



TORRES SHIRE COUNCIL

To Lead, Provide and Facilitate
a sustainable, safe and culturally vibrant community



CORPORATE PLAN 2018 - 2023

www.torres.qld.gov.au

CORPORATE PLAN 2018 - 2023

VISION

To lead, provide and facilitate a sustainable, safe and culturally vibrant community.

MISSION STATEMENT

Torres Shire Council through community consultation will focus in the promotion of community values together with the improvement of the quality of lifestyle whilst ensuring efficiency of servicing and protection of the environment.

GOALS

Goals are identifiable long-term end results or outcomes which together enable Council to achieve its Mission. Council has adopted the following goals:

- To develop an organisational environment that fosters fairness and honesty, high productivity and continual improvement in management and workplace practices.
- To give optimum value for money.
- To promote Council universally as being a professional and committed organisation dedicated to fulfilling the needs and expectations of the community.
- To maintain excellent teamwork between the Community, Council and Staff.
- To develop communication and consultation strategies to ensure a meaningful working partnership with all stakeholders.

OUR VALUES

Council aims to generate an organisational environment based on openness, honesty and respect which will improve the management of people, systems, and resources available to Council.



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Maiem, Seu Ngapa,

My acknowledgement and due respect to the Kaurareg Nation, the traditional owners of the Kaiwalagal Islands.

It is with pleasure I present the Torres Shire Council Corporate Plan 2018-2023. The Corporate Plan is the foundation setting the direction of Council over the next 5 years, based on community's interest and aspirations. The Plan is a governance requirement of elected members, management and staff of Torres Shire Council to deliver best-practice local government.

At the 2016 Local Government elections our community endorsed a new leadership to guide Torres Shire. As Mayor of Torres Shire Council, I am honoured to lead a team of elected representatives and council staff who all are driven and committed to serve our region.

It is important that we continually update our vision and goals, to build on those strong foundations and to reflect the aspirations of the people who put their trust in us to lead the community. The Corporate Plan will link directly to the Councils Operational Plan which will outline the measures to deliver on the priorities and this will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

I look forward to delivering the priorities along with my colleagues over the next five years in partnership with our local communities.

Cr. Vonda Malone
Mayor – Torres Shire Council

TORRES SHIRE COUNCILLORS

▼ OUR COMMUNITY

▼ OUR PEOPLE

▼ OUR BUSINESS

▼ OUR FUTURE

▼ OUR VALUES

- Honesty and Integrity
- Professionalism
- Openness
- Attitude
- Compliance
- Delegations
- Innovation and continuous improvement
- Teamwork
- Responsiveness
- Learning and development

Cr Gabriel Bani, Cr John Abednego, Mayor Cr Vonda Malone, Deputy Mayor Cr Yen Loban, Cr Thomas Loban





OUR VALUES

Torres Shire Council (TSC) has established expectations that as a team, Councillors and Officers must pursue, both individually and collectively, to improve the service provided to residents, while at all times striving to lift performance and improve on past achievements.

In actively pursuing these expectations, Council aims to generate an organisational environment based on good governance, openness, honesty and respect which will improve the management of people, systems and resources available to Council.

The efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness and consistency of any organisation can only be measured through the performance of its people.



OUR EXPECTATIONS

Honesty and Integrity: We maintain high ethical standards and comply with Council's Code of Conduct.

Professionalism: We value and expect professionalism at all times.

Openness: We are open, accessible and communicate effectively.

Attitude: We take a positive approach to our work and dealings with the community.

Compliance: We support and carry out Council decisions, policies and procedures effectively.

Delegations: We act within the limits of our authority.

Innovation and continuous improvement: We show leadership, provide direction, encourage new initiatives and a culture of continuous improvement.

Teamwork: We recognise the importance of teamwork in achieving the highest possible results for Council and the community.

Responsiveness: We are responsive to Community needs and organisational requirements.

Learning and development: We support learning and development in the organisation in order to enhance service delivery and positive outcomes for the community.



OUR CORPORATE PLAN PROCESS

The Corporate Plan 2018-2023 sets out Council strategic direction for delivering sustainable and vibrant future.

Council conducted a community survey in 2017, the qualitative and quantitative data was drawn from the community survey and which has now formed the foundation for the top priorities in this Corporate plan.

