



DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL ARTS STRATEGY

2017-2021

Prepared by KickArts and The 20/20 Group

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL



KICK
CONTEMPORARY
ARTS

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Arts Strategy 2017-2021

Message from the Mayor

Art encompasses diverse avenues of expression covering visual arts, music, literature, performing arts, film, radio and television. It's about our ability to 'tell our story' - an essential and defining human characteristic.

Douglas Shire has many exceptional, national and international professionals working in the arts sector, and even more individuals and groups working behind the scenes, driving the development of arts.

The arts is a wonderful tool for engaging members of the community and can play a significant role in contributing to our overall health and wellbeing. It can assist people to contribute to their community in positive and active ways.

Councils are vital in not only enabling people, but encouraging them to participate in artistic expression. In a climate of expanding global homogeneity, local production and participation is increasingly important.

Douglas Shire Council can play a key role in delivering, funding, hosting, supporting and promoting the arts. This Arts Strategy outlines Council's commitment to the sector over the next five years.

It highlights a vision which promotes the arts as being accessible to everyone, demonstrates an investment in people, enables us to better tell our story and helps to recognise our heritage and make new stories.

Importantly, we would like to take the opportunity with this Arts Strategy to engage members of the community who think art is 'not their thing.'

I encourage everyone in the broader Douglas community, not just the artists, to tap into their imagination and make the time to appreciate the unique creativity of our artists to make living in this naturally stunning environment even more colourful and vibrant.

Mayor Julia Leu

Section One - Strategic Context

Introduction

Why an Arts Strategy?

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a clear vision and direction for Council to facilitate action and meet the creative aspirations of the Shire through collaboration and partnering. It is a way finder and should ensure creative pursuits enrich and enliven the lifestyle Douglas Shire is recognised for. The Strategy assists in building social and economic capital and community wellbeing. It provides Council with an understanding of the needs of the community and how to best meet the community's wishes to engage in creative pursuits in public and private realms.

The research undertaken in the process of developing the strategy reflects the diversity of arts and cultural practices undertaken daily across the Shire and determines the forward strategies for Council's medium-term engagement in the sector.

The Strategy is an evolving document and the intention is to review progress and relevance against the key performance indicators outlined in Section Three, reporting to Council annually. The timelines for the actions will be staged over the next five years under Council's Operational and Capital Works Plans when resources and capabilities allow.

What the Arts Strategy includes

Douglas Shire Council has adopted the Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications definition of arts activities which is "the creation, manufacturing and sale of goods and services relating to literature, radio, television, film, digital content, visual arts and crafts, design, music and performing arts." This includes "writing, drama, playing and recording music, music composition, dance, theatre, design (including graphic and architectural design) and radio and television broadcasting."

What the Strategy does not include

While many opportunities were identified during the initial targeted stakeholder consultations; not all of these have been included in this document to avoid duplication across various Council strategic documents.

- Training and education in the arts sector has been included in Council's Economic Development Strategy
- The idea of private retail and commercial facility owners providing vacant private facilities for emerging artists at heavily discounted rates for a limited period has been included in Council's Economic Development Strategy
- Events are not included as these are covered in Council's Events Strategy 2015 – 2020. It is however recognised that some events, such as Carnivale, include artistic elements and mention has been made of this.

Alignment with Corporate Plan

Douglas Shire Council's Arts Strategy sets out the vision and provides structure for the implementation of goals aimed at supporting, developing and promoting the arts activities in line with the following goals outlined in Council's Corporate Plan 2014 - 2019.

- 1.1.4 Support and encourage a healthy, active and capable region through sporting, cultural and recreational opportunities, and community wellbeing initiatives.
- 1.3.3 Foster and support the role of local artists, writers and performers to encourage community vibrancy and wellbeing.
- 1.3.4 Provide and enhance community facilities and opportunities that cater for the arts, recreational and cultural pursuits.
- 3.1.2 Identify and implement opportunities to create vibrancy in high profile areas, such as Daintree Gateway and Mossman town centre.

Relevant Council Policies

- Douglas Shire Council General Policies
- Busking Policy
- Commercial Filming Photography General Policy
- Community Engagement General Policy
- Community Support Program General Policy
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Policy
- Events General Policy
- Arts General Policy (Draft)

Vision

In a region endowed with natural wonders it is creativity which helps define our identity.

Douglas Shire Council's vision for this Arts Strategy is to support creativity to grow our region, encourage participation in creative pursuits and share our creativity with the world.

Community Priorities

Extensive research was conducted in developing this Arts Strategy, including discussions with a range of people in the arts sector:

The detailed findings may be found in *Appendix One* however the key priorities identified included:

- A strong desire for more public art; many said there was a lack of Public Art in both Port Douglas and Mossman.
- In terms of facilities, there are many facilities around the Shire which lend themselves to art, or have the potential to be used by the arts sector. In the main, current infrastructure is under-utilised and reasons include cost, low awareness, suitability and lack of dedicated resources to manage and drive a dedicated arts facility.

- A strong desire for a permanent home for community art in Port Douglas, near the Port Douglas Community Hall, and the Clink Theatre. It would be multi-use, with exhibition space and suitable studio space for established and emerging artists (visual arts, music, and writing), art and craft classes, rehearsal space for a community choir and even home to a music school.
- A desire to increase RADF funds to pre-amalgamation level. This is related to the number of applications received and at present the level of applications is low. Providing evidence that grant rounds are oversubscribed may strengthen Council's requests for increased investment from the State Government. The level is also impacted on by the creation of other funding streams within Council such as the Community Support Program, Event Funding Program and Business Development Fund, none of which were available under the former Douglas Shire. These other funding streams have funded not only sport and recreational projects, but arts and cultural programs and projects since de-amalgamation.
- There was also comment on the complexity of the RADF form. The RADF committee has reviewed the form and simplified it as far as possible, however much of the content is required by Arts Queensland as part of their funding agreement. Council has and will continue to offer support and guidance in completing applications, and will assist with acquittals.
- A strong desire for a designated area for live entertainment in Port Douglas. This aspect is being addressed within the Proposed Douglas Shire Planning Scheme.
- The need for a regional approach came out strongly when talking about the arts. Many artists participated in festivals in neighbouring shires and collaborated with artists across the Far North Queensland region.
- The Port Douglas Market was viewed by many artists as an important outlet for their work, and an opportunity to engage with the public.
- The main comment to emerge in relation to Indigenous art was there was very little representation of Indigenous culture in Port Douglas.

Section Two – Strategies

Analysis of the feedback provided by internal and external stakeholders through the consultation process revealed a range of attitudes and ambitions for the Shire. Moreover, there was strong sentiment that Council, although communicative and supportive of the arts, could improve its investment in the Shire's creative sector.

Four key areas were identified as significant priorities for the Arts Strategy for the next five years. These are:

1. Access
2. Support and Development
3. Making Place
4. Recognising Heritage

Theme 1 - Access

Douglas Shire Council commits to improving access to the arts for the community and visitors to the Shire. Council commits to facilitating opportunities for artists to enliven and enrich their lives, and their communities.

Goals

Commitment 1: Investigate ways to fund the completion of a cultural audit from which a register of artists, writers and musicians can be created.

A regional register of creative practitioners enables Council to initiate direct access to the arts sector for opportunities to become involved with community programs and advise of available grants. Promotion of the register develops community awareness of the availability, skill set and scope of practitioners for projects to be developed for the shire. A cultural audit is an invaluable tool to connect the arts to commerce, government and philanthropy.

