

Community

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025 – 2035





Acknowledgement of Country

We at Charters Towers Regional Council acknowledge the First Nations people of the land on which Charters Towers and its greater region are located, and where we conduct our business. We pay respect to their Elders past and present.

We are committed to a positive future for all.

Document approved by Council: 16 April 2025

Council would like to thank all those members of the community and Council staff who kindly gave their time to provide input into the development of this Strategy through the consultation process.

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Message from the *Mayor & Councillors*

The creation of this Plan was shaped by meaningful engagement and consultation with residents from across the region, ensuring it truly reflects the needs, aspirations, and priorities of the diverse communities we serve. By listening to the voices of our community, we have sought to build a Community Strategic Plan (CSP) that is not only representative but also responsive to the unique challenges and opportunities within our region.

This Plan acknowledges the crucial role of Council in driving and facilitating the goals outlined within it, as well as recognising that achieving these goals requires a collective effort. Collaborative partnerships with state agencies, local businesses, industry groups, community organisations, and individuals are vital to transforming aspirations into tangible outcomes. This shared responsibility reinforces the idea that success is not achieved in isolation but through cooperation and unity across all sectors.

Our region has faced considerable challenges in recent years, including the profound and ongoing impacts of events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These events have altered the social, economic, and environmental landscape of our communities, necessitating a re-evaluation of priorities and approaches. Despite these disruptions, our commitment to building a brighter future for the region remains unwavering.

This Plan places a strong emphasis on the power of partnerships, proactive advocacy, and seamless coordination across all levels of government. By strengthening these relationships, we aim to create an environment where individuals, families, and businesses can thrive, ensuring that our communities are resilient, vibrant, and prepared to meet future challenges head-on.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the many community members who contributed their time, perspectives, and expertise throughout this process. Their valuable insights have been instrumental in identifying the key challenges, opportunities, and priorities that will shape the future of our region. Community input is the cornerstone of this Plan, ensuring it remains dynamic and reflective of the evolving needs and aspirations of our diverse population. Through this Plan, we are setting the groundwork for a strong, inclusive, and prosperous future for all.



Mayor
Liz Schmidt



Deputy Mayor
Kate Hastie



Councillor
Alan Barr



Councillor
Kim Farmer



Councillor
Graham Lohmann



Councillor
Julie Mathews



Councillor
Steven Plant



Our Vision

We are a council that is committed to the continuous improvement and sustainable future of our region and our communities.

Our Community

The Charters Towers region is located to the south west of Townsville, covers approximately 68,580 km², and is intersected by two major highways: the Flinders Highway and the Gregory Developmental Road. This strategic intersection provides access to both the Great Barrier Reef to the east, the rugged inland regions to the west, and key transport routes connecting Queensland to the north and south.

Charters Towers, a historic town that rose to prominence during the 1870s gold rush, serves as a hub for the region while promoting the region's rich heritage in well-preserved colonial architecture that showcases its golden past. Surrounded by picturesque landscapes, the town offers opportunities for outdoor adventures, including exploring the Burdekin River, hiking, and stargazing in the expansive outback skies.

The region's economy is driven by key industries that include mining, agriculture (particularly the lively cattle industry), healthcare/social assistance, and education. Together, these industries underpin a robust tourism sector that sees large numbers of tourists and visitors drawn to the region.



POPULATION

12,013



2013 AVE AGE

41.3



MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE

\$260,000



EMPLOYMENT

5,316



UNEMPLOYMENT

4.8%



AVE WEEKLY RENTAL

\$357

TOP EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES



Mining

GRP \$369.9M, FTE 899



**Agriculture, Forestry
& Fishing**

GRP \$144.9M, FTE 476



**Healthcare & Social
Assistance**

GRP \$65.8M, FTE 702



Education & Training

GRP \$64.7M, FTE 864

Our Plan

About our Plan

The Charters Towers Regional Council Community Strategic Plan informs the direction and priorities of Council and defines the commitments and outcomes that Council intends to achieve and outlines action areas to deliver.