The strategic actions and outcomes identified in this Corporate Plan form part of the basis for our annual Operational and Financial Plans.



OUR PRIORITIES

- ▾ **OUR COMMUNITY**
- ▾ **OUR PEOPLE**
- ▾ **OUR BUSINESS**
- ▾ **OUR FUTURE**

OUR COMMUNITY

1. Our Community

1.1. Our Region (LEAD)

Council is a partner in the determination of significant regional issues

- Engage with Regional, Local, State and Federal Bodies to deliver the community aspiration

1.2. Our Strong Community Advocacy (LEAD)

Community has access to affordable and appropriate housing

- Implement Council's affordable housing program
- Lobby to improve levels of home ownership and affordable rental
 - Lobby State and Federal Government's to support further housing development to address housing need

Community where the cost of living is comparable to the south-east corner

- Identify and lobby for ways to reduce the living costs of the region
- Establish TSC as the recognised community advocate, or lead partner in a regional alliance, to address key community issues
- Leverage off peak bodies including Local Government Association Queensland (LGAQ), Torres and Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA), Indigenous Leaders Forum etc
 - Lobby State and Federal government for Council's Corporate Objectives
 - Maintain positive relations with Federal and State Government including Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Member for Leichardt and Member for Cook
 - Maintain positive relationships with the ministerial and government champions
 - Make deputations with State and Federal Government Representatives
 - Make representation at conferences at National and State levels

1.3. Our Pro-active Community Leadership (LEAD)

Establish TSC as the recognised and pro-active influencer of State/Federal Government policy and planning on Land Management, Native Title, Sea Claims and Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA)

- Engage with State and Federal governments on relevant native title matters
- Maintain engagements through the Kaurareg Native Title Advisory Committee (KNTAC)
- Maintain relations with Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) on relevant issues through the TSC/TSRA MOU

1.4. Our Multi-Cultural Focus (LEAD)

Embrace and recognise the rich heritage and multi-culturalism of the region and promotes a strong, safe, friendly and connected community.

- Develop a multi-cultural strategy for the Shire
- Maintain annual calendar of events detailing major events and festivals
- Maintain International Sister City Relationship with Kushimoto, Japan



1.5. Our Reputation for Integrity & Service (PROVIDE)

A well-informed community with a greater awareness of Council's achievements

- Conduct a regular community survey
- Develop and implement a communication strategy

1.6. Our Entrepreneurship and Innovation (PROVIDE)

Research, plan and implement an on-going revenue generation process to supplement rates and charges income and grant funding

- Create new revenue streams
- Leverage opportunities from Regional Economic Development Program
- Leverage opportunities provided through productivity commission reports
- Retain, encourage and foster business, business growth and community development

1.7. Our Health Consciousness (FACILITATE)

Enhanced community health through the provision of amenities, facilities and promotion of active lifestyles.

- Advocate for health service delivery that are culturally safe and meets the community needs
- Encourage usage of sport and recreation facilities
 - Support the delivery of health active programs
- Promote and support healthy public policy
 - Advocate for further implementation of health infrastructure



OUR PEOPLE

2. Our People

2.1. Our strong team (PROVIDE)

A stable workforce

- Design and implement a tailored Attraction & Retention Strategy

2.2. Our Qualified Staff (PROVIDE)

A well-qualified workforce with effective leadership

- Develop a staff Training and Professional Development Program
- Develop and mentor local talent capabilities within our communities
 - Develop a succession plan/strategy for Indigenous staff

2.3. Our Wellbeing (PROVIDE)

A workforce that is safe and healthy

- Continue to achieve high standard of Workplace Health and Safety
- Continue with Council's Well Being Program supporting physical, mental and psychological health

2.4. Our Organisational Alignment & Performance Planning (PROVIDE)

Council delivers strategic outcomes and is resilient and responsive to change

- Maintain a performance management program that is aligned to strategic outcomes
 - Promote change management, continuous improvement processes and service quality



OUR BUSINESS

3. Our Business

3.1. Our Structural Alignment & Performance Planning

Council's organisational structure delivers strategic outcomes (PROVIDE)

- Adequately resourced organisation to achieve the strategic outcomes
- Annual review TSC organisational structure to align with strategic direction
- Promote change management, continuous improvement processes and service quality

3.2. Our Performance Management (PROVIDE)

Council's Business Units and general services are maintained and continue to perform at agreed standard

- Enhance our project management capabilities
- Establish service standards for Council's activities

3.3. Our Governance (LEAD)

Council maintain effective governance processes

- Maintain best practice financial and risk management practices
- Maintain policies, procedures, frameworks and registers
 - Maintain and meet audit requirements.

