

Maximising Potential Cultural Strategy 2015 – 2018





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1. Introduction

Maximising Potential: Cultural Strategy 2015-2018 is Moreton Bay Regional Council's second cultural services strategy. Council's first strategy: *Richer than the sum of its pARTS*, was prepared in 2010 and was focussed on strategies that would bring together and consolidate resources, and develop a more strategic approach to cultural program delivery.

The focus of the *Maximising Potential: Cultural Strategy 2015-2018* is to maximise the community benefit from Council's significant investment in cultural infrastructure, its commitment to resourcing cultural activities, and the resources provided by Council to cultural groups through the leasing of cultural facilities, grant and subsidies.

In developing this cultural services strategy, community consultation was undertaken to seek the views and opinions of people about the value of cultural activities to community wellbeing, and Council's performance in the delivery of cultural facilities and programs across the region.

A key outcome of the community consultation was that people consider cultural activities to be very important to personal wellbeing and community life. For many, the region's cultural facilities and programs was a factor in determining their choice to live in the Moreton Bay Region.

The community consultation also showed that people had a positive opinion of Council's cultural services. People spoke highly of Council's cultural programs and Council's galleries and museums in terms of the range and standard of programs, quality of spaces, and accessibility of buildings.

Council, in partnership with the cultural sector has made a significant contribution and investment in cultural facilities and programs. Opportunities now exist to further support cultural activities and increase visitation and participation by continuing the build to capacity of the sector and by raising the profile of cultural facilities and programs throughout the region and beyond.

2. Policy Context

In the Moreton Bay Region Community Plan 2011 – 2021 Council's vision for the region is: *A thriving region of opportunity where our communities enjoy a vibrant lifestyle.*

Council's Corporate Plan 2012 – 2017 is Council's response to the first 5 years of the Community Plan and outlines what Council will do to achieve this vision. Council's cultural services, as described in the Corporate Plan, play an important role in Council's efforts to achieve this vision.

Council's cultural services contribute to this vision through its significant investment in cultural programs and projects, cultural facilities and public art. Council has also made a significant contribution to cultural groups across the region through the leasing of facilities, grants and subsidies, and through training and development opportunities.

Council's cultural services make an important contribution to the lifestyle and amenity of the Moreton Bay Region. The cultural facilities and activities provided by Council in partnership with cultural groups promote participation in community life and provide valuable recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. Cultural facilities and activities also create opportunities for people to develop skills and knowledge in the arts and to express their creativity. It is also important to note the role that cultural facilities such as public art and heritage trails play in enhancing the amenity of the region.

Council's cultural services also make an important contribution to local economic growth by supporting the various creative industries that exist throughout the region. Cultural and creative industries are one of the fastest growing economic sectors in Australia. The Moreton Bay Region has a number of established creative industries that have the potential to grow and expand over the coming years as creative individuals and businesses are attracted to live and work in the region.

The economic benefits of the Moreton Bay Region's cultural and creative industries include the direct employment of people in these industries and in the sale of cultural and creative goods. Furthermore, these cultural and creative industries create opportunities for cultural tourism at the local, regional, national and international level.





3. Cultural Profile

3.1 Cultural Organisations

The Moreton Bay Region has a dynamic and growing cultural sector. In 2015 Moreton Bay Region has over sixty three cultural organisations that include visual arts organisations, craft associations, musical associations, and historical societies. Each organisation offers a comprehensive range of programs for their members and residents of the region. Underpinning the aims for each organisation is to sustain participation, further develop skills, and to provide opportunities for members to present their creative output to the region.

The Moreton Bay region has a vibrant visual arts community and legacy and this is reflected by the numerous organisations within the region. Each has a long history that demonstrates sustainability and resilience to fluctuating membership. While the region has many individuals that maintain a diverse craft practice, the region has three crafts, Wood Craft, Lapidary and Textile represented by numerous associations throughout the region.

Theatre associations provide opportunity for residents to attend and participate in a variety of theatre productions. Musical theatre associations sustain an energetic music program throughout the region, with a strong focus on musical theatre productions. This is evident by the number of annual musical productions presented throughout the region.

Each significant population area within the region has an historical society formed by the residents of the area to capture relevant historical information and/or objects. The significance of each collection is dependent on the society's ability to store, maintain and exhibit their collections.

3.2 Cultural Facilities

Council manages an Art Gallery and Museum network, and the Redcliffe Cultural Centre to provide the region with the opportunity to experience and participate in cultural activities.

The Art Gallery and Museum network comprises of three museums and three galleries which attract over 125,000 visitors annually. The network is supported by professional staff assisted by a team of volunteers. Each venue offers a variety of programs that include a changing exhibition program, public programs for adults and children, and ongoing programs that manage both the social history collections and art collection. The network aims to engage with the region, offer quality programming, and to remain relevant.