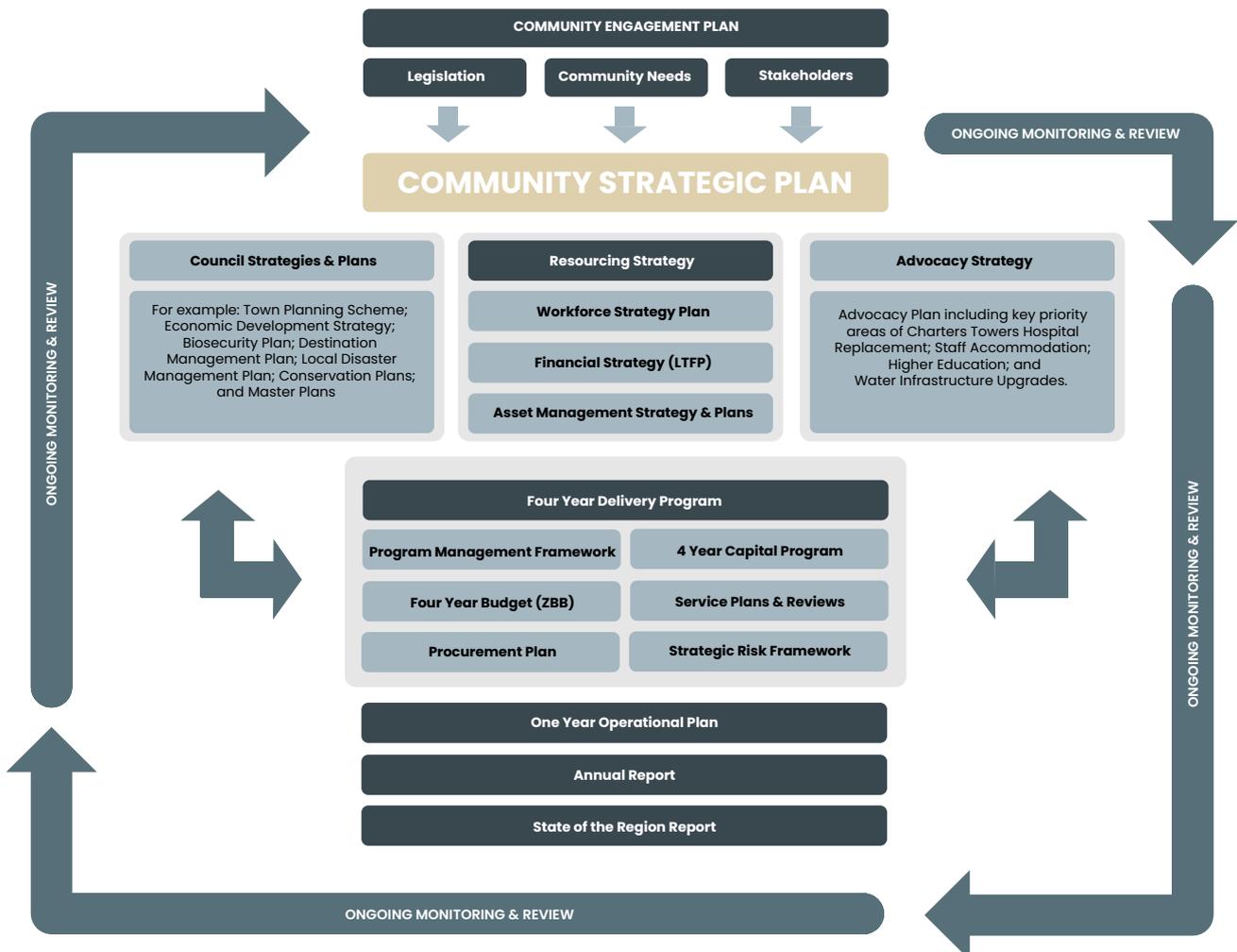
It captures Council's decision-making processes and accountability, as well as our community priorities, relating to service delivery, assets, programs, partnerships and the economy. The Plan forms part of Council's Integrated Planning, Performance & Reporting Framework. The Framework is premised on the basis that all Council planning should originate from a robust understanding of the community's expectations around key priorities and service levels.

