



## COMMUNITY VISION



'The future is not  
somewhere we are going,  
but something we are creating'

Prof. Ian Lowe

March 2009

## Who We Are

In 2009, 69,000 of us live in and call the Coffs Harbour area home. Some of us are Aboriginal descendants of the people who first inhabited this land. One in five of us was born overseas. We come from a huge range of countries covering the globe including eastern and western Europe, Asia, North, South and Central America, the Pacific Islands and Africa. We are of all ages and we live in a variety of ways - we live alone, in partnerships, as families; we live in towns, in villages and in rural areas.

Approximately 28,000 of us are working in some capacity (either part or full time). About 11,000 of us do voluntary work in some capacity. Our work is diverse. Many of us are involved in the provision of services and infrastructure that support our quality of life e.g. police, Council, teachers, health and community workers. Many others work in retail, trades, construction, tourism and primary industry.

Between us we have about 25,000 motor vehicles with the majority of households owning either one or two vehicles. Four out of five of us use a car to travel to work while a small number of us get to work walking and cycling. A tiny proportion of us currently travel to work by bus.

## What We Value

The natural environment in all its many aspects

Our natural environment sustains us. We value it as a place of beauty, a place to meet, a place to play and relax, a place of peace and tranquillity, a place of inspiration and spirituality. We value it for our mental and physical wellbeing and the sense of freedom that it gives us. We love its cleanness, the fresh, cool air and water, the open space and wide vistas that sustain and inspire us. We value our beaches, headlands, bush and national parks, our peaceful rural backdrop, our shady, cool forests, our clean waterways, fresh air and rich biodiversity. We love the way our mountains and forests descend to meet the sea. We love our comfortable climate and the outdoor lifestyle that it affords us.

*"I love the markets and festivals where local people offer their own creations!"*



*'I value the schools where our children feel engaged, challenged and confident to achieve their goals in life'*



### Arts, music and culture

We appreciate the emerging cultural opportunities in the area. We enjoy the multicultural events, festivals, local markets and music events. We value our libraries, Jetty Theatre, Botanic Gardens, Museum, Art Galleries and Conservatorium of Music. We believe that learning, experience, expression and celebration strengthen our community.

### Parks and open spaces

We value the parks and open spaces where we meet, talk, play and relax. We value safe places for our children including play grounds, cycleways and footpaths. We value our streetscape beautification with trees and flowers. In particular we value our harbour and foreshores spaces as a place for all to share and enjoy. We value our green corridors - especially Coffs Creek and the Botanic Gardens. We value the easy access to our beaches via footpaths and cyclepaths.

### Strong, connected communities

We value opportunities to meet people, volunteer, participate in community groups and activities and to work together. We value creativity, compassion, respect for each other and inter-generational and multi-cultural understanding. We value our community as a safe place. We value the many organisations and groups that give to our community. We value the right to have a say and to be involved.

### Rural areas

We value our peaceful rural areas - so close to the city and yet so peaceful, with clean running waterways and green vistas. We value the local produce that our rural areas yield as well as the potential they have for providing for us into the future. We value the individual identities of our hinterland and coastal villages and communities. We like the balanced mix of bush, farmland and coast.

### Our country culture with city infrastructure

We value the services and facilities that Coffs Harbour as a regional centre offers us - our health campus, our shops and businesses, our education campus, our schools, our sports and leisure facilities and our airport. Just about everything we need is here yet we have an economy with a low environmental footprint. We enjoy the balance that the city offers - it's big enough to meet our needs but retains a small town feel with a friendly, laid back pace. We value the existing low-rise development profile which we see as in keeping with the natural beauty of the area. We value the opportunities that Coffs Harbour offers to plan and develop sustainably into the future.

*'The fresh air we breathe'*







# Our Vision

**Coffs Harbour is a model of sustainable living.**

**We value, respect and protect our natural environment and acknowledge that it sustains us and future generations.**

**We work together to live sustainably.**

**We have respect for, and learn from, our diverse communities of many ages and cultures.**

**We are healthy, caring and actively engaged in our communities.**

**We move around safely, easily and sustainably.**

**Our economy is strong and diverse and our businesses are leaders in innovation and sustainability.**

**We value all people and use the goodwill in our community to build a better future for our children.**

**We think globally and act locally.**



‘We could be a great place to show off sustainability and low-impact living’

‘A place that is renowned for eco-tourism, cultural arts and a major centre for environmental industry...’