- Scope the undertaking of a cultural audit to determine the extent and diversity of creative practices within the Shire.
- Investigate and facilitate the establishment a register of artists of all genres.
- Once created, Council commits to promoting the register as a portal; a link between other industries and the arts.

Commitment 2: Assess and improve community access to current facilities.

Increased community engagement using Council facilities encourages greater use of available spaces and increases community vibrancy.

- Increase awareness of the flexibility in venue hire fees offered to Not for Profit art groups to encourage greater uptake.
- Review public access to Council public facilities accompanying art activities to improve community relations.
- In conjunction with members of the arts sector, scope the development of an Arts Centre for Port Douglas.

Commitment 3: Facilitate increased participation in the arts across the Shire.

Increased participation in the arts builds social capital and creates a sense of wellbeing and social inclusivity.

- Review Council's communications to improve the effectiveness of the promotion of community art activities.
- We will actively engage community groups to link with Council to assist in the promotion of activities.
- Establish a 'What's On' directory in high traffic areas to promote art exhibitions and performances.
- Develop our civic spaces through appropriate public art placement.

Theme 2 - Support and Development

Douglas Shire Council recognises it can play an important role in supporting activities of the community, connecting community and developing investment throughout the Shire.

Goals

Commitment 4: Facilitate creating connections and strengthening partnerships between like-minded community groups.

Strengthening and establishing connections between disparate but like-minded groups creates a sense of inclusivity and encourages shared access to skill sets and equipment. It also encourages groups to share resources for common interest.

- Investigate opportunities to collaborate with other FNQROC local governments on a regional creative arts summit which would go a long way to raising awareness of the value of arts in the region, bringing artists together from around the region, and from different sectors in the arts.
- Encourage creative groups to develop stronger local partnerships.
- Investigate support for lifestyle events in collaboration with regional artists.
- Actively assist in strengthening relationships by providing advice and leadership.

Commitment 5: Encourage entrepreneurship and local investment in the arts.

Supporting entrepreneurship drives vibrancy and underpins economic development for the Shire. Micro-business invests significant capital over time however finds it difficult to generate upfront capital for activities. Assisting with alleviating the cost burden can encourage arts businesses to develop.

- Facilitate establishing partnerships between local business and the arts.
- Offer community groups and/or artists assistance in addressing obstacles in delivering project outcomes.
- Ensure the arts content of Port Douglas Markets is at least 95% regional content.

Commitment 6: Increased Council investment in the arts sector.

Council's increased investment signals a focus on viewing the arts as an economic driver for the Shire.

- Incrementally increase Council investment in the arts sector over the next five years.
- Strategically increase investment by encouraging civic resourcefulness.
- Seek to increase the number and quality of RADF applications to pre-amalgamation levels.
- Demonstrate to State Government the necessity for an increase in RADF allocations.
- Collaborate with neighbouring councils to deliver regionally focused initiatives.

Commitment 7: Encourage investment in the arts from outside the Shire.

External investment in the arts indicates interest in the viability and vibrancy of the arts projects developed and delivered in the Shire.

- Publicly acknowledge and promote incoming investment in the arts in the Shire.
- Offer incentives for reoccurring investment in the arts.
- Use public art opportunities to create investment within the Shire.
- Promote where possible the Shire's arts activities as part of the tourism brand.

Theme 3 - Making Place

Goals

Commitment 8: Embed Indigenous heritage across the Shire within arts activities where possible.

Regional Indigenous heritage is recognised worldwide as the most unique aspect of Australia. As part of celebrating and educating people about the World's oldest continuing living culture and key to reconciliation, maintaining and encouraging inclusiveness and a dialogue with the Shire's First Peoples creates a sense of inclusiveness and shared experience of the region.

- Create a bilingual program of tourism signage with the Yirrganydji and Kuku Yalanji to promote the Shire's Indigenous heritage.
- Consultation with Traditional Owners to explore opportunities for representation of Indigenous culture throughout the Shire.
- Ensure inclusivity and consultations through any partnership with Traditional Owners.
- Have appropriate permission and/or MOUs in place surrounding use of Indigenous Intellectual Property.
- Work with Mossman Gorge and Yalanji Arts to develop partnerships for ensuring higher public access to Indigenous stories and artworks.

Commitment 9: Create a nurturing and inviting place for creative activity.

A nurturing and inviting Shire for creative activity creates interest and encourages people to participate in the arts. Sufficient space for artists to play, experiment and deliver artworks encourages audiences to participate.

- We will encourage arts activities to feature prominently in the public realm.

- Continue to review procedures around activating projects within the public realm.
- We will provide safe and inclusive spaces for ephemeral / temporary daily arts encounters for artists and audiences.

Theme 4 - Recognising Heritage

Goals

Commitment 10: To ensure Council-approved art related activities and projects are included in the agenda for discussion when working with the Bama Working Group. We will consult with the Bama Working Group to seek advice as to whether proposed images or activities are deemed:

- Inappropriate or offensive to the Traditional Owner groups.
- Are being placed on or near significant story or sacred places causing distress.
- Are correctly and appropriately acknowledging traditional ownership.
- Are providing equitable access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in the proposed development.

Commitment 11: Encourage new stories to be developed.

Encouraging new stories helps communities celebrate successes and provides a trigger for engaging the Shire's youth.

- Encourage partnerships with lifestyle activities to foster arts inclusions within other festivals and events.
- Foster and grow learning capability around grant funding opportunities.
- Work closely with grant fund recipients to deliver maximum benefits for project outcomes.
- Introduce an Arts and Cultural category in the Australia Day Awards.

Commitment 12: Support art projects which tell the Shire's history and heritage.

Telling stories connected to the region invites and encourages participation from audiences eager to understand the environment and circumstances of the creation of artwork. Heritage speaks to who we were, who we are and where we are going as a populace.

- Ensure projects active in the public forum connect with the Shire and its peoples.
- Through RADF and other funding programs, develop activities which encourage celebration of the Shire's history and heritage.
- Scope the capacity of Council and the art industry to support the delivery of an Arts Trail and its growth over the next decade.
- Recognise heritage is being made in the present and document and promote projects and activities that establish new traditions or give depth to existing ones.

Section Three - Key Performance Indicators

Unless specified, actions will be staged over five years as Council resources allow; incorporated into Council's annual Operational and Capital Works plans. Actions will be reported on annually by Council Officers, to Councillors through a Report to Council.

Goals Theme 1 – Access

Commitment 1: Investigate ways to fund the completion of a cultural audit from which a register of artists can be created.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Scope the undertaking of a cultural audit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope completed Decision made as to whether a cultural audit can be completed
Create and publish an artists' register online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the cost and who or which organisation is best placed to establish and maintain a register of artists in the Shire
If a register is created, promote as a portal on Council's website to link other industries with the arts sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of webpage clicks - unique and total Include link with all art related emails eg. RADF announcements

Commitment 2: Assess and improve community access to current infrastructure.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Increase awareness of the flexibility of venue hire fees for Not for Profit arts events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete training for Council staff handling venue booking enquiries to determine which Category (A, B, C or D) applies Information about waiving of fees for eligible community art events included on Council's Venue Hire Information webpage
Review public access to Council facilities accompanying art activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback sought from customers on their satisfaction with Council facilities Develop feedback survey and implement mechanism to distribute and collect Track and report on satisfaction levels over time
In conjunction with members of the arts sector, scope out the development of a community Arts Centre for Port Douglas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use existing and proposed infrastructure audits of Council-owned facilities to identify a possible location for a community Arts Centre

