the most progressive in their economic performance and most resilient and secure in their economic structure.”

Economist, John Kenneth Galbraith

Culture means business

In recent years the number of economists and social researchers that recognise the potential for local cultural and economic development to enhance each other has grown considerably. Arguably the most influential internationally is Richard Florida, whose latest book, *The Flight of the Creative Class* (2006) describes cities' competition for creative talent as “the defining economic issue of the 21st century”. Florida's ideas are centred on his observation that business goes where culture grows. It is a powerful message for Council given its aim to strengthen the local economy so that 60% of the city's residents earn their living here in the Redlands.

There are both simple and complex connections between economics and culture. At the simplest level, many local businesses produce cultural products or services. In the Redlands there are many examples in tourism, craft, sport, fashion, music, and media among others. Along with traditional (though diminishing) local industries they reflect the enterprising culture that continues to drive our City forward. Among these are a number of creative industry enterprises and practitioners in the city that have achieved national and international success. Honouring their achievements and nurturing others with similar ambitions will help grow creative industries which are steadily expanding all over the world. Also, by sharpening our focus on cultural heritage and contemporary culture in developing local tourism we can boost economic opportunities, and at the same time, protect the City's natural and cultural assets for residents as well as visitors.

There is another, less obvious connection between culture and business, that warrants increased attention in light of the emerging knowledge economy. As Galbraith asserts, cultural vitality is itself an important indicator of local economic viability. Monitoring the degree of diversity, participation and innovation in local creative activities and events, will help track our progress towards economic as well as cultural health. Growing our community's cultural capacity (for its own sake) will improve local knowledge and skills, strengthen connections between people and groups, foster creativity and innovation and position us well to identify and pursue economic opportunities. For example, investing in digital literacy skills and creative applications of new media will help businesses and workers seize opportunities in the rapidly growing knowledge and creative industries.

