



DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

# OPERATIONAL PLAN 2023-2024



## Introduction

Douglas Shire Council's Annual Operational Plan 2023-2024 provides the operational focus that will guide the organisation to deliver the Corporate Plan 2019-2024 objectives and work towards realising the shared vision for the Shire's future.

The Operational Plan provides the framework to support the organisation to operationalise the goals of the Corporate Plan by setting out the specific activities, timelines and measures, which helps to maintain focus and provide transparency as the Council progresses the delivery of the Operational Plan objectives.

The operational activities are aligned with the themes as outlined in the Corporate Plan. These themes reflect the vision, provide the areas of focus and direct the strategic direction for Council's planning and service delivery. There are five themes:

- Celebrating our Communities
- Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth
- Leading Environmental Stewardship
- Inclusive Engagement, Planning and Partnership
- Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery

## Executive Summary

Douglas Shire Council's Annual Operational Plan 2023-2024 has been developed in alignment with the themes and areas of focus of the Corporate Plan 2019-2024, as required by section 175 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*. Identified key strategic projects and services are also incorporated into this Operational Plan.

Each of the key objectives has defined key performance indicators, to facilitate a process for the measurement of the Council's performance against its key objectives.

Progress against the delivery of the objectives outlined in this plan is reported regularly throughout the year to Council and the community via quarterly performance reports and the Annual Report.

## Planning

The Operational Plan is a key component of the Council's strategic planning framework and should be

considered in conjunction with other planning documents, including the long-term financial forecast, annual budget, and corporate reporting.

## Risk Management

Council is committed to implementing a systematic risk management methodology that identifies and addresses areas of potential risk within the Council in a manner that is consistent with Australian Standards. Effective risk management is governed by an Enterprise Risk Management Framework that establishes the relationship between Council's various risk management components and processes.

A key element of the Risk Management Framework is Council's Risk Register. This register details how significant risks to the organisation are described, assessed, and managed. It is maintained in accordance with Council's Risk Management Policy and the Enterprise Risk Management Guidelines.

Corporate and strategic risks are reviewed on a quarterly basis in alignment with the nominated review dates. Operational risks are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and escalated where appropriate.

## Planning and Performance Reviews

The Douglas Shire Council's Planning Strategy, supporting the Vision, Corporate Plan, Operational Plan and Budget is the council's Planning and Performance Review Process. Management Strategy meetings are held fortnightly and set out the monthly planning work to be performed.

- Yearly review of the Corporate Plan outcomes to ensure the Council is working to deliver the Vision and that the Vision hasn't changed due to changes in the community.
- Chief Executive Officer quarterly reporting to Council on the performance of the implementation and progression of the Operational Plan.

The Planning Framework ensures Council doesn't lose sight of the Vision for the future and illustrates, to staff, Councillors and the Douglas community, our commitment to delivering the Plan.



### Theme 1 - Celebrating Our Communities

Douglas Shire Council embraces the diversity of our communities and values the contribution that all people make to the Shire. We recognise that it is a core strength of the region. We acknowledge our past so that it may guide us into the future. We recognise the wrongs done to our Indigenous community and we actively seek to reconcile so that we may all benefit from and enjoy our Shire. We acknowledge early European settlers who forged an agricultural base for our economy, and we welcome all new arrivals as part of our broader community.

Goal 1: We will celebrate the diversity of our community and ensure that all infrastructure, programs, and services are underpinned with inclusiveness and accessibility.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Reconciliation Action Plan	Reconciliation Action Plan to be finalised and adopted.	Stage 1: Reflect RAP adopted by Council.	People and Community Services	1.1.1	Develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan.
Victor Crees Pavilion	On completion of design, seek grant funding.	Grant submission made if funding opportunities arise.	People and Community Services	1.1.7	Implement the community facilities revitalisation program.
Mossman Shire Hall	Council will continue to seek funding for improvements of the Mossman Shire Hall.	Grant submission made if funding opportunities arise.	Infrastructure	1.1.7	Implement the community facilities revitalisation program.
Indigenous Business Program	Implement an external indigenous consultative committee that works with council on opportunities such as social enterprise, employment, health outcomes, cultural programs, art, youth and sport for First Nations Peoples in the Shire.	1. Establishment of the Committee 2. Terms of Reference 3. Meetings have commenced	People and Community Services	1.1.8	Continue support for the expression of indigenous culture throughout Douglas.
Goal 2: We will deliver programs and services that protect and enhance the liveability of our beautiful Shire.					
All Corporate Plan Initiatives have been completed for Theme 1, Goal 2					
Goal 3: We will develop programs that promote health, well-being, and safety in the community.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Active8 Club Development Program	Following the approval of the Sports and Recreation Strategy, deliver three initiatives from the Sports and Recreation Strategy that enhance sport participation, active recreation, and promote wellbeing in the shire.	Enhanced sport participation, club development and healthy and active initiatives.	People and Community Services	1.3.1	Build capacity of sporting and recreation clubs and committee members in the Shire to enhance access for the community to engage in sport, recreation and healthy activities.
Sports and Recreation Strategy Actions	Undertake actions of the Sports Master Plan that will focus on improved facilities for shared use. Commence the implementation of the Sport, Recreation and Active Strategy for the Shire that articulates a set of themes and priority outcomes that will underpin initiatives, infrastructure and programs.	Sports and Recreation Strategy adopted by Council. Action Plan initiated.	People and Community Services	1.3.2	Develop a Sport and Recreation Strategy.