3.4. Our Technological Savvy (FACILITATE)

Council embraces new technologies to improve business and services

- Implement technology development to enhance sustainable and efficient services
 - Implement the Information Technology strategic plan

OUR FUTURE

4. Our Future

4.1. Our Revenue Generation (PROVIDE)

A sustainable Community

- Research and build a long-term approach to diversifying Council's revenue streams to support strategic planning imperatives and reduce reliance of rates income.
- Research, plan and implement an approach to securing recurrent funding for key elements of Council's accountabilities to ensure sustainability of service provision and asset maintenance.

4.2. Our Business Diversity/Economic Development (FACILITATE)

A sustainable and diverse local economy

- Create a regional alliance to devise a strategy and action plan to retain and grow local business enterprises and encourage investment in the region, particularly in sustainable, small to medium enterprises.
 - Maintain and drive further commitment and greater employment outcome through the Indigenous Employment and Opportunity Plan (IEOP) and the Indigenous Procurement Plan (IPP).
 - Engage in the Developing Northern Australia rollout to enhance business and economic growth.
 - Advocate to establish the Tourism Information Centre.
 - Engage and support tourism activities.

4.3. Our Asset Management (PROVIDE)

A safe and responsive community

- Regularly review, develop and deliver community programs and activities to prepare for, mitigate, prevent, respond to and recover from natural and man-made disasters.
 - Maintain regular Torres Strait Local Disaster Management Group meetings and liaise with regional and state disaster groups.

4.4. Our Disaster Readiness (LEAD)

Council embraces new technologies to improve business and services

- Implement technology development to enhance sustainable and efficient services
 - Implement the Information Technology strategic plan.

4.5. Our Environmental Consciousness (FACILITATE)

Environmental integrity of our area is maintained

- Develop and implement strategies and community/stakeholder partnerships to promote, improve and support sustainable environmental practices and maintain affordable housing across the region using environmentally sustainable building practices.
- Lead the development of innovative strategies to mitigate the environmental impact of the urban footprint, industry, waste and waste water management and recycling.

4.6. Our Management of Climate Change (FACILITATE)

Council understands and is prepared to address the impacts of climate change

- Develop a pro-active approach to engaging with relevant regional, Local, State and Federal bodies to address the impact of climate change and support adaptation and resilience within community
 - Develop a pro-active approach to develop council's ability to respond promptly to reduce any adverse environmental impacts on community.



THE TORRES STRAIT

The Torres Strait is home of the First Nation Indigenous People of Australia - Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginals. The Torres Strait islands, of more than a hundred islands, traditionally known as Zenadth Kes, are divided into:

- Gudha Maluilgal Boigu; Dauan and Saibai Islands
- Muluilgal Badu; Mabuia and Moa Islands
- Kulkulgal lama (Yam Is); Warraber (Sue Is); Poruma (Coconut Is) & Masig (Yorke Is)
- Meriam Mer (Murray Is); Erub (Darnley Is) and Ugar (Stephen Is)
- Kaiwalagal Waibene (Thursday Is); Ngurupai (Horn Is); Kirriri (Hammond Is); Muralug (Prince of Wales Is); Gealug (Friday Is); Mawai (Wednesday Is), Palilug (Goode Is)

There are three dialects spoken within the three groups of islands, predominated by the 'creole' language that emerged after the arrival of the missionaries:

- Kala Kawa Ya (Top Western and Western group)
- Kala Lagau Ya (Central group)
- Meriam (Eastern group)

The Torres Strait islands are part of the State of Queensland, Australia and the islands of Boigu, Dauan and Saibai are within an active international border where the neighbouring country of Papua New Guinea is visible from those islands' shorelines.

The issues of Customs, Quarantine, Immigration and Defence are administered from Thursday Island within a Treaty that also maintains traditional cultural and trade ties between Papua New Guinea and the people of the Torres Strait.



HISTORY

Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginals occupied the Torres Strait during a period when the celestial tides provided a bridge between Papua New Guinea and Australia over 40,000 years ago.