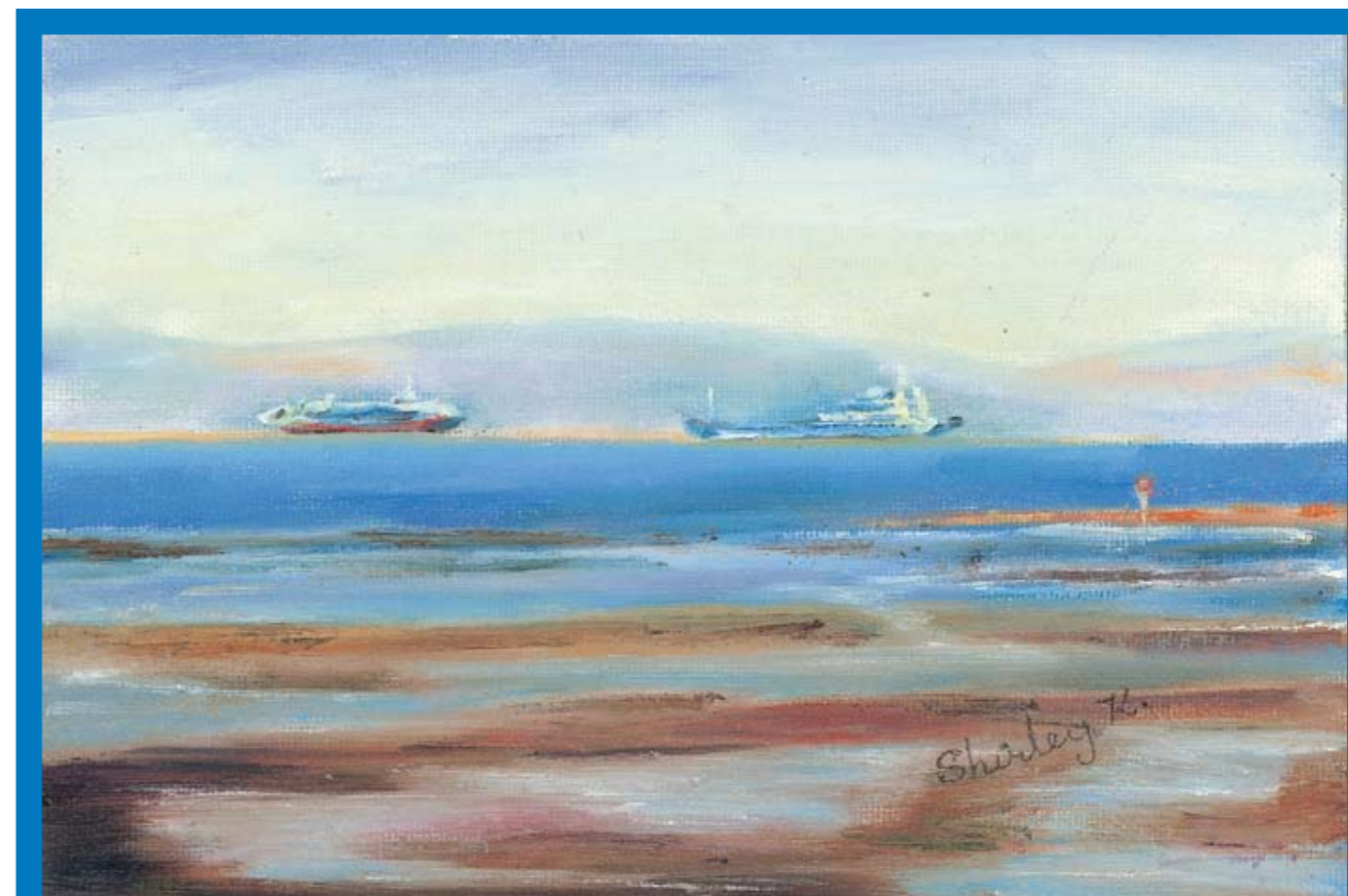
Culture is a thermometer

When ruptures emerge in our culture (usually revealed when 'sub' cultures within it collide or clash) they often signal that something deeper, something important is going on, something that needs attention. For example, graffiti culture disrupts mainstream culture and signals a clash of fundamental values – shared community values seem not to be so shared any more. A culture of violence and alcohol abuse brings tragedy to a teenage party, provoking a deeper look at the challenges facing young people.

A new urban development is welcomed by some and feared by others, either challenging or affirming the cultural values reflected in their opposing views. Older residents treasuring memories of simpler times detect an absence in contemporary culture, a dissipating sense of community, of neighbourliness. Rapid population growth fractures our 'sense' of place. Contested cultural and land rights among Quandamooka peoples suggest some of the complex challenges faced by Indigenous communities in the Redlands.

Paying closer attention to the ideas, aesthetics, and dilemmas emerging from diverse cultures in the City will help Council stay tuned to the pulse of its communities. An active listening exercise in itself, it is part of an innovative approach to community engagement, a stated priority of Council.

Toondah | Shirley Sharey





Redland Spring Festival



Whose culture?

It is important that attention is paid to the voices of new, emerging and fragile cultures as well as those of the traditional or mainstream culture which, in the main, has been sustained by well established residents who have lived here for many years. These are our local heroes who not only established and maintained a rich arts and heritage tradition in the city, but many other social and recreational institutions and events as well. We owe them a great debt of gratitude and should honour them for their many civic achievements. In their journey they have forged strong connections with local social, political and economic structures which may be absent or tenuous for younger, 'different' or newly arrived residents. In the next 20 years 50,000 people are expected to settle in the Redlands, many of these in the south of the city. We need to build bridges now with the next generation of cultural custodians, and creators, and listen more keenly to them if the Redlands culture is to continue to develop and reflect the interest of all residents.