Orara Primary School

‘A beautiful environmentally self-sustaining city. The Green City’



Angel



creative art competition winners

‘Coffs - a city that has a strong sense of self’



Tamika Skinner

‘Coffs - a showcase in sustainability, healthy living and productivity’



Erika Goines







## Learning and Prospering

We are a prosperous and learning community

*‘We will promote and encourage green / sustainable business and industry’*

### Key outcomes for 2030

We are recognised as a model of sustainable business and industry with a strong and diverse local economy

Our young people now work, live and study here. We have a range of diverse and rewarding employment options. Our businesses and industries are futures driven, smart, innovative and green. We value our strong and diverse economy and the markets we have developed around renewable energy, local produce, sustainable tourism and clean industry.

We have a lively and diverse city centre

Our city centre is lively and diverse with a balanced mix of retail and residential. We have many spaces for people to meet, relax and interact. Our city retail areas are inter-linked with a frequent and affordable public transport system.

We have excellent education and lifelong learning opportunities that reflect our community values

We are recognised as a centre of excellence for sustainable living. We have strong social capital and share our knowledge, skills and history. Our education systems link strongly to the community and business. We value and employ the knowledge of our older people and the aspirations and enthusiasm of our young people.

*‘I imagine a centre for excellence in green and clean technology’*

*‘Open up our hinterland to more opportunities including tourism and agricultural pursuits’*

*‘Children have the opportunity to be well educated’*



*‘A city with clever, diverse and balanced planning - a green city full of trees and open spaces’*

## Places for Living



Our built environment connects us and supports us in living sustainably

### Key outcomes for 2030

**We have designed our built environment for sustainable living**

The buildings that we live and work in are beautiful and sustainable. There is a diverse range of housing options with affordability for all. Development is sustainable, accessible and people-friendly with compact urban areas and public transport hubs. We use innovative planning to protect our natural environment. Our coastal development is low-rise, balanced and sensitive. We generate our own renewable energy.

**We have created, through our urban spaces, a strong sense of community, identity and place**

Through innovative development we have created beautiful, liveable and accessible spaces for all our people. We have safe and interactive play facilities for our children within each community. We have facilities and spaces for our youth, elderly and disadvantaged where they can meet and have fun. Our open spaces and parks are protected, improved and expanded. Our harbour is an inviting, vibrant place that provides a focal point for our city and people.

**We have vibrant rural communities**

Our rural villages are revitalised while maintaining their unique rural identity. Each has the facilities needed to help maintain the strength of the local community. Our hinterland villages support a strong tourism base that has developed around local produce, arts, culture and nature experiences.

*‘A friendly, beautiful natural environment with plenty of open space for the casual living we enjoy’*

*‘A place where people have time to chat and enjoy their lives’*

*‘Sustainable buildings that complement the area, as if an extension of the mountains or a glistening remnant of the ocean’*





## Moving Around

*‘The hinterland linked with the coast by way of light rail’*

We are moving around easily, safely and sustainably

### Key outcomes for 2030

We make the best use of an excellent, environmentally-friendly public transport system

We have an integrated network of accessible and environmentally-friendly public transport, consisting of a mix of buses and light rail connecting urban centres and rural villages. The upgraded North Coast rail line has taken freight off our roads and offers high speed services to both Sydney and Brisbane as well as local commuter services between our coastal and rural communities.

Many of us walk and cycle from place to place

We have a system of safe, maintained, well-lit (solar) and well-signed footpaths and cycleways throughout our urban, suburban and rural areas. We have a system of walking tracks that link our villages to each other and our urban areas.

We are well connected to each other and services

Our urban areas are linked via a system of affordable public transport, cycle and path ways. We have a system of well-maintained roads with clear directional signage. Large trucks no longer pass through our communities; this has made our local roads safer and helped to reconnect us. Our people are valued over cars in all our developments and urban centres.