The Redcliffe Cultural Centre is an exciting performing and creative arts space that caters for the cultural needs of local and regional audiences. The centre presents, touring productions, comedy shows, movies, musicals, conferences, civic functions, as well as a variety of community organisations and arts activities.

In addition to Councils managed facilities, Council has a substantial capital investment in 19 facilities leased to cultural organisations across the region. Council has adopted three master plans to direct planned future development for, Old Bay Road, Bribie Island Community Arts Centre, and the Caboolture Historical Village.



3.3 Heritage

Council acknowledges the importance of Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage by maintaining a record of known significant heritage sites and by actively collecting relevant objects for the regional collections. To educate and inform residents and visitors to the region, Council has developed a number of heritage trails that identify historical sites highlighting buildings and sites of significance. Through the museum network programs, it promotes and educates residents and visitors about the history of the region.

3.4 Public Art

Council currently has three main public art precincts throughout the region. The Caboolture Trail of Reflections showcases over 18 interrelated public artworks. The key themes reflected by the artists are a collective statement about two important local community values. The values are the importance of preserving social history and natural history. This public art collection creatively raises consciousness about the unique Caboolture river system and the still waters of the Pumicestone region. It also preserves social history by depicting the carpet snake in various ways. Derived from the Kabi language 'Cabool' denotes Caboolture the place of the carpet snake (the python *Morelia spilota*). The Redcliffe Foreshore Public Art Trail and the Woorim Foreshore Public Art Trail are public art collections that respond to the people and histories of the Moreton Bay region. The Moreton Bay Region's coastline has a unique character and forms part of a significant marine environment and habitat. Integrated into the streetscape and landscaping, these artworks collectively express a local dialogue between nature, culture and people.





4. Council's Investment in Cultural Services

This strategy will guide Council's investment in cultural facilities and programs over the next three years as it continues to:

1. **Provide a sustainable and accessible network of cultural facilities and services that reflects the cultural aspirations of the region.**

Council has an ongoing commitment to the provision of cultural facilities. Through its art galleries, museum and Redcliffe Cultural Centre, Council continues to provide exhibitions, public programs and performing arts events of a high standard. Through this strategy, Council's focus will be on maximising visitation at these facilities.

2. **Provide opportunities for cultural expression and development through participation in a variety of cultural programs and activities.**

In addition to the facility based public programs mentioned above, Council delivers cultural programs and activities in the community. Council also actively supports cultural groups in the delivery of cultural programs and activities through various funding initiatives and training programs. Over the next three years, Council will be working towards increasing community participation in these cultural programs and activities.

3. **Maximise the creative industries potential of the Moreton Bay Region.**

Council values the contribution of creative industries to the local economy throughout the region. Over the next three years, Council will be actively working to support and develop creative industries through the provision of studio spaces at the Caboolture Hub and through a variety of funding and professional development opportunities. Council will also be providing opportunities for the creative industries to showcase the products, services and activities associated with this growing sector.

4. **Identify, preserve and promote the region's rich cultural heritage and social history.**

Council has an important role in collecting and maintain historical items and oral histories through its Museum network. Council continues to enhance the quality and significance of its Museum exhibitions, and over the next three years Council will be focussing on maximising visitation and participation in the activities of its Museums. Council will also be working to promote and develop heritage trails throughout the region and to develop a coordinated policy response to Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage matters.



5. **Maximise the cultural tourism potential of the region.**

Council will endeavour to attract increased numbers of visitors and tourists to the region to visit its Art Gallery and Museum networks and to participation in the vast array of cultural activities on offer in the region through Council programs and cultural organisations.

6. **Build the capacity of cultural organisations to deliver a variety of cultural services and programs throughout the region.**

Working in partnership with the community will continue to be an important priority for Council over the next three years. Council is committed to maximising the value and relevance of its professional development programs and will continue to support cultural organisations by providing access to cultural facilities. Council will also continue to actively support cultural initiatives through its grants programs.

7. **Bring vitality and vibrancy to civic spaces.**

Council recognises the importance of public art and is committed to creating vibrant public spaces. Public art enlivens communities, enriches culture, builds community pride, helps celebrate diversity, and is considered critical to the region's identity. Over the next three years Council will also continue to encourage the use of public spaces by creatives and cultural groups.



5. Council's Programs, Projects and Support to Cultural Groups

In order to maximise the community benefit from Council's investment in cultural programs, projects and support provided to cultural groups, the Council will undertake the following actions over the next three years:

5.1 Cultural Events and Activities

1. **Investigate the opportunity to conduct an annual arts event to showcase the region's creativity.**
This event would raise the profile of local artists and cultural groups, provide a valuable networking opportunity for the cultural sector, and would attract visitors and tourists to the region.
2. **Increase participation in Council's professional arts development program (currently known as 'Food for Thought').**
To increase participation, Council will evaluate the success of the current '*Food for Thought*' program and utilise participant feedback to ensure future events/training are responsive to the cultural sector's needs and aspirations.