Commitment 3: Facilitate increased participation in the arts across the Shire.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Review Council's communications to improve the effectiveness of the promotion of art activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations for improved promotions prepared Implementation of recommendations
Actively engage art and community groups to link with Council to assist in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of consultations with art groups and artists

the promotion of activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publication of art community events on Council's online event calendar
Establish a 'What's On' directory in high traffic areas to promote art exhibitions and performances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'What's On' directory boards (or other format) in Macrossan Street and in Front Street ▪ Clear and simple procedure in place for updating information displayed
Develop our civic spaces through appropriate public art placement in public spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Art program rolled out ▪ Bama Working Group consulted with all public art on public land

Goals Theme 2 - Support and Development

Commitment 4: Facilitate creating connections and strengthening partnerships between like-minded community groups.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Investigate opportunities to collaborate with other FNQROC local governments on a regional creative arts summit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact FNQROC members to assess interest in collaborating to host an arts summit in the region ▪ If event goes ahead, success would be measured by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of participants ▪ High satisfaction with content
Encourage creative groups to develop stronger local partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Artist register online ▪ Number of connections made transitioning into collaborative projects
Investigate support for lifestyle events to include artistic elements in collaboration with artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Automatic referral of the artists register to lifestyle event organisers at initial enquiry stage
Actively assist in strengthening relationships by providing advice and leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of consultations with groups

Commitment 5: Encourage entrepreneurship and local investment in the arts.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Facilitate establishing partnerships between local business and the arts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interest sought from private property owners wanting to activate their currently empty or under-utilised spaces through temporary occupancy by selected artists and/or art organisations. ▪ Number of transitions from project activity to ongoing activity
Offer art groups/artists assistance in addressing obstacles in delivering project outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run RADF grant writing and acquittal workshops for artists and art groups
Ensure the arts content of Port Douglas Markets is at least 95% regional content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meticulously apply the grandfather clauses introduced in 1988 to reduce the sale of items not made locally ▪ Percentage of art stallholders selling locally made items over 95%

Commitment 6: Increased Council investment in the arts sector.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Incrementally increase Council investment in the arts sector over the next five years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage increase year on year
Strategically increase investment by encouraging civic resourcefulness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in ongoing activity based on initial Council support
Seek to increase the number and quality of RADF applications to pre-amalgamation level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run RADF grant writing and acquittal workshops for artists and art groups
Demonstrate to State Government the necessity for an increase in RADF allocations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of RADF Funds allocated each year
Collaborate with neighbouring councils to deliver regionally focused initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twice yearly communication with relevant officers at Cairns, Cassowary, Mareeba, Tablelands and Cook councils

Commitment 7: Encourage investment in the arts from outside the Shire.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Publicly acknowledge and promote incoming investment in the arts in the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of promoted projects per year
Offer incentives for reoccurring investment in the arts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of reoccurring projects due to Council support
Use public art opportunities to create investment within the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of external contractors engaged with art activities in the Shire
Promote, where possible, the Shire's arts activities as part of the tourism brand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art activities listed on Tourism Port Douglas Daintree's 'Things to Do' webpage

Goals Theme 3 - Making Place

Commitment 8: Embed Indigenous heritage across the Shire within arts activities where possible.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Create a bilingual program of heritage / tourism signage with the Kuku Yalanji and Yirrganydji.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage program included on Bama Working Group agenda
Consult with Traditional Owners to explore representation of Indigenous culture in Port Douglas region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation of Indigenous culture in public areas around Port Douglas
Ensure inclusivity and consultations through any partnership with Traditional Owners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of consultations in relation to projects: example each project requires at least one consultation
Have appropriate permission/MOUs in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure purchasing procedures, approval

place surrounding use of Indigenous Intellectual Property.	processes for public art, include a clause relevant to Indigenous Intellectual Property
Partner with Mossman Gorge and Yalanji Arts to develop partnerships for ensuring higher public access to Indigenous stories and artworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of projects for Indigenous peoples outside of Art Centre or Gorge shop

Commitment 9: Create a nurturing and inviting place for creative activity.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Encourage arts activities to feature prominently in the public realm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% yearly increase in number of advertised/completed arts activities
Continue to review procedures around activating projects within the public realm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in red tape and a streamlined application process in place.
Provide safe and inclusive spaces for ephemeral / temporary daily arts encounters for artists and audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inventory of public spaces for activities completed Alter or change land usage if required

Goals Theme 4 - Recognising Heritage

Commitment 10: To ensure Council approved arts related activities and projects are included in the Agenda for discussion when working with the Bama Working Group.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Consult with the Bama Working Group to seek advice as to whether proposed images or activities are deemed appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public art process to include requirement for all proposed projects to be referred to Bama Working Group

Commitment 11: Encourage new stories to be developed.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Encourage partnerships with lifestyle activities to foster arts inclusions within other festivals and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automatic referral of the artists register to lifestyle event organisers Number of facilitated connections between artists and event managers
Foster and grow learning capability around grant funding opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run RADF grant writing and acquittal workshops Provide debrief for unsuccessful applicants
Work closely with grant fund recipients to deliver maximum benefits for project outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of acquittals successfully completed for all RADF grants issued
Reintroduce an Arts and Cultural category in the Australia Day Awards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for Arts and Cultural category introduced

Commitment 12: Support projects that tell the Shire’s history and heritage.

Action	Key Performance Indicators
Ensure projects active in the public forum connect with the Shire and its peoples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage increase in number of approved public art projects
Through RADF and other funding programs, develop activities which encourage celebration of the Shire’s history and heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage increase in the number of activities reflecting the history and heritage (Could be Council Initiatives)
Scope the capacity to support the delivery of an Arts Trail and its growth over the next decade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete a scoping report on developing an Arts Trail
Recognise that heritage is being made in the present and document and promote projects and activities that establish new traditions or give depth to existing ones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document arts activities and invite documentation ▪ Prepare and publish a yearly report on achievements in the sector

Appendix One

Summary of Research and Consultation Findings



Consultation Process

Preparing the Arts Strategy was a two-stage consultation process.

The first stage was to talk to a small sample of artists across a range of disciplines to gather a spread of views from people involved in different sector of the arts and people from different communities around the Shire.

This was done via a series of face to face meetings, a few phone interviews and follow up emails to clarify points raised.

The purpose was to ensure the strategy wasn't prepared in a vacuum when the draft Arts Strategy went out to the broader community for comment and further input.

Below are the findings from the initial consultations and the public feedback stage.

Public Art

There is a desire for more public art and indeed it was observed there was a lack of Public Art in both Port Douglas and Mossman.

"It would be nice to see some sign of artistic life when entering Mossman or Port Douglas. A personalised, beautiful entry way, something over the road. Port Douglas in particular needs more signs of artistic life."

"I'm keen on more public art, particularly in Port Douglas which is sometimes considered shallow and devoid of art."

"Primarily I'm interested in big public sculptures. More public art; particularly if the artist gets exposure."

"Some public art makes you stop and take notice. It takes you out of your routine; focusses you in the present. Doesn't matter what it is. Imagine something on the side of Island Point – tourists would see coming back from the beach?"

In regard to Public Art: I feel it works if there is a substantial budget with selection based on experience and how the artist's prior work fits with the site/brief. As a professional artist (having completed 20 public artworks) I'd like to see that we do this professionally so the finished public artworks vitalise Mossman and Port Douglas and offer a cultural presence. So I agree we also need a Public Art Policy.