Habitat | Julie Shepherd

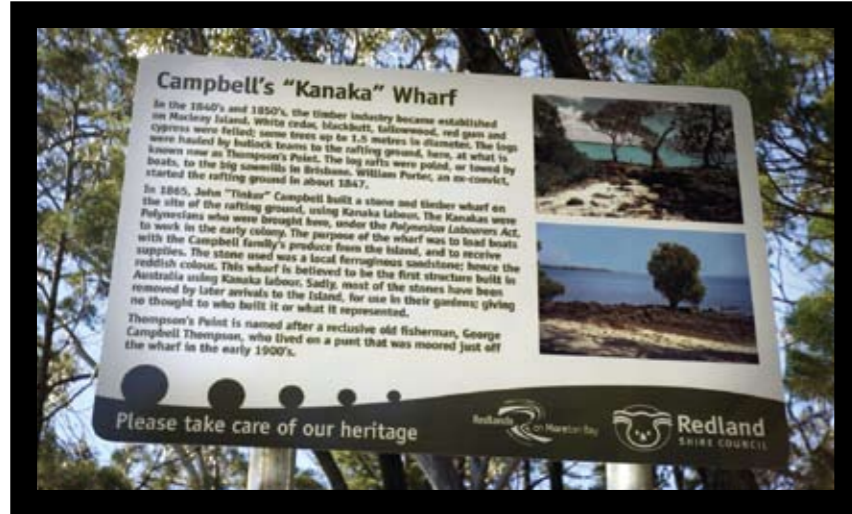


Folk Redlands

Council's primary responsibility in support of community cultural expression is to provide public facilities and resources so that people can create, explore and present their identity, ideas and aspirations in their own way. An essentially 'hands-off' approach in terms of the content or form of cultural expression is important. Government intervention in this area (whether from Council or any other level) represents a threat to culture which, like air and water, must flow freely to be healthy. This notwithstanding, from time to time Council does have a responsibility to intervene to address gaps and to assist those who struggle to find their voice or, have it heard in the wider community.

Healthy democracy requires that all the voices be heard. A culture that welcomes difference, celebrates the new, and values (or at least tolerates) dissent is a hallmark of robust democracy. Council acknowledges that targeted assistance may be required to enable emerging communities, or those disadvantaged by location, to express their own culture, assert their own preferences and establish themselves as positive contributors to the wider culture. Recent research undertaken by Council suggests that Indigenous people, young people and residents of the Bay Islands are among those that warrant such a pro-active approach. With a rapidly growing population special efforts need to be made to ensure that new arrivals to the Redlands have equal access to the City facilities, resources and opportunities as well established residents.





Colonisation and immigration

Captain Cook sighted and named Point Lookout on his historic voyage on the Endeavour in 1770. Some local researchers speculate that a Spanish galleon explored the territory (and sank) off Stradbroke Island even earlier than this. Either way, colonisation of the continent heralded the arrival in the Redlands of large numbers of immigrants during the past two centuries. They were boat people; they came from England, Ireland, Scotland, the South Sea Islands, the Philippines, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, India and South Africa. In their luggage and in their hearts the settlers (indentured labourers in the case of Kanakas) carried their culture with them to form the multicultural community that the Redlands is today. This rich heritage is an important part of what makes the Redlands distinctive, and is itself a great cultural asset.



The wreck of the 'Toondah', Cassim Island, courtesy Alan Rogers

Indigenous cultural heritage

No discussion about Redlands culture is complete without acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners and Elders of the land and waters of the region. A unique element of the city's culture is the living heritage of the people of Quandamooka (Moreton Bay region) – one of the oldest living cultures in the world. For at least 21,000 years the Nughi, Nunukal and Gorenpul clans of Quandamooka have practised their unique culture here, sustaining the vitality and health of both their community and their environment as a direct result. This culture's survival against extraordinary odds since European settlement is remarkable.

Today the local Indigenous community continues to confront tremendous challenges as it struggles for recognition of fundamental cultural and native title rights. Increased knowledge of the cultural heritage of the Quandamooka people and support for their efforts to sustain and develop it is a key goal of this cultural plan. On the advice of local Indigenous community leaders and representative organisations Council can invest in a positive future for the local Indigenous community, especially on North Stradbroke Island (Minjerrabah) by supporting the preservation and sharing of Quandamooka language, stories, songs, dances, traditions and knowledge, and integrating these into social, land and economic planning, and community celebrations.