The fundamental documents used to inform this Plan include Charters Towers Regional Council's Advocacy Plan 2025, Economic Development Strategy 2025 - 2030, Destination Management Plan 2025-2030, Flying-fox Management Plan, and Waste Management Strategy.

Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework

An integrated approach to planning and reporting is required under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework set out in the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

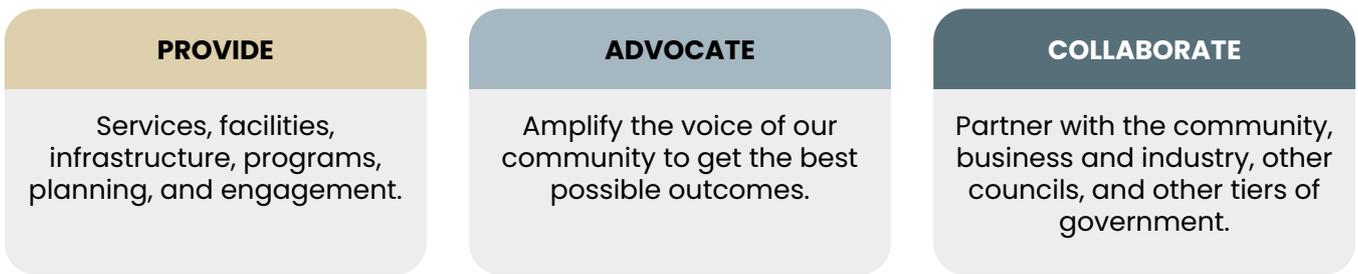
This framework requires that Council develop a series of plans, strategies, and reports linked to the community vision and priorities set out in the CSP. The Community Strategic Plan is based on the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.



Council's *Role*

Guided by the strategic direction set by the community's elected representatives, Council officers oversee and manage the operations of the organisation.

Under the *Local Government Act 2009*, Council has a duty to ensure the system of local government is accountable, effective and efficient.



Council plays a crucial role in governing and managing a community, ensuring that local services, infrastructure, and policies align with the needs of residents and for making decisions on key issues such as urban planning, public safety, environmental sustainability, and economic development. By setting budgets and regulations, Council helps to improve the overall quality of life within their jurisdiction.

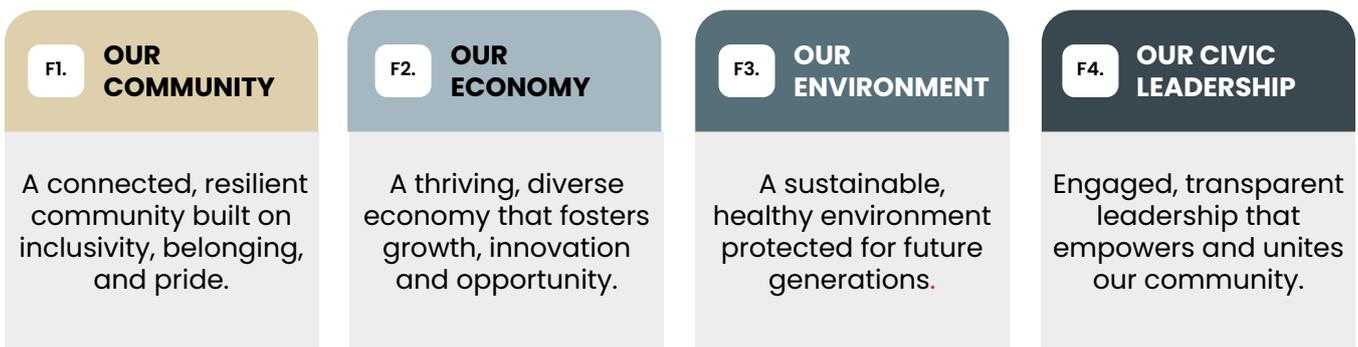
Beyond administration, Council serves as a link between the community and higher levels of government, advocating for funding and support on behalf of residents.

Council is committed to the continuous improvement and sustainable future of our region and our communities.

Whilst Charters Towers Regional Council takes the lead as the preparer and custodian of the Community Strategic Plan, all levels of government, businesses, industry groups, community groups and individuals will share the responsibility for achieving our long-term goals.