Goal 4: We will promote arts and culture programs and events that bring vibrancy to the community and compliment the tourist experience.

Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
All Corporate Plan Initiatives have been completed for Theme 1, Goal 4					

## Theme 2 - Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth

A robust economy is at the heart of a thriving community and enables investment in environmental protection. While our remoteness is a key attribute, it also presents challenges for attracting new business and investment. We must also meet the challenges of fierce competition in the tourism sector. Council will partner with industry to build, diversify and promote the Douglas economy. Council will design and deliver infrastructure, strategies and services that support the local economy and businesses.

Goal 1: We will build appropriate infrastructure and deliver services that connect and support businesses.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Continue to develop the Port Douglas Aquatic Precinct Water Park in Port Douglas	Dependent on results of community engagement, generate "shovel ready" documentation to enable State and Federal funding to be obtained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise the facility location</li> <li>Full suite of detailed documentation</li> </ul>	People and Community Services	2.1.2	Develop a master plan for a water park precinct in Port Douglas. Seek State and Federal grant funding to deliver the outcomes from the plan.
Continue to support and partner with the State for the development of the Wangetti Trail as this is a State Government project	Finalise infrastructure requirements, preferred route, and land tenure for the Mowbray North section.	Finalise requirements for Mowbray North.	Environment and Planning	2.1.3	Partner with State Government to deliver Phase 1 and 2 of the Wangetti Trail including assisting relevant Traditional Owners to realise employment and cultural ambitions supported by the Trail.
Infrastructure Improvements	Determine options for an enhanced service and commence design if necessary.	Selection of options and commencements of design activities if required.	Infrastructure	2.1.4	Implement the new Daintree Ferry Contract and required infrastructure improvements as well as enhanced amenity and service.
Decorative Lighting Stage 2 - Macrossan Street and Front Street	Continue decorative lighting installation within the trees along Macrossan Street from the Grant Street intersection through to Davidson Street and the 3 trees in Front Street, subject to Grant Funding sourced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding Identified</li> <li>Funding Sourced</li> <li>Lighting infrastructure installed if grant funding secured</li> </ul>	Infrastructure	2.1.6	Deliver Light Up Macrossan Street and Front Street projects.
Goal 2: We will work with partners to promote the Shire as the World's leading sustainable tropical destination and encourage business investment.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Investigate a Short-Term Accommodation Policy	Monitor ongoing investigation findings of short-term accommodation.	Report to Council.	Environment and Planning	2.2.2	Develop a short-term accommodation policy.
Goal 3: We will develop strategies that seek to diversify the Shire's economic base.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
All Corporate Plan Initiatives have been completed for Theme 2, Goal 3					

### Theme 3 - Leading Environmental Stewardship

Our visitors and residents deeply value the unparalleled environment in which we live. We recognise our responsibility in protecting and preserving our natural world for generations to come. We understand the strong link between the environment and the economy: they are interdependent. Douglas Shire will be at the forefront of environmental protection by developing strategies, setting policies, and working with all stakeholders to become the envy of and to inspire locations across Australia and the World.