The first place of permanent European settlement in Torres Strait was Somerset, south-east on the tip of Cape York Peninsula and was occupied from 1863 to 1877.

On account of the hazardous tidal channel between Somerset and Albany Island, the settlement was moved to Port Kennedy – Thursday Island – where the harbour was considered safe with a deep anchorage for the increasing shipping movements of the Pacific traders and the Christian missionaries throughout the Torres Strait.

The discovery of pearl shell in the 1860's led to the influx of Japanese, Malays, Filipinos, Micronesian and European nationalities to this region.

The London Missionary Society landed on Darnley Island on July 1, 1871 and introduced Christianity to the inhabitants. July 1 is recognised as the “Coming of the Light” and is commemorated annually throughout the Torres Strait. July 1 is a Torres Shire gazetted bank holiday each year.

In 1770 Captain James Cook made claim to the east coast of Australia, on Possession Island, in the name of the King of England, the British Crown under international award of terra nullius.

A group of Torres Strait Islanders including Eddie Koiki Mabo campaigned for Indigenous land rights that challenged the Australian legal system and fought for recognition of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of their land. This led to a landmark decision on 3 June 1992 by the High Court of Australia and this significant date is commemorated annually known as Mabo Day and is a Torres Shire gazetted bank holiday.

The inaugural Island Council Meeting at Masig in August 1937 set about the revival of the need to establish the prominence of Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland and Local Government on the outer islands which would set a precedent for the Town Council on Thursday Island. The first migration of outer-island tribal group to Thursday Island occurred around the period of 1930 to form Tamwoy Reserve community under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act.

TORRES SHIRE IN BREIF

Torres Shire consists of Waibene (Thursday Island); Ngurupai (Horn Island); Gealug (Friday Island); Mawai (Wednesday Island); Muralug (Prince of Wales Island) and Palilug (Goode Island) and areas of the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) of Cape York.

Torres Shire is the northern most Shire in the State of Queensland with an international border from the coast line of Western Province in Papua New Guinea down to the 11th degree parallel crossing the Cape York Peninsula at the Jardine River.

Torres Shire is the northern most administration centre for the Commonwealth and State Governments based on Thursday Island which is approximately 3.5 square kilometres.

Torres Shire has a population of approximately 4,600 with approx. 30% transient residents working for the Government in education, police, ambulance, medical, customs, recreation and administrative needs based on Waibene and Ngurupai.

TORRES SHIRE - THURSDAY ISLAND

After almost 40 years of State Government administration the Torres Shire Council was restored to elected Council status in March 1991 and is now administered by a mainstream local authority Council comprising a Mayor and four Councillors.

Torres Shire Council has established an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) with the Kaurareg Traditional Owners on specific aspects of its development and is covered by Native Title.

All commercial activities and social services of the Torres Strait are generated from Thursday Island. The central business and commercial centre is located on the main street, Douglas Street. There are hotels, a motel, food takeaways, numerous retail shops including a chemist, newsagency, hardware, butchery, grocery and bakery shops, Council Chambers, Australia Post and agent for Commonwealth Bank of Australia, National Bank of Australia, Queensland Public Health Centre & Dental Clinic, Radio Station, Police Station, Court House, a hostel, taxi ranks and residences.

Other facilities of the Federal and State Governments maintaining services on Thursday Island include Immigration, Customs, Foreign Affairs & Trade, Fire & Rescue Services, Queensland Ambulance and the Federal Police. A joint Defence Force Base is situated at Hocking Point.

Several Churches are situated at the west end of Douglas Street, with a fully equipped General Hospital at the far end, staffed by professional medical and health personnel with the nursing staff quarters nearby. In emergency cases, patients are medivaced south and the Queensland Ambulance Service plays a major part in servicing the communities in the whole region.

The Thursday Island Cemetery is listed on the Australian Historic Register and a special section is dedicated to approx. 700 graves of Japanese pearl divers and Japanese residents.

Education facilities in the Torres Shire are provided at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School, Tagai State Colleges - Primary Campus and Secondary Campus, Tagai TAFE and the Tagai State College, Horn Island Campus.



HORN ISLAND

Horn Island, known as Ngurupai, is an area of 53 sq. kilometres, with locations for the Airport, Quarry, Landfill and the Loggy Creek dam which is a major infrastructure supplying water to Horn, Hammond & Thursday Islands. The township of Wasaga has a general store, cafe, churches, hotel, motel and museum, a sports stadium and children's play-ground, Police, Health and emergency services.