Our *Focus*

Council's 2025 - 2035 Community Strategic Plan focuses on four (4) themes and corresponding strategic objectives to help achieve our vision.



Community *Engagement*

Participation

Community members from throughout the Charters Towers Region participated in the first stage of community engagement from 19 November 2024 to 13 December 2024. Thoughts and opinions were sought and provided via facilitated workshops held in Charters Towers and the smaller townships, as well as via a survey which received 119 individual responses (equating to approximately 1% of the region's population).

Strengths

The relaxed and safe lifestyle, enhanced by the area's family friendly atmosphere and ideal location, was highly valued. The rich culture and strong community spirit, underpinned by a close-knit social fabric and a celebration of arts and heritage, stood out. The beauty of the natural environment, especially the cherished Burdekin River, along with plentiful outdoor recreation and leisure opportunities, are also celebrated as a cornerstone of life in the Region.

Challenges

Community feedback has identified several challenges within the Region. The rising cost of living is a concern, with increases in the prices of groceries, utilities, and the stress associated with rentals and mortgages. Infrastructure needs are pressing, particularly regarding water management and the maintenance of roads and footpaths. There's a crucial need to retain and support the youth through employment, training, and engaging services. Additionally, the housing market poses challenges in terms of supply, availability, diversity, and affordability, affecting the Region's ability to attract and retain residents.

Where *From*

61.9%
Charters Towers

9.3%
Hervey Range

8.5%
Greenvale

8.5%
Ravenswood

5.9%
Pentland

2.5%
Homestead

3.4%
Other

Survey Participants

119 survey
responses
received (online
or hardcopy)



Their *Age*

26.9%
56-65

22.7%
46-55

19.3%
36-45

16.0%
66-75

9.2%
26-35

4.2%
76-85

0.8%
19-25

0.8%
86+

Our *Objectives*

The strategic objectives outlined in this Plan are designed to drive our community toward a prosperous and sustainable future.

While also aligning with a range of existing Queensland and Australian Government strategies and priorities (including North Queensland Regional Plan, Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, NQ Regional Transport Plan, White Paper on Developing Northern Australia, and North Australia: Targeted Growth), we aim to achieve our vision.

Measuring *Success*

The Community Strategic Plan is monitored through reporting in the Operational Plan and Delivery Program.

Performance is measured through:

- On time satisfactory completion of the actions.

Effectiveness is measured through the achievement of:

- Stated outcomes sought.

Impact is measured through change in:

- Growth in Estimated Resident Population (ERP).
- Growth in Total Gross Regional Product (GRP).





Fl.

Our Community

A connected, resilient community built on inclusivity, belonging, and pride.

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F1.1</p> <p>High quality health services</p> <p>To maintain the Charters Towers Region as a vibrant and appealing place to live, it is essential to provide modern health and aged care.</p>	<p>F1.1.1 Advocate for the redevelopment of the Charters Towers Health Service and additional critical health services</p>	✓		Advocate for construction of a replacement hospital alongside Eventide Aged Care Facility
	<p>F1.1.2 Advocate for additional investment into aged care services</p>	✓	✓	Advocate for investment into Aged Care
<p>F1.2</p> <p>Celebrate our unique character, identity and history</p> <p>Once known as “The World” during its prosperous period in the late 19th century, Charters Towers and surrounding communities have significantly contributed to Australia’s development and have much to celebrate.</p>	<p>F1.2.1 Opportunities for community participation and connection to enable quality social cohesion across the Region</p>	✓	✓	Deliver a number of Council events across the Charters Towers Region
	<p>F1.2.2 Friends, family and visitors alike enjoy coming to and exploring the Region</p>	✓	✓	Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables
	<p>F1.2.3 Leverage and protect the unique history of the Charters Towers Region</p>	✓	✓	Review of the Town Planning Scheme, including local heritage
<p>F1.3</p> <p>Deliver high quality community facilities</p> <p>To attract new residents to the region, the Charters Towers Region needs to continually improve community facilities and services.</p>	<p>F1.3.1 Investment in quality play and active recreation opportunities that are accessible</p>	✓		Seek government funding to invest in improving existing public spaces that are inclusive of all ages and abilities.
	<p>F1.3.2 Visually appealing, inviting, and accessible public spaces</p>	✓	✓	Maintain existing public spaces to a high and accessible standard through a Maintenance Program for each of the following: Charters Towers, Greenvale, Hervey Range, Homestead, Pentland, and Ravenswood
<p>F1.4</p> <p>Strengthen partnerships and relationships within our community</p> <p>We will diligently enhance collaborations and connections with organisations and groups in our community to advance the cultural, social, environmental, and economic goals of elderly, youth, and indigenous community members.</p>	<p>F1.4.1 Community engagement will be inclusive and designed to reach diverse communities</p>	✓	✓	Facilitate meaningful and effective community engagement that is inclusive across the entire region
	<p>F1.4.2 Communities actively participate in decision making processes</p>	✓	✓	Continue to develop community participation in Council advisory committees, surveys, Have Your Say portal and feedback sessions



Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 - 5 Years	6 - 10 Years	Council's Role
F1.4 Strengthen partnerships and relationships within our community (Continued)	F1.4.3 Young people are supported to develop as future civic leaders	✓	✓	Facilitate the Charters Towers Youth Council
	F1.4.4 Everyone can participate, prosper and have access to opportunities that facilitate more equitable economic participation	✓	✓	Identify and remove barriers to economic, social, cultural participation and inclusion for hard to reach groups



F2.

Our Economy

A thriving, diverse economy that fosters growth, innovation and opportunity.

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F2.1</p> <p>Regional collaboration & advocacy</p> <p>Creating an environment that supports sustainable economic development.</p>	<p>F2.1.1 Increase regional collaboration</p>	✓		Strengthen partnerships with regional advocacy development organisations to deliver regionally significant projects
	<p>F2.1.2 Enhance stakeholder collaboration</p>	✓		Facilitate greater and meaningful engagement between Council, industry and community to deliver a united vision for the region
	<p>F2.1.3 Promote priorities</p>	✓		Establish Charters Towers as a regional leader by promoting its economic priorities, driving strategic initiatives, and advocating for the region's needs at state and federal levels
<p>F2.2</p> <p>Investment attraction & local business support</p> <p>To attract and develop new industries and support existing industries.</p>	<p>F2.2.1 Support small businesses</p>	✓		Foster the growth of existing businesses and encourage new startups by creating an environment that promotes innovation and entrepreneurship
	<p>F2.2.2 Attract investment</p>	✓		Promote key priorities and opportunities to attract investment from the private sector, but also the Queensland and Australian Governments. Create an environment that is attractive to external investors/businesses
	<p>F2.2.3 Foster tourism growth and investment</p>	✓		Foster growth for existing tourism related businesses and encourage new startups. Focus on increasing the length of stay of visitors and attracting new markets
<p>F2.3</p> <p>Infrastructure investment & planning</p> <p>Planning for future growth that supports and enables affordable housing and private investment.</p>	<p>F2.3.1 Effective planning</p>	✓		Align infrastructure planning with the region's growth priorities, focusing on transport, water security, digital connectivity, housing, and education to support existing and emerging industries
	<p>F2.3.2 Deliver enabling infrastructure</p>	✓		Expand and strengthen the region as a place to do business by facilitating the delivery of the required enabling infrastructure to support growth



Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F2.4</p> <p>Establish a clear vision and strategic goals for the region's visitor economy</p> <p>Ensure long-term success, resilience, and sustainability by leveraging the region's strengths, addressing challenges, and unlocking its potential as a premier tourism destination in Queensland.</p>	<p>F2.4.1 Foster a deep appreciation for creativity while driving economic growth and community pride</p>	✓		Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables
	<p>F2.4.2 Strengthen the core infrastructure and capabilities of the tourism industry</p>	✓		Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables
	<p>F2.4.3 Showcase Charters Towers' distinctive character while supporting regional producers and fostering sustainable tourism</p>	✓		Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables
	<p>F2.4.4 Invite visitors to immerse themselves in the region's rich pastoral culture and capture the spirit of exploration and connection to the outback</p>	✓		Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables
	<p>F2.4.5 Celebrate Charters Towers' enduring connection to gold, bridging its historic legacy with ongoing and future mining operations</p>	✓		Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables
	<p>F2.4.6 Bring the rich history of Charters Towers to life, and tell stories of gold exploration, WWII aviation, and First Peoples' heritage</p>	✓		Deliver the Destination Management Plan action plan deliverables
<p>F2.5</p> <p>Additional Housing to Support Regional Migration</p> <p>To realise the economic opportunities in the region, a skilled and ready workforce is required. To grow this workforce, additional housing is needed to support migration of skilled and ready workers to our region.</p>	<p>F2.5.1 Development of broadhectare land into new residential areas</p>	✓		Identify suitable land developers and attract to the region
		✓		Identify unallocated State land for development and support conversion to freehold
	<p>F2.5.2 Construction of new houses to meet demand</p>	✓	✓	Identify suitable builders and attract to Charters Towers Region
		✓	✓	Identify and implement strategies that stimulate additional housing development, including fee and red tape reduction, expedited approvals and development incentives



Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F2.5</p> <p>Additional housing to support regional migration</p> <p>(Continued)</p>	<p>F2.5.3 More Council provided housing for employees reduces pressures on the private market</p>			<p>Advocate for funding to build four additional houses for Council employees</p>
	<p>F2.5.4 Increase in net migration (skilled labour)</p>			<p>Promote the lifestyle opportunities within the Charters Towers Region, including job opportunities, schooling, and recreational opportunities for youth</p>



Welcome to
**Dalrymple
National Park**
Traditional homeland of the Kujala people
This park protects our natural and cultural heritage.
Please take care and enjoy.

F3.

Our Environment

**A sustainable, healthy environment
protected for future generations.**

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F3.1</p> <p>Sustainably develop natural resources</p> <p>The Charters Towers Region is home to considerable natural resources that can be sustainably developed.</p>	<p>F3.1.1 Additional water allocation from the Burdekin River</p>	✓		Advocate for the release of additional water allocation from the Burdekin River
	<p>F3.1.2 Barriers to developing good quality agricultural land are overcome</p>	✓		Advocate for removal of restrictions on developing good quality agricultural land
	<p>F3.1.3 Barriers to developing eco-tourism in National Parks are overcome</p>	✓		Advocate for removal of restrictions on eco-tourism in National Parks
<p>F3.2</p> <p>Manage issues associated with flying-fox roosts within the local government area</p> <p>Reduce impacts on residents and habitat associated with flying-fox roosts in the Charters Towers LGA while being considerate of approvals potentially required, site values, and in accordance with legislation.</p>	<p>F3.2.1 Clearly define roles and responsibilities for management actions</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan
	<p>F3.2.2 Minimise community impacts and avoid future conflict</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan
	<p>F3.2.3 Support ways for the community to co-exist with flying-foxes</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan
	<p>F3.2.4 Ensure actions are in accordance with relevant legislation</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan
	<p>F3.2.5 Improve community understanding and appreciation of flying-foxes</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan
	<p>F3.2.6 Conserve flying-foxes and their habitat</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Flying-fox Management Plan
<p>F3.3</p> <p>Provide a strategic direction for the management of invasive plants and animals</p> <p>Minimise the impact of invasive plants and animals on the environment, the economy, human safety and social amenity.</p>	<p>F3.3.1 Increase public knowledge of invasive plant and animal management</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan
	<p>F3.3.2 Take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent or minimise a biosecurity risk</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan
	<p>F3.3.3 Prevent expansion of invasive plant and animal distributions</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan
	<p>F3.3.4 Determine the level of risk from invasive biosecurity matter</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan
	<p>F3.3.5 Advocate best practice management wherever possible</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan
	<p>F3.3.6 Regularly reassess and update management practices</p>	✓	✓	Implement actions of the Biosecurity Plan



The Discovery diaries

What became of Discovery:

TOWERS HILL

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F3.4</p> <p>Maximising renewable energy opportunities</p> <p>The Charters Towers Region is home to considerable high quality renewable energy opportunities, including solar, wind, and pumped hydro.</p>	<p>F3.4.1 Town Planning Scheme supports renewable energy products</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Facilitate efficient and effective planning approvals to support the implementation of renewable energy projects</p>
<p>F3.5</p> <p>Effective waste management</p> <p>Improve waste management in the region.</p>	<p>F3.5.1 Reduce waste to landfill</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy</p>
	<p>F3.5.2 Sustainable waste management</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy</p>
	<p>F3.5.3 Regional market development and circular economy</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy</p>
	<p>F3.5.4 Bring the community on the journey</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Deliver actions of the Waste Management Strategy</p>

The image shows the exterior of a modern building with a curved wooden slat roof. A prominent red banner with white text reads "CHARTERS TOWERS REGIONAL COUNCIL". Below the banner is a large glass entrance. The scene is set outdoors with greenery and a clear sky.

CHARTERS TOWERS REGIONAL COUNCIL

F4.

Our Civic Leadership

Engaged, transparent leadership that empowers and unites our community.

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F4.1</p> <p>Transparent and accountable processes and decision-making</p> <p>Transparency, accountability, and confidence in Council's decision making is central to building and maintaining our social license with our community.</p>	<p>F4.1.1 High community and external stakeholder awareness of Council's priorities and strategies</p>	✓	✓	Actively include and incorporate community feedback and consultation in Council decision-making processes
	<p>F4.1.2 Our decision-making, asset management and service delivery structures are understandable and accessible to all members of the community</p>	✓	✓	Continually improve administrative release of information on day-to-day Council activities and achievements, strategic and operational goals, and progress in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy
	<p>F4.1.3 The community is empowered to approach Council to discuss emerging and known issues</p>	✓	✓	Continually improve accessibility to Council information
		✓	✓	Annual Community Meetings will be hosted in townships to ensure regional communities feel empowered to discuss emerging and known issues in a face to face setting
<p>F4.1.4 Asset Management will be prioritised across all Council assets</p>	✓	✓	Provide a consistent approach to asset management across the region	
<p>F4.2</p> <p>People first customer service</p> <p>Putting the needs of our customers at the forefront of our service delivery will ensure community satisfaction.</p>	<p>F4.2.1 Best quality services delivered to residents across the region</p>	✓	✓	Provide a consistent, knowledgeable and professional customer experience
	<p>F4.2.2 Customer satisfaction with their interactions with Council</p>	✓	✓	Undertake biannual Community Satisfaction Surveys
	<p>F4.2.3 Council has the right people, with the right skills, doing the right jobs at the right time, to deliver the services expected by the community</p>	✓	✓	Implement Charters Towers Regional Council's Workforce Strategy Plan



Strategic Objectives	Strategies	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	Council's Role
<p>F4.3</p> <p>Long-term financial sustainability</p> <p>Council needs to ensure its long-term financial sustainability to provide the services our community expects both now and into the future.</p>	<p>F4.3.1 Adequate, secure funding from the Queensland and Australian Governments to deliver needed community services</p>			<p>Advocate for appropriate funding support from the Queensland and Australian Governments (such as restoring Financial Assistance Grants to 1% of commonwealth taxation revenue)</p>
	<p>F4.3.2 Growth in the region's rate base to support additional service delivery</p>			<p>Promote liveability and affordability of the Charters Towers Region</p>
<p>F4.4</p> <p>Innovation in service delivery</p> <p>Innovation is more than just implementing new ideas, its about how we can improve efficiency and quality of service delivery to our local community.</p>	<p>F4.4.1 Improved data collection for decision making</p>			<p>Invest in systems to digitise the collection of data across all Council services</p>
	<p>F4.4.2 New technologies change the way Council does its business, increasing productivity</p>			<p>Identify and implement new and existing technology opportunities</p>
	<p>F4.4.3 Residents can access Council services in more convenient ways, improving service delivery</p>			<p>Identify and implement new and existing technology opportunities such as online booking and payment systems and community engagement tools</p>







CHARTERS TOWERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Community Strategic Plan

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