I'd also agree with a prior comment that there is currently no cultural presence (through art) in either community. At this stage (I feel) it's more important to create 'permanent works' because of the need to build up a 'cultural presence'. I like the fact that 'sites have been nominated for 'site specific' art works (such as outside Port Douglas Community Hall and Clink theatre, for instance).

I like the ephemeral sculpture idea (and have myself been involved in many ephemeral sculpture projects) but am concerned that the timing is out for this. We need art that makes statements about

‘who we are and what we represent’ as an integrative element and a more ‘permanent’ statement in the two communities.

Alternately an ephemeral project could work later, if it is ongoing and not a one off. Projects such as ‘Strand Ephemera, Townsville, ‘Floating Lands’, Noosa, ‘Sculpture by the Sea’ Sydney create a lot of interest and enhance those communities.

I’m also quite concerned about prior council funding being allocated to creating art work on existing council amenities, (aka toilets). It seems to me that council needs a bigger view of what public art can achieve. And while you are addressing this, the use of graffiti art suggests a strategy to once again restoring unsightly amenities in place of a broader more encompassing approach.

Locations

Several locations for Public Art were suggested:

- Outside Port Douglas Community Hall to liven this area up
- Outside the Clink Theatre
- A sculpture would be good at Stinger Park located at Four Mile Beach
- Public sculptures on the hill walk. It is being built from scratch so is a great opportunity to do public sculpture – with the full information. Get artists to walk the trail and select a spot. Works could be ephemeral. People could do pop up art for 2-3 months. Provides change along the path.
- Teamsters Park; other information bays around the Shire;
- In Macrossan Street; it could be an art piece which doubled as a directional sign to The Clink Theatre, listing what’s on, or in the Coles Plaza area.

Street Art/Graffiti Art

- Art on Council/Telstra and/or Ergon Energy infrastructure would be good. A great way to engage youth, and build skills.
- Street artists program: street art is very important. It is almost the soul of major cities. All those cities are creating spaces for street art. A lot make money selling graffiti on canvas and t-shirts. They are like tattooists who found ways to convert their art into making a living. There are galleries down south devoted to graffiti artists, Back Streets gallery and all they exhibit is street art.
- Legal graffiti, someone needs to come up with a plan to make this work; venues; open spaces, walls – visible to public. We don’t have the laneways, but we do have places, big vacant tracts of land where a ply wall could be built. Needs to be highly visible.

Arbiter for Public Art

A few mentioned the need for an arbiter for public arts, citing examples in other places where public art had been controversial.

“There needs to be an arbiter for public arts. Who will be the arbiter? Perhaps the RADF committee?”

Facilities

There are many buildings and open areas around the Shire which lend themselves to art, or have the potential to be used by the arts sector.

From the research and feedback received it is evident current infrastructure is under-used for various reasons including:

- Cost
- Low awareness
- Suitability
- Lack of dedicated resources within the community/non-profit art sector to drive and provide ongoing support

Council Owned

Port Douglas Community Hall

- Has quite good facilities including kitchen etc.
- Has a hanging system to facilitate exhibitions
- Area has ample parking
- Air-conditioned

Perceived Negatives

- A bit expensive for one-off exhibitions; current hall hire fees too high for low budget artistic endeavours and experimentation
- Community hall is scary – painting with dyes, can't drop anything on the floor / too much fear about damaging the polished floorboards
- Lacks atmosphere, no staging, cost to access and other restrictions including access to public facilities as public toilets are closed.
- It's elegant and an attractive show piece but too precious. This building needs to be a lot more affordable, Council needs to cut its perceived losses and offer low rent for perhaps holiday craft activities for children. This would get movement into the area.
- Currently a deathly quiet, under-used but beautiful space, which needs colour, sculpture, tents, flags, artistic activities, community owned equipment, buzz, life and children humming throughout. It can still function as a Spaceport.

Foyer of Council offices

- An excellent venue to take art to the community.
- Council has recently installed a flexible hanging system with 25 brass picture rail hooks and 2m cable hangers, with push button hooks
- I like what Council does with its internal space in the foyer

Sugar Wharf

This building is heritage-listed and can accommodate 120 on the deck and 200 inside (depending on setup and there is a track lighting system and art display hanging facilities on the walls.

The building is available for hire with no tables or chairs and does not have air-conditioning. The stunning location overlooking the Dickson Inlet somehow overcomes these obstacles and those in the art community love the venue.

- Easy to use picture hanging systems
- Limited access for art exhibitions as booked out in the season for weddings

“The iconic Sugar Wharf building in Port Douglas has now become so popular for weddings it is impossible to book as an exhibition venue for more than a couple of days!”

“Go Troppo ran for three years, following on from an exhibition we had in Sugar Wharf about Low Isles: “Fragile Sanctuary”. We were the first group to use the Sugar Wharf as public space. Can’t use now because used for weddings and Council makes money.”

- Sugar Wharf needs to be available to be used as a curated exhibition space. Go Troppo which ran for three years was a great example. At the last event there was a series of fabulous abstract figurative sculptures in the centre of the building right by the centre doors. Day trippers to the reef were taking photos when returning to the marina. Sun shone through the door and illuminated the sculptures. Calypso tour boat stopped because so many people wanted to take photos.
- Great atmosphere; lousy lighting
- Arts industry is worth being given a shot. Council needs to allocate two to three weeks in peak season for an annual art show at the Sugar Wharf.
- Love the Sugar Wharf. Don’t know how it’s operated.

Mossman Shire Hall

The Heritage-listed Mossman Shire Hall was built in 1936. It features a stage and wooden floor, and in the past has been a venue for wedding receptions, concerts, dance classes and other public and private functions. It holds 350 theatre style or 250 dining style.

Today it is an under-used facility, most likely because it cannot compete with modern, air-conditioned facilities such as the Mossman High School’s auditorium.

There’s also a perception it doesn’t have all the facilities other venues offer.

“Hasn’t been updated since 1950 – still has the gold velvet curtains. Art deco. Could be used for theatre arts, schools if some money was put into sound and lighting. It’s a resource that has been forgotten. It has dressing rooms, back stage area but someone has to run it.

“Acoustics not good. Very echo-ey. I don’t see it as a place where I would want to present a play. Gets hot in there.

“There’s no equipment.” [Author’s note: There is a sound system on stage; an old grand piano which is tuned annually and stored beneath the stage, approximately 17 timber and 20 resin rectangular tables (1600 x 750) and 300 chairs.]

- It is costly to use
- Mossman Shire Hall is under used. Could be developed for temporary exhibitions.

DAB Building

- Council owned and currently rented to DAB for nominal amount
- Excellent building and facility, heritage listed
- Drawback is that it is not on the main thoroughfare (Front Street)
- Keen to see Council continue to support DAB where the organisation pays nominal rent (\$50/year) plus service charges (water and rubbish)
- DAB has prepared a list of upgrades to the building they'd like to see completed

Mossman Library

- Mossman Library always welcomes DAB artists to exhibit their work in the public spaces. This encourages the community to support DAB and become involved in some way. The library is a very important resource for local artists for research as well as exhibition space.