Goal 1: We will protect our sensitive environment and plan for the impact of climate change.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Sustainable Waste Management at Events	Encourage sustainable practices at events, including supporting the culture of BYO reusables and provision of recycling bins where they are unavailable commercially. Review Plastics Policy.	Report to Council.	Environment and Planning	3.1.5	Develop and implement a Plastic Free Douglas strategy.
Plastic Free Places	Continue to participate in the Plastic Free Cairns and Douglas Program, managed by Boomerang Alliance and funded by the State Government, which assists businesses to reduce or eliminate single use plastic items from their supply chain.	New pilot program introduced "Choose to Reuse".	Environment and Planning	3.1.5	Develop and implement a Plastic Free Douglas strategy.
Goal 2: We will implement programs that reduce and offset our environmental footprint.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Reef Guardian Action Plan Theme	Implement 5 actions under the Reef Guardian Council Program.	Complete identified Reef Guardian actions in alignment with new Reef Guardian funding.	Environment and Planning	3.2.2	Undertake remaining actions in the 2017-2020 Corporate Sustainability Strategy and update it for the next five years.
Identification of future projects and sites within the Douglas Shire	Implement solar installation at Mossman WWTP, subject to approval of land purchase by State Government. Implement other renewable energy installations at Douglas Shire Council sites with highest power usage to reduce overall energy bills subject to successful grant funding applications.	Land purchase finalised and other sites identified.	Environment and Planning	3.2.3	Continue to develop renewable energy options for Council operations including a solar engineering study for Port Douglas Waste Water Treatment Plant.
Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan	Continue implementation of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan to reduce waste generation and increase resource recovery in Douglas.	Implementation of Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan.	Environment and Planning	3.2.4	Develop a Waste Strategy with the aim of moving towards a circular waste economy.
Far North Queensland Regional Resource Recovery Plan	Continue participation in regional collaboration for the development of a Far North Queensland Regional Resource Recovery Plan to identify opportunities to	Adoption of Far North Queensland Regional Resource Recovery Plan.	Environment and Planning	3.2.4	Develop a Waste Strategy with the aim of moving towards a circular waste economy.

	manage waste efficiently as a region.				
Illegal dumping program	Continue the illegal dumping program through a combination of education, investigation, and enforcement.	Decrease in illegal dumping.	Environment and Planning	3.2.4	Develop a Waste Strategy with the aim of moving towards a circular waste economy.
Far North Queensland Regional Resource Recovery Plan	Continue participation in regional collaboration for the development of a Far North Queensland Regional Resource Recovery Plan to identify opportunities to manage waste efficiently as a region.	Adoption of Far North Queensland Regional Resource Recovery Plan.	Environment and Planning	3.2.6	Investigate waste management options for waste streams in anticipation of the completion of the current Bedminster disposal contract in 2026.
<b>Goal 3: We will continue to build water infrastructure so that the Douglas Shire may enjoy water security and water quality.</b>					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Mossman River intake	Part of the Douglas Shire water security strategy. Progress the intake as a matter of urgency to avoid Rex Creek water licence exceedance by 2025/26.	Finalise design for Mossman River intake, Mossman WTP UV upgrade and Mossman WTP Hydroelectric scheme (if feasible) to progress project to shovel-ready status. Secure additional water licence on Mossman River. Purchase land from private landowners and State Government. Submit development application. Apply for grant funding.	Water and Wastewater	3.3.3	Continue to implement water intake resilience planning and upgrades to improve water security and quality for the community.
Water treatment process upgrades	Part of the Douglas Shire water security strategy. Phase 2 of ultrafiltration membrane replacement program to reduce losses during the treatment process and reduce chemical usage (OPEX costs).	Complete installation of the second phase of the membrane replacement program at Mossman WTP; Next phases to follow in subsequent years to include final phase of Mossman WTP followed by Whyanbeel and Daintree WTPs.	Water and Wastewater	3.3.4	Continue to provide high quality water to the residents of Douglas Shire inline with the DSC Drinking Water Quality Management Plan and regulatory requirements whilst implementing innovative solutions for process improvements.
Recycled Water	Part of the Douglas Shire water security strategy. Substitution of drinking water with Class A recycled water in Mossman Port Douglas water supply scheme.	Part of the Douglas Shire water security strategy. Substitution of drinking water with Class A recycled water in Mossman Port Douglas water supply scheme.	Water and Wastewater	3.3.5	Pursue opportunities to expand the use of recycled water from our wastewater treatment plants.

**Goal 4: We will partner with the community to educate and monitor.**

Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Waste Education	Development and implementation of Council's Waste Education Plan for schools, businesses and community groups.	Implementation of Waste Education Plan.	Environment and Planning	3.4.1	Implement a recycling and waste education campaign to increase recycling rates, reduce contamination and reduce waste to landfill.
Water Education	Part of the Douglas Shire water security. Continuation / development of the water education program and resources to support messaging for the Douglas Shire water security strategy.	Development of resources including the development of an Education Corner on the council's website for all education materials.	Water and Wastewater	3.4.3	Implement a water sustainability education program to inform the community, particularly school children, of the water cycle and how everyone utilises water and the impacts on the Reef from our water choices.
Recreational Fishing Trail	Implementation of recreational Fishing Trail.	Completion of Trail and promotion.	Environment and Planning	3.4.4	Conduct education and enforcement programs to protect our beachfront vegetation.
Monitoring and enforcement of developments for land-based sediment run off	Education program and dedicated compliance program undertaken. Review and update of standard development conditions in line with best practice.	Reduction in the reporting/investigation of sediment and erosion issues from development/home sites.	Environment and Planning	3.4.5	Conduct education and enforcement programs relating to water quality entering waterways and the GBR lagoon including sediment from the urban environment.