*‘An efficient public transport system using a combination of buses and light rail’*



*‘Less reliance on cars’*

*‘A network of bicycle tracks and footpaths everywhere that allow people to travel across their community’*







# Looking After Our Community

*‘A wonderful mix of people who are proud to call Coffs Harbour home’*

Our communities are healthy, informed and engaged

## Key outcomes for 2030

**We are healthy and strong**

We have strong local pride and identity. We pursue healthy lifestyles and our health and special care services and facilities are comprehensive and accessible to all. We are resilient and independent. Our indigenous communities are strong, proud and self-reliant. Our communities are safe, caring and inclusive.

**We are engaged and connected and work together to live sustainably**

We are a caring and connected community with strong intergenerational communication and understanding. We actively work together to share our skills and to collaboratively deliver a better future for our children. We value our children and young people and offer them all the facilities and services they need in order to achieve their full potential.

**We enjoy a comprehensive range of community, artistic and cultural opportunities**

We are a diverse community with access to a range of options for artistic and cultural expression and entertainment. We enjoy celebrating and having fun together through our many community events. We value and understand our indigenous and cultural heritage. We make good use of a range of recreational opportunities

*‘Providing all services necessary to all children to achieve their potential’*



*‘Community gardens within developed areas where we can grow healthy food’*

*‘Our youth have an array of activities, education choices and sense of community’*



# Looking After Our Environment

Our natural environment is protected and conserved for future generations

*'Respect for people, wildlife and nature'*

## Key outcomes for 2030

We understand and value our unique natural environment and its cultural connections

We are active ambassadors for our environment and we share our skills and knowledge. We understand Coffs Harbour's indigenous culture and its links to the land. There are many opportunities for nature experiences and learning through improved access to natural areas via a network of walking and cycle tracks through our coastal and hinterland parks and reserves.

We protect and restore our environment to conserve its unique biodiversity for future generations

Our forests, beaches, headlands, forested mountain backdrop, plants and animals are preserved for future generations. We manage our catchments holistically to maintain healthy and resilient ecosystems including our land, our air and our water. We maintain and conserve our flora and fauna through a protected, connected network of well-managed corridors and reserve systems.

We manage our resources and development sustainably

We are responsible in the use and management of our natural resources. We strive to minimise our environmental footprint through our everyday actions. We use our land in a long-term, sustainable way and implement best practice in reducing development impacts on our environment. We are independent in our energy production using efficient, renewable sources of power.

*'I hope that Coffs Harbour would always maintain being a region of ecological diversity and an area known for its natural beauty'*

*'I imagine that Coffs Harbour will be totally sourced by renewable energy'*







# Realising Our Community Vision 2030

*‘I would like to see Coffs become a world leader and benchmark for sustainable development and living’*

Development of the Community Vision 2030 is only the first step in a long process to move the Coffs Harbour area towards a sustainable future. Making our vision a reality requires the involvement of everyone who lives, works and plays in our area. Council alone cannot achieve the Community Vision 2030, and the involvement of residents, businesses, community groups, organisations and all levels of government is important in ensuring that the vision is achieved.

If you or your organisation, community group or committee want to help to deliver the vision then consider ideas and projects you could undertake to achieve our community's aspirations.

Talk to your local Councillor about the Coffs Harbour Community Vision and activities happening in your area.

We look forward to working in partnership with our community to ensure that Coffs Harbour is a great place to be, now and in the future.



This Community Vision was developed from July – November 2008 through a series of community-based activities including a questionnaire, community workshops, a random telephone survey and a creative arts competition. Quotes in this document are taken from the visions given to us in the community questionnaire.

The Community Vision 2030 Background Paper documents the process in detail and can be found at [www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/coffsharbour2030](http://www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/coffsharbour2030)

We extend our sincere gratitude to all those community members who have shared their vision for a sustainable future for Coffs Harbour. We also thank the many people within Coffs Harbour City Council who have been involved in some way in developing our Community Vision 2030.



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