There are two wharves, one provides an interchange service between the Airport and Thursday Island with daily ferry and water-taxi services for visitors and local commuters, and the other is used as a public cargo and shipping wharf. The Horn Island International Airport is owned and operated by Torres Shire Council.

PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND

Prince of Wales Island, also known as Muralug, is the largest island in the Torres Strait, with an area of 203 square kilometres. It is mainly the traditional lands of the Kaurareg people but also contains a number of leased and freehold areas. The population is approx. 90 residents with homes along the most popular beaches at Muralug, Country Woman's Beach, and Long Beach. Residents commute to nearby Thursday Island by dinghies for work, shopping, medical and a school boat operates to transport children to the schools on Thursday Island.

INNER ISLANDS

Goode Island (Palilug) - has a decommissioned lighthouse, a World War II derelict command post and look-out stations.

Friday Island (Gealug) - is popular for camping and picnics and is the base for this area's largest cultured pearl farm.

Tuesday Islands group and Wednesday Island (Mawai) - are uninhabited islands nearby.

TORRES SHIRE COUNCIL GOVERNMENT POLICY PLAN

Torres Shire Council will continue to advocate on behalf of local constituents, businesses and rate payers on matters of regional significance together with local issues inline with Council's new vision 'To Lead, Provide and Facilitate a safe, sustainable and culturally vibrant community.'

TSC Government Policy Plan:

Towards Greater Governance in Torres Strait – One Boat - The plight for Greater Autonomy has been the aspiration of Torres Strait Islander people of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area since the Inaugural Island Council Meeting in 1937 at Masig (Yorke Island), Torres Strait. Further aspirations were outlined in the report to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs – Title: Torres Strait Islanders - A new deal - A Report on Greater Autonomy for Torres Strait Islanders (August 1997) and from the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) initiated Greater Autonomy Task Force which created the Bamaga Accord (October 2001).

This was further progressed at the Joint Leaders Forum hosted by the Coalition Executive on Thursday Island on 6 May 2014, when the leaders of Torres Shire Council, Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC), Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council (NPARC) and TSRA unanimously passed a joint resolution to progress the remodelling of the Torres Strait governance model. As a result of the Joint Leaders Forum, the Coalition Executive presented a submission to the former Prime Minister the Hon. Tony Abbott MP outlining the aspirations of the region in Canberra on 18 June 2014.

Constitutional Recognition for Indigenous Peoples -

Torres Shire Council acknowledges the foundational work completed on the journey towards constitutional recognition for Indigenous People. The Federal Government commitment and support to date is commended. Torres Shire Council supports Constitutional change to recognise the first people of Australia, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Peoples.

Water Security Supply and Water Filtration - Torres Shire Council is responsible for administering the local government functions including water supply to the residents of Horn Island, Thursday Island and Prince of Wales Island. Water for the region is supplied from Loggy Dam which is located on Horn Island. Loggy Creek Dam was constructed in 1990 by Water Resources (Queensland Government) and consequently handed over to Torres Shire Council to operate and maintain.

The reservoir created by the dam is the principle source of water for the population on Horn Island, Thursday Island and Hammond Island. The water is drawn from the Loggy Creek dam and pumped to the communities of Horn Island and Thursday Island via a reticulation network. The raw water from the dam is currently disinfected via an inline chlorine dosing system which pumps chlorine directly into the rising main supplying Horn Island, Thursday Island and Hammond Island townships. There is no filtration or any other form of water treatment within the current system. Council acknowledge the recent investment from the Queensland Government to install a new Water filtration System by 2020.

National Partnership Agreement on Remote

Indigenous Housing Investment - The Torres Strait region has a significant shortage of affordable residential dwellings, due to unavailability of residential land, competition for housing which pushing sale prices up, and geographical factors such as the costs of building and maintaining homes in remote areas. Torres Shire Council believes that the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPAIHH) initiated by the former government has an enormous ability and strength to make the Australian dream of "home ownership" a reality to the remote Indigenous peoples of this great nation.

Torres Shire Council is disappointed that there has been no provision made in the Federal Budget 2018/2019 for NPAIHH. There is growing evidence that the housing



crisis in Indigenous communities is rising, Council is seeking support from the Federal Government to Close the Gap for Indigenous People.