**Goal 5 - We will recognise the contribution that Traditional Owners make to the protection of the environment.**

Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
All Corporate Plan Initiatives have been completed for Theme 3, Goal 5					



### Theme 4 - Inclusive Engagement, Planning and Partnerships

In delivering for our communities, economy and environment, Douglas Shire will ensure open and transparent engagement and communication. We will develop robust strategic plans and we will partner with our community and key stakeholders.

Goal 1: We will implement transparent decision-making through inclusive community engagement and communication.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
All Corporate Plan Initiatives have been completed for Theme 4, Goal 1					
Goal 2: We will develop forward-looking strategies for the future of our communities, and we will ensure balanced and appropriate planning decisions.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Planning Scheme Amendments to align the Scheme with the Planning Act 2016 and improve the functionality of the Scheme	Planning Scheme Amendments to align the Scheme with the Planning Act 2016 and improve the functionality of the Scheme.	Gazettal of amendments.	Environment and Planning	4.2.4	Enhance existing Planning Scheme to promote investment while protecting the environment.
Goal 3: We will recognise the critical role that our partners play in planning and delivering vital programs and services.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Douglas Shire Housing Strategy	Continue to work with local service providers and all levels of government to find, advocate, and where appropriate, implement measures to address the housing shortage in Douglas.	Report to Council.	People and Community Services	N/A	N/A

## Theme 5 - Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery

Strong governance and financial management are the foundations of the way in which Council will conduct its business and implement the initiatives of the Corporate Plan.

Goal 1: We will conduct Council business in an open and transparent manner with strong oversight and open reporting.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
All Corporate Plan Initiatives have been completed for Theme 5, Goal 1					
Goal 2: We will put the customer at the centre of our service delivery and process improvement as we deliver efficient and appropriate services based on community expectations.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Develop online planning application service/Planning Register and Process Improvements	Improve processes including merging of planning application registers to improve efficiency for officers and provide better customer service. Develop and implement an online application process.	System improvement to ensure officers can provide an efficient service to developers and customers.	Environment and Planning	5.2.3	Implement a continuous improvement program.
Develop prescribed activities process including the online booking system and GIS layer	Develop and implement a process that includes an online booking system to record events and activities in open spaces and venues within the bounds of the local laws and other legislation and policies. Investigate implementing a GIS layer to record open space uses. It is anticipated that significant savings in wages will follow the introduction of a good system/s based on automation of some processes.	An overall program for the community and local businesses to have the ability to see open space and venue availability. A robust process will also ensure staff can provide an efficient service to the community.	Environment and Planning	5.2.3	Implement a continuous improvement program.
Develop an organisation culture strategy	This strategy will look at workplace planning, organisational culture, human resources strategies and policies.	Completion of Strategy and implementation of actions.	People and Community Services	5.2.4	Develop an organisational culture strategy.
Goal 3: We will recognise the critical role that our partners play in planning and delivering vital programs and services.					
Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Commence new certified agreement discussions	Negotiations for new certified agreement to begin in November 2023.	Report to Council.	People and Community Services	5.3.4	Implement a new Certified Agreement for Council.

**Goal 4: We will work with our communities to ensure they are informed, empowered and supported so that they are resilient to the impacts of disaster events.**

Operational Plan Initiative	Description	Target	Department	Corporate Plan Initiative	Corporate Plan Link
Enhance disaster management capacity	Pursue funding opportunities for a Local Disaster Coordination Centre and Training facility.	Funding identified and applied for.	Environment and Planning	5.4.1	Install new infrastructure throughout the Shire to allow for increased intelligence on rainfall, flood and transport impacts.
Support Inclusive and Resilient Communities	Development of a resilience strategy for the Douglas Shire Communities.	Delivery of final Strategy.	Environment and Planning	5.4.2	Investigate potential to implement Resilient Benchmarking across the Shire to better equip communities in environmental, social and economic challenges and enhance planning in hazard preparedness.