5.2 Policy, Research and Innovation

1. **Develop cultural heritage policies for Council.**
These policies will outline Council's role and responsibilities in the identification, recording, preservation and promotion of the region's cultural heritage including Indigenous cultural heritage.
2. **Evaluate the outcomes achieved to-date through the Caboolture Hub Creative Studios.**
This evaluation will survey all previous and current users to document and evaluate the outcomes achieved. Consideration may then be given to the development of further studios in other creative centres throughout the region.
3. **Review Council's online community and cultural directories.**
This review will ensure that information about cultural groups, programs and activities across the region are up-to-date and is presented in the most appropriate and user-friendly format.
4. **Investigate opportunities to utilise new technologies such as smartphone applications to promote the region's cultural facilities, groups and activities.**
This investigation will focus on how written, visual and audible story telling resources can be enabled by a scalable website/app for Council's cultural facilities. To compliment this initiative, consideration will also be given to the provision of social media training for cultural groups across the region.



5. Maximise the activation of Council’s cultural facility networks as places of centre-based cultural development.

This will be achieved by engaging the cultural sector in the public programs delivered at these facilities. Opportunities also exist to develop programs that have a focus on Indigenous and multicultural engagement.

5.3 Support to Cultural Groups

1. Continue to invest in the Community Grants Program, including targeted investment in the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF).

Through this investment, Council will continue to encourage the establishment of innovative arts projects and to promote the professional development and employment of arts and cultural workers.

2. Promote participation in Council programs that develop the governance and administration skills of cultural groups.

To achieve this, Council will review and adapt its ‘Modern Club Management’ programs to suit cultural groups. This program provides expert advice and resource manuals with supporting templates that systematically take cultural groups through steps that will improve governance, committee development and the volunteer management process. The initial focus of this initiative will be cultural groups that have a lease with Council to operate from a Council-owned facility.

3. Provide opportunities for cultural groups to lease Council owned or controlled land and facilities.

From time to time, Council leases land and facilities for community groups for cultural activities. This type of support is dependent on the availability of suitable land and facilities, the ongoing sustainability of the community group, and the wider community benefit to be derived from the proposed activity.



6. Council's Art Gallery Network

In order to maximise the community benefit from Council's investment in its Art Gallery network and associated art collection, the Council will undertake the following actions over the next three years:

6.1 Facility Development

1. Investigate the delivery of a cultural facility to replace the existing Pine Rivers Art Gallery in a highly visible and accessible location.

The scope of this investigation will include:

- a multipurpose gallery space for both the creation and presentation of artwork
- accommodation of multiple art forms and mediums
- an ancillary gallery for the presentation of artwork by regional artists

2. Improve signage and way-finding for Council's Art Gallery network.

Under this initiative, priority will be given to the Caboolture Regional Art Gallery as it is Council's premier visual arts facility located at the Caboolture Hub. This will include installing street signage in King Street and in other key locations in the Caboolture CBD.

3. Continue to undertake lighting upgrades throughout Council's Art Gallery network to improve energy efficiency and quality of lighting within each facility.

This will reduce energy consumption throughout the Art Gallery network and will improve the visitor experience.

4. Investigate the potential of the Redcliffe City Art Gallery facility to accommodate additional exhibition and public programs spaces.

The scope of this investigation will include:

- a dedicated exhibition space so that visitors are able to experience exhibitions developed from Council's collection on an ongoing basis
- public programs space for educational activities associated with the exhibition program
- maintaining exhibition space for community artists

5. Undertake an audit of current collection management and storage spaces.

This audit will optimise exhibition and public programs spaces to accommodate growth throughout Council's Art Gallery network. The audit will also provide recommendations in relation the most effective model for storing and exhibiting Council's art collection into the future.



6.2 Exhibitions and Public Programs

1. Develop initiatives that increase visitation to Council's Art Gallery network.

Initiatives may include, but not be limited to:

- development of a tourism arts strategy
- a coordinated approach to the marketing of the Art Gallery network
- a dedicated touring exhibition program
- visits to schools, aged care facilities and other communities organisations

2. Continue to grow the art collection through Council's acquisition program in order to build a collection of works that is relevant to the region.

Through this investment, Council will ensure that its collection will continue to be the foundation for relevant and engaging exhibitions throughout the network into the future.

3. Improve the functionality of Council's online Art Collection Portal.

To achieve this, the collection database will be actively maintained and the overall functionality of the portal will reviewed. Ultimately, this will enable all of Council's art collection to be available on-line.