Horn Island Airport Investment - The Horn Island Airport now provides the largest gateway to the Torres Strait region. The Mainland has accessibility with highways, motorways, arterial roads and road networks that service the mobility of the community and business needs. However the Torres Strait Region requires airports and marine access to service the community and business needs as no extensive road transportation exists due to the existence of many islands and not a consolidated land mass. It is for this reason that Council is seeking funding assistance to further develop the airport needs so that the passenger movements and economic development can be adequately serviced. Should economic development be considered as a determining factor then this highway airport into the Torres Strait Region could be considered the most important asset that urgently needs modification.

There is a need to comply with CASA requirements as well as establish higher level safety operating processes at the airport. There has been interest in establishing

a seafood processing facility should an upgrade occur. Both the upgrade and new industry interest will create employment for the region which presently has high levels of unemployment. The investment by government will decrease payment of unemployment benefits for which no economic return is generated for the community as their will be employment created. The future development will have a cultural focus to ensure it maximises local employment opportunities.

Torres Strait Regional Waste Management - Being in a remote area of Australia neighbouring the international border of Papua New Guinea, our Torres Strait island communities need to cope with significant operational and logistical challenges when developing long term solutions for dealing with waste materials. Focusing on Regional Waste Management strategy is now a high priority by the local authorities of the Torres Strait region. Our major constraints which require consideration when providing current and future operations include:

- our region's climatic conditions with heavy constant rain during the wet season
- transportation logistics with moving heavy equipment within the region limited to sea freight
- this region's two quarantine zones as well as the mainland quarantine entry
- limited infrastructure for handling large equipment and managing waste now and in the future

Dengue fever is a constant threat to health with living in the tropics of the Torres Strait. Removing likely mosquito breeding grounds in the our communities will provide long term and sustainable solutions to the management of waste and significantly reduce the environmental risks associated with the accumulation of old car bodies, machinery and plant equipment, whiteware and appliances in an area of significant environmental importance.

As the only part of Australia with an active international border and where the neighbouring country is visible from the shoreline, the Torres Strait receives a strong focus from Commonwealth and State governments regarding customs and quarantine matters. The region is divided into two zones being the Torres Strait Protected Zone and a Special Quarantine Zone. The following quarantine zones apply to the Torres Strait.

Various prohibited items, including soil and live plants, cannot be moved between these zones or from any

Torres Strait island to the mainland of Australia. Decontamination is a major factor when moving materials and equipment in these zones especially when quarry items have been stockpiled in the open air prior to being crushed and when equipment and machinery have been used in landfill environments.

Investment for the Establishment of Tourism Centre – The geographic location of our region – Torres Strait, provides a strong platform and foundation to launch new economic, social, educational information technology and communication initiatives in partnership which enhance the development of our region’s strategic goals and aspirations.

One of these goals is to attract investment to allow the establishment of a Tourism Information Centre for the Torres Strait region. This will also develop employment opportunities for local indigenous individuals and businesses.

Thursday Island is recognised as the administrative centre, tourism hub and gateway to the most northern Australian region. Visitors have an engaging and interesting experience of the unique history and living culture of the multi-culture peoples in the Strait, however there is no dedicated precinct that caters for the visitors and tourists on their arrival to this region. Cruise ships are increasingly using the route either north or south through the Torres Strait shipping channel and are continuing to use Thursday Island as a stopover on their itinerary.

High Cost of Living in Torres Strait - One of the major issues for the greater population of Australians living in Far North Queensland (Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area) is the high cost of living due to our remote location and the logistics involved in the movement of goods and services from our nearest port of Cairns.

The seaport, airport and road network are critical transport infrastructures that connect the Torres Strait to mainland Australia.

The major contributing factor to any Australian island community off the coast of mainland Australia depends on the transportation of goods which involves fuel and freight costs. The Torres Shire townships of Thursday Island, Horn Island and Prince of Wales Island and sixteen outer island communities are such examples

linked by sea, with the only mode of transport being by ferries, barges, small boats and light aircraft.

Economic Development – Employment Outcomes
Torres Strait is labelled as a disadvantaged region in Northern Australia due to our location and remoteness. There are a variety of impediments to growth and economic challenges in the Torres Strait, which includes the availability and quality of sufficient well paying jobs to high construction costs compared to mainland Australia.