The Clink Theatre

- This boutique theatre and cabaret room is owned by Douglas Shire Council and leased to the Douglas Theatre Arts Group (DTAG) which showcases local, international and Australian artists.
- It was once the police lock-up. It is a beautiful auditorium, with perfect acoustics, complete with full theatre accoutrements, 120-tiered seating, back stage, dressing room, wardrobe and sets area, foyer, and box office.
- Located in Mowbray Street which has relatively little passing pedestrian traffic, The Clink Theatre lacks exposure to both locals and visitors alike. Retailers are more and more reluctant to display posters for upcoming events. A number of people suggested a box office and/or directional signage in Macrossan Street, perhaps a piece of art to raise awareness.
- Collaboration with the Cairns Civic Theatre proved effective in the past. "The manager would notify us when a performance group suitable for a smaller audience was coming to Cairns. We'd do a deal to persuade the performers to stay "an extra day in paradise", to do a performance at The Clink. This meant we got performances we wouldn't normally get in Port Douglas."
- There are 2-3 talented directors in Port. A procedures manual has been written to provide volunteers with clear instructions on the role of a Producer.
- About local productions, it is getting harder and harder to attract actors, singers, backstage workers, etc. as we are becoming more and more time poor.
- Create nights at The Clink - Pecha Kucha inspired - creative entrepreneurs, business people, artists, musicians, create a hub for inspired discussion, cross collaboration, etc.

Privately Owned

CWA Hall in Mossman

- Mossman Gorge has used this hall as an art exhibition space.

Activating Vacant Commercial Space

- Some would like to see vacant shops offered as a pop up space for artists and this has occurred in various locations around Port Douglas.

- Some would like to see it made available at little or no cost although others believe there needed to be a reasonable cost to encourage artists to ensure a high quality of merchandising.

“I have an anti-thing about free spaces, artists in general tend to err on the cheap side, if you give artists a place for nothing it doesn’t encourage them to “up” their game. And there are recognised artists who whine all the time and are so down in the mouth, and think the government and/or Council need to give them grant funding. There are ways to make money out of art. Nobody wins with free space. It means artists are not encouraged to work as a business.”

Mossman Botanic Gardens

- Several artists mentioned the proposed Mossman Botanic Gardens would provide many opportunities for artists. Indeed early news reports indicated plans for a gallery to display the work of renowned Daintree floral artist Betty Hinton and in time, an amphitheatre. Other suggestions were the inclusion of a Haiku garden.

“I’d really like to see the Mossman Botanic Gardens go ahead. That would be awesome; opening up opportunities for artwork and sculpture.”

Have gathering places for reflection, togetherness, wishing trees of Japan, love letter writing, the love locks of the Pont des Arts in Paris where many people get married. There needs to be some sort of monument to celebrate love, etc.

Mossman Gorge Art Centre

This is known to the Mossman Gorge community however the art centre doesn’t have any presence outside of here.

Restaurants

One suggestion was an Art in restaurants program. Artist could be available in the restaurant when artworks displayed. Restaurant may make a commission; enhances/adds to the ambience with an artist attending each night to engage with the public.

Karnak Playhouse

- Located at 23 Karnak Road, Upper Whyanbeel, this facility is operated by the Diane Cilento Foundation Ltd, a not-for-profit company.
- The theatre and stage have been rebuilt; the 500 seats have been removed, but the tiered decking retained and expanded and there’s a space suitable to display art within the complex. The plan is to “reawaken the space” and 2017 will mark 25 years since Diane opened Karnak. Work is underway to put together a 2017 program which will work in harmony with other events in the Shire.

Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF)

RADF Explained

The Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) is a partnership between the Queensland Government and regional councils supporting local artists and arts activities in Queensland communities.

Each year Douglas Shire Council applies to Arts Queensland for funds. If successful, Council distributes funds for art projects. Projects receiving funds may be initiated by the community, such as the staging of Grease at The Clink Theatre and harp therapy at Mossman Hospital, or initiated by Council, such as the mural on the amenities block at Rotary Park in Mossman. The table below shows the history of RADF grants.

Year	Council	Arts Queensland	Other	Total	Applications	Grants Awarded
2016/17	\$12,857	\$30,000	-	\$42,857		
2015/16	\$12,600	\$26,460	-	\$39,060	7	6
2014/15	\$6,000	\$14,000	-	\$20,000	9	7
2013/14	Funds from de-amalgamation			\$5,000	6	6
2006/07	\$29,200	\$43,500	\$5,480 ¹	\$78,480	32	24

Carried over from previous year

Applications are assessed by the RADF committee and feedback specifically about the committee was that it was conscientious and fair and there was a good variety of people who make fair decisions.

Increase RADF Funds

There is a desire to increase the RADF funds.

“Growing the RADF program back to where it was would be good. As the years go by, word will spread and more people will apply. Julia did a great job building it up. It would be an evolutionary thing. It also brings in money – Council gets matching funding. When the Botanic Gardens is developed, people can take on individual elements to be part of the garden. Not all funded by RADF, but certainly part funded.”

To do this would require an increase in the number of applications. To demonstrate to Arts Queensland there is unmet demand.

Regarding attracting a more professional standard of art in the area, I’d also like to comment on the new approach to RADF grants:

“We need to attract ‘High Calibre’ Arts practice in this area and I don’t feel it can happen with the allocation of lots of small grants.

“I notice this was not mentioned in the strategy. (I am very concerned about the limit of \$3,000 per applicant and I would venture to say that that is why applications have decreased) There is a lot this region stands for in terms of its environment (proximity of Great Barrier Reef and ancient rainforest). We have a heritage of making noise about lack of care for these precious environments and I’d like to see some big projects financed by council that show visitors to the region that these environments are important and not just tourist attractions or simply subjects for local commercial paintings and sculptures. I like the fact that council feels the need to increase the overall amount for RADF but again would venture to argue that to attract a higher number of applicants of a higher calibre then the funding limit needs to be lifted. A LOT of work goes into a grant application/acquittal and applicants need to feel that they can dream of bigger projects that have more impact.”

[Author's note: Under Council's RADF Program for 2016-2017 eligible applicants may apply for up to \$5,000 (GST Exclusive). Applicants may consider applying for funding above the maximum investment amount or ratio if their financial contribution is at a higher level than the defined percentage ratio, or they have secured partners investing in their project, or there is capacity for exceptional delivery of RADF objectives.]

RADF Applications

In terms of the accessibility of RADF funds, it varied. Some found Council very helpful and said when they first tried it was hard, but had learnt along the way.

"When I first came here, I didn't know grants existed. Found out how and just started. Artists who say "I can't do it" need to learn. There's too much spoon-feeding of people. They need to learn. I did."

For others the process is just too daunting, despite Council offering workshops for potential applicants to go through the RADF process. What also emerged was that the acquittal process was often viewed as being more difficult than the initial grant.

"The reasons more people do not apply for RADF are at least two - the complexity of the application form, and the crazy questions posed to complete funding acquittal. For example, one question asks how many people attended the theatre/exhibition and where did they come from? How can this be reliably reported? Council must urgently work on its own forms to attract more applicants who often do not have the time to attend workshops. Forms are anathema to creatives."

"Some people think the current RADF application form is still too complicated and this puts off would-be participants. Some of the questions, for them, seem difficult to answer, or even unnecessary. Time for committee to go through it carefully and change."

Much of the application process and information asked is out of Council's hand as it is information required by Arts Queensland, but, in saying that, Council has the flexibility to develop the RADF application form and Guidelines, and is in the process of making these more user friendly.

RADF Pay Back Grants

Another suggestion was to consider "payback grants" where an artist could receive funds up front for materials, or a venue booking fee for example. Once the exhibition and/or performance was complete and revenue from either ticket sales or works sold was collected, the money, or part thereof, could be returned. There was not universal agreement with this concept and there would need to be further investigation as to whether this type of arrangement would fit under the RADF guidelines.