Yulu Burri Ba dancers welcome Council and Government representatives to a formal presentation of the Quandamooka Aboriginal Community Plan in March 2008



Honoured elders, Uncle Pat and Aunty Margaret Iselin

The traditional Quandamooka estate includes Moorgumpin (Moreton Island), Minjerrabah (North Stradbroke Island), part of South Stradbroke Island, part of the mainland from the Brisbane River south to the Logan River, the smaller Bay Islands and the majority of Moreton Bay in south east Queensland. Local Traditional Owners and Indigenous people from other parts of Queensland make up the diverse Indigenous community of the Redlands today. Their history and their contemporary experience is a very significant part of Redlands culture but is relatively unknown by most residents and visitors. To address this gap, and sustain local momentum for the national reconciliation agenda, Council seeks to strengthen its relationship with local elders, Quandamooka representative bodies and arts organisations.

A proposed Minjerrabah Knowledge Centre at Dunwich is part of Council's 10 Year Library Plan, launched in July this year. Effective dialogue between Council and local Indigenous organisations will be crucial to articulating a vision and a practical plan to establish the centre. With support from other local community and government bodies a lasting legacy for North Stradbroke Island that acknowledges and promotes a 21,000 year-old culture could be a reality. The benefits (in terms of tourism as well as cultural development) would be enjoyed by Indigenous and other residents and visitors for many years to come.

Along with the three Quandamooka clans who are acknowledged as the traditional owners of the Redlands, Council also recognises the Turbal people whose native title claims attach to a small portion of the Redlands.

PART 3 – COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The following comments are direct quotations from residents involved in consultations conducted in development of this plan. These views are representative of all those offered during focus groups and surveys. They reflect the strong support of residents and cultural groups for the ideas and directions in the 'Culture in the Redlands' discussion paper (reproduced here as Part 2 of this Plan).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Council gratefully acknowledges the local artists whose works appear in these pages. Many of these images reflect diverse perceptions of the Redlands and were presented as part of the Redland Art Gallery's Postcards of the Redlands exhibition in February 2008.

Thanks also to those who supplied photographs for this Plan: Redland Spring Festival, Chris Dew, Dept. of Sport, Recreation and Local Government,

"A strong cultural spirit is the foundation of a strong community."

"Culture in a community is a vibrant growth from within the community. It evolves as an expression of the interests and values of the community at large. It cannot be created externally as an add-on extra."

"I agree with the need to develop cultural policy initiatives in the City which are inclusive of all sections of the community to promote awareness and reconciliation."

"The role of volunteers in the democratic process and in community cultural development needs constant acknowledgement, nurturing and support."

"I think the cultural centre (performing arts centre) should be available at a reasonable cost to encourage professionals (not necessarily locals) to perform on a regular basis (approx 2-3 times annually) during week days for seniors' enjoyment."

"Formerly an educator, once education director of a children's museum and currently an active member of one of the Redlands cultural organizations, I have some insight into cultural vitality. I look forward to opportunities to make a contribution to this endeavour."

"My highest praise for this visionary and timely overture to the Redlands community on the broad scope of culture. You have framed the discussion beautifully, proposing a web that links all components of the community vertically and horizontally, past, present and future."

"I also support the endeavour to move some cultural events and emphasis to the southern end of the City and to the Bay Islands and Stradbroke – embracing Indigenous people and their particular issues and interests and – of special significance – new settlers in the Redlands."

"I look forward to witnessing how Redlands Council can become a forward moving, progressive city with a firm cultural direction and plan. As our region continues to develop, I hope we can match its growth to its requirement for community and culture relevance."



Community comments continued...

"While I generally agree with the analysis of key issues as a basis for Council's cultural planning I have some concerns about the separation of the environment 'nature' from 'culture'. I draw your attention to the aims of the Friends of Peel Island Association where the "historical and environmental" values are linked. Moreover the "indigenous culture" relates very strongly to the environment of the Island. Indeed there are some isolated spots on the island which have a very strong 'spiritual presence' which I would define as being culture'. I wonder if the new Redland Cultural statement could tie in nature/environment /culture as integral parts of the same thing."

"As an arts professional who has worked at an elite level for 20 years, and who has devoted much of the last decade to bettering the sector, this report highlights the only sustainable future. I wholeheartedly endorse this report."

"Culture is an extremely strong building block for the health and wellbeing of the community."