Queensland Unemployment Level 6%
Torres Shire Unemployment Level 11%

Within the Torres Shire there remains a high level of unemployment, in particular, the age group of youth constituents. There needs to be a strong Government commitment to provide the appropriate traineeship and apprenticeship investments at the completion of secondary schooling to continue on to supporting the transition into the workforce.

Health Infrastructure - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples average life expectancy is 69.1 years for indigenous males and 73.7 for indigenous females, this was 10.6 and 9.5 years lower than the life expectancy of non-Indigenous males and females respectively. These records are alarming and have not improved over the recent decades.

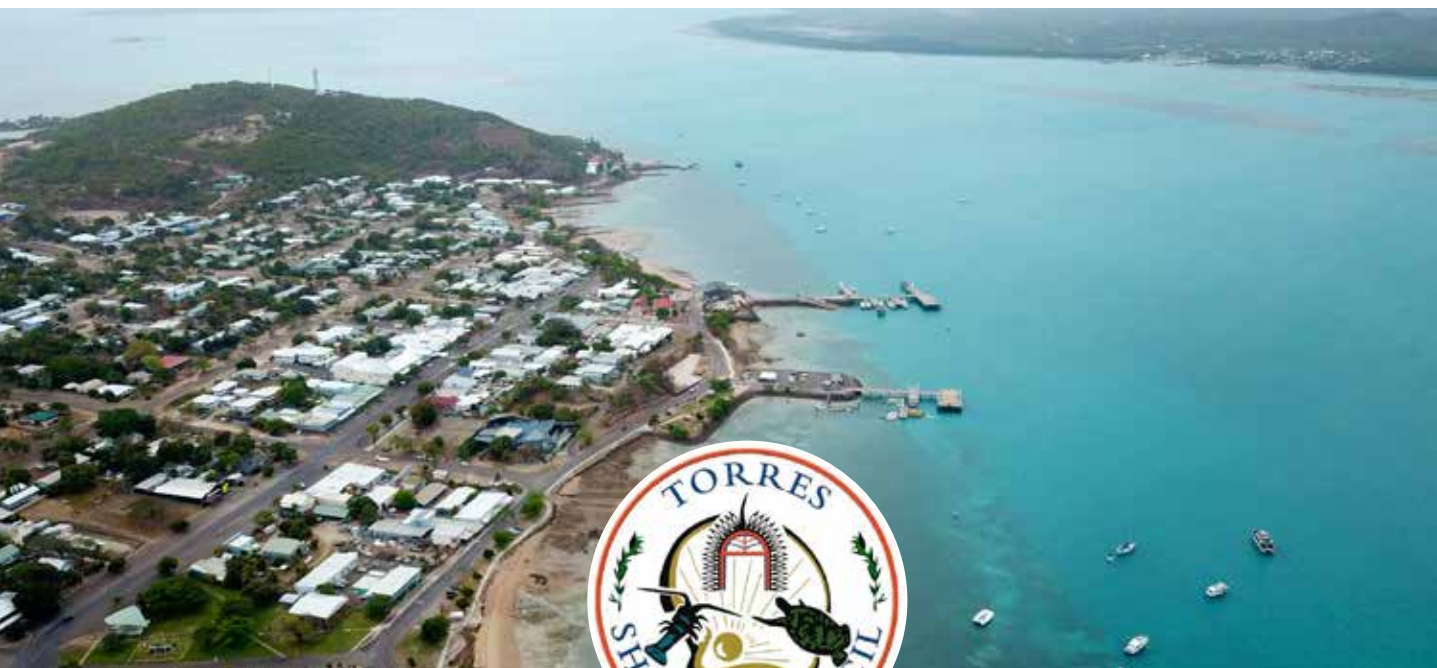
There are a number of impediments that contribute to these factors:

- limited access to fresh wholesome foods, like fruit and vegetables
- remoteness and isolation factors
- extreme high costs of living in a remote region of Australia
- inaccessibility to health infrastructure
- emphasis on prescription care compared to preventative care and measures
- lack of services in this region to promote healthy lifestyles
- poor housing, nutrition, employment and education

To enjoy the benefits of an active healthy lifestyle, the region requires adequate investment directed to prevention control, this investment will deliver quality outdoor health infrastructure in motivating local constituents to have access to and participate in regular exercise.







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