[Author's note: Arts Queensland has since provided advice to councils around the issue of interest-free loans as part of grants programs. Section 111 of the *Local Government Act* states that "a local government must not, either directly or indirectly, make or guarantee a loan to an individual." While it is the responsibility of each council to obtain their own legal advice about the grants they offer their communities, it is important to note this section of the Act. If artists are looking for interest-free loans, the QuickstART Fund provides microloans managed through a community finance company.]

Live Entertainment Precinct

With the recent public consultation of the Proposed Douglas Shire Planning Scheme, one of the initiatives proposed was a Live Entertainment Precinct in Port Douglas which included Macrossan St west of Mudlo St, along the Wharf St restaurants and incorporating The Reef Marina.

The Live Entertainment Precinct was intended to send a clear message that this area of Port Douglas is a “lively” location where public entertainment, including live music is encouraged. It is an area designated as the entertainment hub of the Douglas Shire and the preferred location for live music and other regular entertainment.

It does not preclude live music in other locations, rather the preference is for live entertainment to occur in this precinct to minimise noise and other impacts in residential areas.

If the Live Entertainment Precinct is adopted, amplified music at licensed premises within the Precinct would still be regulated by Liquor Licensing officers and subject to recommendations by sound engineers.

Council received many submissions from residents requesting Council consider a “Special Entertainment Precinct” which would transfer the regulation of noise controls from the State Government [Liquor Licensing] to the Douglas Shire.

Aside from the pub scene, others welcomed the proposed “arts area (acoustic, amped, music, plays, children's entertainment, dance, art, acting etc.) in and around the town of Port Douglas and wanted to ensure all people of all ages were considered.

“This will give all talented people of Port Douglas a place to share their learnings and shine a happy light with absolute support by family, friends, teachers, grandparents, tourists etc.

“Having been in the entertainment area for the past 25 years in this region, I fully support the live entertainment precinct.”

Outdoor auditorium

- One suggestion was to build an outdoor auditorium in the park near Port Douglas CWA Hall and tennis courts. Activation of this space would have long term benefits of being outside noise restriction zones. Realises this is a significant piece of infrastructure.
- Venue for performance – connecting to Indigenous community.
- Another suggested a rotunda for Rex Smeal Park which provides musicians and performers with cover from the sun and the rain. The downside to this is having a fixed structure may impede the flexibility of site which at present is quite open. An alternative put forward was to invest in a “pop up” stage/performance area which could be moved from site to site when the need arose.

Regional Approach

The need for a regional approach came out strongly when talking about the arts.

“Our RADF funded exhibition was at the TANKS in Cairns. It enabled us to have a far great audience, and at Council’s suggestion we held a “Closing event in the foyer of Council’s offices Mossman which wasn’t the full show, but gave people a taste. Through this project we developed strong working relationships with artists in Kuranda and Cairns. One potter sent recipes for clay and has invited an artist to work with them on a collaborative work.”

“Wallaby Creek Festival (Rossville, Cook Shire) is a really great festival. Home grown. I’ve been involved with the Poet’s breakfast.”

“At the Cairns Tropical Writers festival I’ve participated in the Poet’s Picnic”.

“I did a show at Clink Theatre and then took it to the Cairns Tropical Writers festival. They loved that Douglas Shire had brought a piece of work to the festival.”

“Many years ago we had a great relationship with Cairns Civic Theatre. When a show/performance was booked the manager thought could work at the Clink, he would let us know and in some cases we’d make contact and get them to stay an extra days and do a show in Port Douglas. This gave us access to shows we wouldn’t normally get.”

“Take advantage of all events which come to Cairns.”

“We have headlined the Cairns Festival and participated in the Tablelands Folk Festival, Reef Feast, Mareeba Multicultural Fest and many other venues in Cairns, Mossman, Mt Molloy, Daintree, Yungaburra, Kuranda, Mareeba, and at the inaugural Latin Festival, German Club Cairns. Thus far in 2016 we have participated in the Reef Festival, Palm Creek Festival, Townsville, at the Tanks Arts Centre and many other venues in the north.”

“Get more of a relationship with Director of Cultural Services at Cairns Regional Council.

Several artists had done shows at the Centre of Contemporary Arts and in the Cairns Regional Gallery, and others had sold work through the KickArts shop.

Port Douglas Market


The Port Douglas Market was viewed by many artists as an important outlet for their work as well as an opportunity to engage with the public.

- The Port Douglas Markets are a key location for artists’ engagement with the local community and visitors.
- The Port Douglas Markets are well supported internationally, and particularly visitors from Melbourne.
- The market is the main avenue of public engagement directly with artists and artisans.
- Cost wise it’s affordable. \$33/week for 3m x 3m space. Some artists had double stalls.
- The co-ordinator does a fantastic job of allocating spots to ensure stallholders are happy with their location not adjacent to those selling similar items.
- A few suggested Council’s website could be improved.

- Website listing can be vastly improved to better describe what's for sale at the market, perhaps link to artist's website etc. One enterprising young artist has created a site which does that : www.portdouglasmarkets.net/sunday-market.html


Sunday Market - who is at the Sunday Market?

Welcome! This is brand new in June 2016 so we are starting from scratch and seeding this site with many of the market stall holders at the Sunday Markets. Keep an eye out here as we start networking and filling up the site, so you can see who is here, before you get here, or after you've been! Paul 0409 004 770




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Visnja - Harp and Vocals

Visnja regularly plays at the Sunday market. Visnja (Vish-nya) also plays at weddings on the beach, St Mary's By The Sea, Sugar Wharf and corporate functions at local restaurants. Phone Paul 0409 004 770. See Visnja's Port Douglas Market Page [here](#)




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- A few would like to see only locally made arts and crafts.
- Council website says in 1998 Council decided the Port Douglas Sunday Market would be a "Cotters Market", thereby ensuring goods offered for sale were made by the stallholder. It is 18 years since the decision was made and there are still stalls (one person said at least 16), selling imported goods.
- "Council needs to make a decision; do they continue to try and satisfy everyone which means keeping all the non-compliant imported crap or whether they want to have a world class assemblage of unique handmade works?"
- Musicians who play and sell CDs aren't charged although one was willing to do so.
- Comment was received regarding the quality of the musicians playing, and particularly encouraging musicians to expand their repertoire.
- St Marys by the Sea, as an open space for music at the Markets.

Existing Council Support

Someone asked “Other than grants what does Council do?”

Consultant research showed that in addition to managing and providing RADF funds, Council’s current contribution to the art sector currently includes:

- Provision of building (gallery and studio space) in Mill Street Mossman to Douglas Arts Base at nominal rent \$50/year.)
- \$5,000 provided to Douglas Theatre Arts Group (Clink Theatre) for annual maintenance of the facility.
- \$5,000 provided to Douglas Shire Historical Society for upkeep of the Courthouse Museum.
- Waiving of, or reduction of facility hire fees for not for profit organisations.

There was a strong desire for this Council support to continue and one sentiment was that Council needed to make sure it did not spread itself too thinly and try to do too many new things.

“Keep doing the good things. When I was on the RADF committee, there wasn’t an issue about recurrent funding up to a certain level, particularly for arts organisations who were delivering in terms of programs and exhibitions. It’s unreasonable to think they should be self-funding and user pays. They don’t have the capacity to get philanthropic funds.”

“These organisations need a base level of recurrent funding to keep the wheels turning, pay for public liability insurance, electricity, etc. It helps ensure the volunteers don’t get too stressed.

Community Art and Design Centre – Port Douglas

With current facilities under-used, it is difficult to justify the creation of new infrastructure, however emerging from discussions with those in the art community was a strong desire for a permanent home for community art in Port Douglas, in the vicinity of the Port Douglas Community Hall, and the Clink Theatre.

It was envisaged it would be multi-use, with exhibition space and suitable studio space for established and emerging artists (visual arts, music, and writing), art and craft classes, and rehearsal space for a community choir and even home to a music school. Comments as follows:

- Convert the Port Douglas Community Hall or build a facility next door
- The proximity to the Clink Theatre and Neighbourhood Centre lends this area to becoming an arts/community precinct.
- Space could include:
 - Children’s art & design gallery to liven up the walls
 - Inventor centre – displays of innovation and sustainable design products (i.e. haute couture bamboo fabric fashion)
 - Artist’s tool library
 - Low cost subscription-based shared studios
 - Low cost studio hire for dance classes and music workshops
 - Would need to be staffed
 - Gift shop

- Morning use by artists, afternoon use by school children and facilitators, particularly in the wet/hot season
- Weekend use by pop up design shops
- Inspiration from FabLab: laser cutter, 3D printer, fabric printer to up-skill residents, enable high school students to make inventions, prototypes
- Ticket outlet for Clink Theatre shows & Karnak Playhouse
- Contact point for Douglas Street Art
- Choir rehearsal space – The Coral Sea Singers
- Kids’ classes: circus skills, sewing lessons – Paisley Park
- Farmers’/ Flea Market on Saturdays – cheap and cheerful
- Night market undercover
- Add to the route for shuttle buses
- Directional signs in Macrossan Street
- Arthouse Port Douglas Inc. proposed a similar concept eight years ago prior to amalgamation. It was based on the premise that the Queensland State Government could be persuaded to sell its block located at 37 Macrossan Street which is earmarked for a School of the Arts, and use the funds to build an arts centre on Council owned land in Mowbray Street. The aim would be to create exhibition space and suitable studio space for established and emerging artists (visual arts, music, and writing) as well as business skills development for artists. Revenue would be raised via:
 - Art classes - a variety including visual arts, music and writing
 - Complementary classes. These would be niche courses on topics such as marketing artworks and related business disciplines.
 - Commission on sales of works.
 - Sales of materials
 - Membership subscriptions
 - Rentals of studio space to local emerging and established artists.
- There is a definite need for a permanent exhibition space for LOCAL art. At the Douglas Shire Historical Society, we have a collection of Strom Gould paintings, which are sitting in storage because of the lack of a gallery in which to display them. Strom was a popular local artist of the 1970s/80s and one of his works hangs at the Courthouse Hotel. We as a community should be collecting significant local works like those of Tania Heben to preserve for the future. and a proper place should be built to display them.

So the proposal for an Arts Centre is a good one, but it should also include space for an historical workshop and drop-in centre for visitors who are keen to research their family history locally.

Something more simple than the Community Hall could be built on the Council depot site in Mowbray Street near the Clink, and the vehicles of the depot could be moved behind the Community Hall to get rid of the eyesore in the so-called ‘community precinct’.

- A ‘state of the art’ Arts Centre building(s) as part of an arts precinct, probably adjacent to the Port Douglas Community Hall, as outlined in the draft strategy. This building would offer individual, permanent studio spaces, exhibition spaces, a recording studio, spaces for study,

storage, workshops, experimentation and collaborations and would, of course, include indigenous artists.

The centre needs to stage high quality programmes, which might include exhibitions, visiting artists-in-residence, exchanges, open studios and festivals, as well as activities in the wider region, that lend themselves to the interactivity of Creative Tourism as well as Cultural Tourism.

It would be good to have links with Australian and overseas arts institutions, perhaps in the form of an exchange programme, and the establishment of a 'remote' campus for the Arts Faculty of a leading Australian university, integrated into their syllabus.

Music

- Those involved in music believed there was a lack of suitable equipment, rehearsal space and access to perform for the Community Choir, despite there being some demand for it. The Mossman Youth Centre has however a range of musical equipment, and a space available.

"After reading the Douglas Shire Council Draft Arts Strategy & Arts Policy, I wondered if it would be possible to have more focus or inclusion in the policy of instrumental music arts. Most of the policy seems geared towards visual arts, painting, theatre, sculpture etc."

Combined Music Teachers of Mossman Port Douglas have been communicating with members of the council for the last 9 months, first to receive permission from the Council to house the piano in the Mossman Shire Hall and what needed to be in place to gift the piano to the council when it is purchased. The group has raised \$1556.26 through donations and raffles in the 3 months since council permissions were finalised. We are now waiting for our incorporation application with a slight name change (Music Teachers and Students of Mossman Port Douglas Inc) to be approved so we can start applying for grants.

"Instrumental music is a growing part of the Douglas Shire Council community with at least 140/150 families (600 people) immediately involved in the art of instrumental music."

Tropical Flavour and environmental values

- We are sitting on two World Heritage areas. I'd like to see an interweaving of art and the environment. Bring art into media, make films about it, writers writing about it, people interpreting it through visual arts and song writing.

Acquisitive Art Award

- A few suggested Council could introduce an acquisitive art program/award. It can have a wonderful impact on some people.
- Reintroduce Australia Day Award for Arts and Culture

Indigenous Art

The main comment to emerge in relation to Indigenous art was that there was very little representation of Indigenous culture in Port Douglas.

- The Indigenous Regional Arts Development Fund (IRADF), part of the Backing Indigenous Arts initiative, is a partnership between the Queensland Government, through Arts Queensland, the Torres Strait Regional Authority and sixteen Aboriginal Councils and host organisations throughout Queensland. Douglas Shire Council is not eligible to apply for IRADF funds.
- Needs to be more Indigenous cultural history evident in Port Douglas.
- I think it has a presence in Mossman Gorge Art Centre. Nicely done. I think it's fair. Not much sign of it in Port Douglas. Certainly entry way to Mossman could have an Indigenous flavour.
- Yalanji Art is supported through State Government funding and does not access RADF. Individual artists may need extra assistance to increase confidence with the grant process, with perhaps some kind of one on one grant application workshop.
- Indigenous signs
- Local language lessons

Feedback also raised the issue around cultural sensitivity regarding the representation of Indigenous culture in Port Douglas.

“A magnificent job is being done at Mossman Gorge, which should be maintained and supported as the Shire’s principal place for indigenous artworks, both in creation and marketing.”

Volunteer Staff

DAB qualifies with Centrelink as a “workplace” for people who are almost at retirement age. Those who apply for Government Benefits must volunteer for 15 hours per week.

Arts Trail

Several people suggested an Art Trail could be created and a map provided to self-drive visitors and locals directing them to art-related activities in the Shire. This could operate on a permanent basis, or over a weekend in conjunction with a major festival where the potential is to include studio visits.

Some years ago, the Historical Society raised funding and researched and set up a trail of historic photo posts in Port Douglas, Mossman and Daintree which are now owned by Council. They are in need of refurbishment. Maintenance as part of the maintenance schedule will be undertaken of photo posts.

Tourism

Tourism is one of the principal industries of the region and will grow in response to new initiatives.

“It is entirely possible to present The Arts of the Douglas Shire to the world in such a way that helps to define this special place and its people, whilst developing a high profile arts industry.”

The Douglas Shire Historical Society is presently working with Tourism Port Douglas Daintree and the Reef Marina to partner with DAB on a directional map of the town for cruise ship passengers. As the Historical Society previously formed this partnership to present the silver mural on the side of the Woolworths building in Mossman, we are hopeful of another very successful outcome.

Arts and Heritage Officer

A few artists suggested a dedicated Arts and Heritage Officer at Council, or a consultant project manager to drive the Art Strategy.

There were offers to help:

“I am very interested in helping to progress the Five Year Plan and consider that aspects of it could start immediately (eg ‘pop up’ studios/galleries, entrepreneurship help, partnerships with business, banners at the entrance to Port Douglas etc.). I would be willing to manage a banners project, whereby selected artists’ work is reproduced on large banners and erected on existing light poles at strategic spots along Port Douglas Road, perhaps in time for Carnivale this year. An Artists’ Register could be included on the Art in Tropical Australia website, a logical addition to information about artists, groups and events.”

“I’d be very keen to coordinate a community arts centre in Port Douglas on a part time basis.”

Art Register

Many people thought it would be useful to have a register of artists with artist details, website and social media links.

Whilst a website for professional artists, already exists www.art-in-tropical-australia.com, although it only covers visual artists, not writers or musicians. The page manager says it is very labour intensive but this hard work pays off as it receives good traffic which hovers around 650 unique daily visitors and more than double that daily total. 1200+ referrers and more than 100 countries.

“If there was to be a new register created and maintained, there would need to be thought given to who would do this, what the cost would be, etc. It is recommended that thought would also need to go into setting out the criteria i.e. whether it is just professional artists, and if so how is this verified, or whether it includes hobbyist.”

“A register of local artists is fraught with difficulty because of the itinerant nature of creatives. Who would update it and how often? Even the list of locals at the end of this Strategy is not complete e.g. I am not on it, although I have published five books on Douglas history.”

“An artist’s register would not be easy to establish, especially from an Indigenous pool. Who would run that?”

The following is a list of art industry contacts compiled during the research and initial consultation for the Arts Strategy.

- Alan Horsfield, children’s author, www.alanhorsfield.com.au
- Alison George, Catseye Productions, photographer and videographer www.catseyeproductions.com.au
- Alteouise DeVaughn – Musical Director, The Clink Theatre, Douglas Theatre Arts Group
- Anna Curtis, artist and printmaker, www.annacurtis.com.au
- Ben Kuring, Benny and The Clones, original Rock Band from Port Douglas, www.bennyandtheclones.com
- Bob Gilmour, facebook.com/gilmourdesign; Instagram.com/gilmore.design
- Cara Stevens, www.carastevens.com.au
- Cloud Nine, Handmade Guitars, Shop 7/11 Beor St, Craiglie, www.cloudnineguitars.com.au
- Daintree Eco Lodge, Aboriginal inspired art workshops www.daintree-ecolodge.com.au/about/indigenous-champions
- Daintree Timber Gallery, Daintree Village, Handcrafted wood ware, Open 10am – 4pm 7 days
- Diana Abiad, www.dianaabiad.com.au
- Debbie Rasmussen, textile artist

- Elaine Horsfield, author, www.elainehorsfield.com.au
- Eliza's Gallery, jewellery and pottery, Daintree Village Open 10am – 4pm 7 days
- Floravilla Art Gallery, Betty Hinton watercolours, Cape Tribulation Road, Cow Bay, www.floravillaartgallery.com.au
- Gail Shaw, watercolours, www.gailshaw.com
- Helen Ramoutsaki, poet, performance poet, writer, storyteller and educator, www.helenr.com
- Janbal Gallery, Brian (Binna) Swindley www.janbalgallery.com.au
- Jane Powell Jewellery, www.janepowelljewellery.com
- Jeff Whitehill, paintings and photography, www.jeffwhitehill.com
- John Burden, writer
- Jungle Bugs and Butterflies, Stephen Lamond's timber and artwork, Turpentine Road, Diwan www.daintreemuseum.com.au
- Liz Showniruk, president Douglas Arts Studio Gallery Inc.
- Los Caracoles, original Latin fold and world music, <http://www.loscaracoles.com.au/>
- Pam Willis-Burden, author
- Marina Gurtzis, Handcrafted Jewellery www.marinagurtzisjewellery.yolasite.com/
- Mossman Gorge Centre, Indigenous art, www.mossmangorge.com.au/the-centre/the-centre
- Rainforest Hideaway, Sculpture Trail, 109 Camelot Cl, Cape Tribulation, www.rainforesthideaway.com.au
- Sam Matthews, mosaic artist
- Sheryl Burchill, www.yalanji.com.au/arts/artist_Sheryl-Burchill.html
- Tania Heben, visual artist, main oil paintings, www.taniahebenstudio.com
- Visnja Prtenjaca, voice, piano, harp. www.visnja.com

Art Organisations

- Douglas Arts Studio Gallery Inc, 11 Mill Street, Mossman www.dabmossman.com
- Douglas Photographic Society, www.facebook.com/Douglas-Photographic-Society-387868047994558/
- Douglas Theatre Arts Group Inc www.clinktheatre.com.au
- Karnak Playhouse, 23 Karnak Road, Upper Whyanbeel, www.karnakplayhouse.com.au
- Mossman Botanic Garden Inc. www.mossmanbotanicgarden.com.au
- Port Douglas Artists Inc www.art-in-tropical-australia.com/port-douglas-artists.html

- The Clink Theatre, Mowbray Street Port Douglas, www.clinktheatre.com.au
- Douglas Street ART is a newly formed group aimed at creating opportunities for those interested in street art to develop their skills, or showcase their art; whether it be on blank walls, the sides of buildings, toilet blocks, bus shelters or fences.

Festivals – Douglas Shire and surrounding region

- *Cairns Tropical Writers Festival* – hosted biennially since 2008 by Tropical Writers Inc. It is run in Cairns over four days in August and has covered topics including blogging, poetry, playwriting, publishing, writing for children and recording memoirs. The program attracts readers, writers and creative thinkers. www.cairnstropicalwritersfestival.com
- *Carnivale* – held annually in May in Port Douglas. Whilst not exclusively an arts festival activities there are live musical performances, Container Art Park and Tropical Photography Exhibition. www.carnivale.com.au
- *Go Troppo* - held in October in Port Douglas in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Organisers of this multi-arts event had hoped Go Troppo would become an annual fixture but an acute shortage of funds precluded subsequent events, although it was hoped to hold the festival in 2014 to celebrate the re-forming of the previous Douglas Shire Council. It presented special performances of original plays and musicals, art shows and competitions and art workshops held in scenic locations at artists' studios at the Sugar Wharf. "It was a good community thing as we drew people together. We had good local sponsors but it had to have government funding."
- *Port Shorts Film Festival* - ran annually in the early 2000s, and after a seven year hiatus returned in 2015. The lead up starts mid-year when workshops for young and adult filmmakers of all experience learn about how to produce quality short films, documentaries and music videos. Teams of high school students from Cairns to Mossman compete and the best films are screened at the Port Shorts Young Filmmakers Awards held in October. www.portshorts.com
- *Wallaby Creek Festival* – is a three day presentation of music and the arts presented by Cape York Folk Club Inc. It is held annually at the Home Rule Rainforest Lodge in Rossville late September. Activities include a music program on two main stages, craft, sculpture, face painting, breakfast with the poets, movies workshops and street theatre. www.wallabycreekfestival.org.au

National boutique music festival

- Developing a festival which becomes self-sustaining and connects to film festival (Port Shorts) believes that assisting with travel and accommodation for artists would be one way develop self-sustainability.