4. Investigate the development of community outreach and education programs.

These programs will target the education sector and the broader community. This may include the development of information outreach kits and curriculum-based online fact sheets.

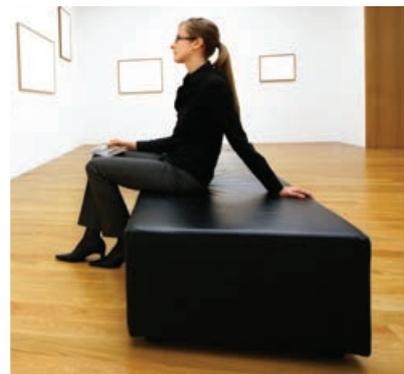
5. Attract and curate exhibitions of national and international standard.

This will ensure that Council maintains and further develops industry networks and partnerships at the regional, state and national level.

6.3 Community and Emerging Artists

1. Continue to provide dedicated spaces that allow cultural groups and emerging artists to exhibit where appropriate.

These spaces will provide professional development opportunities for local artists to further understand current arts industry practice as it relates to exhibiting their works.





7. Council's Museum Network

In order to maximise the community benefit from Council's investment in its Museum Network, the Council will undertake the following actions over the next three years:

7.1 Facility Development

- 1. Improve signage and way-finding for Council's Museum network.**
Under this initiative, signage currently on Museum buildings will be updated and additional street signage will be provided where required.
- 2. Undertake an audit of current collection management and storage spaces.**
This audit will optimise exhibition and public programs spaces to accommodate growth throughout Council's Museum network. The audit will also provide recommendations in relation the most effective model for storing and exhibiting Council's Museum collections into the future.
- 3. Undertake lighting upgrades throughout Council Museum network to improve energy efficiency and quality of lighting within each facility.**
This will reduce energy consumption throughout the Museum network and will improve the visitor experience.
- 4. Review disability access and services for people with visual or hearing impairments throughout the Museum network and make modifications as required.**
This initiative will ensure that Council's Museums can be enjoyed by all visitors.

7.2 Exhibitions and Public Programs

- 1. Review the curatorial themes driving exhibitions and public programs across Council's Museum network.**
This review will ensure that curatorial themes across Council's Museum network will continue to reflect past and contemporary views of local history.
- 2. Continue to grow the collection through Council's acquisition program.**
This acquisition program represents a long term investment in the cultural capital of the community and is Council's key resource for exhibitions and educational programs.
- 3. Revitalise semi-permanent exhibitions for the Pine Rivers Heritage Museum and the Redcliffe Museum.**
This initiative will ensure that Council's semi-permanent exhibitions are representative of the established curatorial themes and maximise the visitor experience.



4. Develop initiatives that increase visitation to Council's Museum network.

Initiatives may include, but not be limited to:

- a coordinated approach to the marketing of the Museum network
- identifying gaps in Museum audiences and develop programs to target these groups
- visits to schools, aged care facilities and other communities organisations

5. Investigate the development of community outreach and education programs.

These programs should target the education sector and the broader community. This may include the development of information outreach kits and curriculum-based online fact sheets.

8. Redcliffe Cultural Centre

In order to maximise the community benefit from Council's investment in the Redcliffe Cultural Centre, the Council will undertake the following actions over the next three years:

8.1 Facility Development

1. Refurbish meeting room space, outdoor areas and other spaces within the Redcliffe Cultural Centre.

The centre has numerous areas for hire by community and commercial groups. The planned improvements to these areas will increase customer satisfaction with the venue and will attract new hirers.

2. Upgrade technology, sound and lighting in the main theatre.

This will improve the quality of production at the Redcliffe Cultural Centre and enhance the visitor experience.

8.2 Service Delivery

1. Prepare and implement a business plan for the Redcliffe Cultural Centre to guide service delivery and future investment at this facility.

This business plan will:

- review the services provided by the Redcliffe Cultural Centre to the community
- maximise the ongoing sustainability of the Redcliffe Cultural Centre
- maximise customer satisfaction with the Redcliffe Cultural Centre
- identify opportunities for the Redcliffe Cultural Centre in the performing arts sector.



9. Public Art

In order to maximise the community benefit from Council's investment in public art, the Council will undertake the following actions over the next three years:

1. **Develop a public art policy.**

This policy will provide a framework that continues the development of a strong public art collection for the region. The framework will provide guidelines for the selection and installation of public art pieces that are relevant to the region.

2. **Trial the use of new technologies such as smartphone applications to promote the region's public art collection.**

This trial will develop written, visual and audible story telling resources that can be enabled by a scalable website/app for Council's public art precincts.

3. **Continue to investigate opportunities to integrate public art with infrastructure projects.**

Public art has the potential to improve the aesthetic value of Council's infrastructure projects. Where appropriate, Council will endeavour to design and install public art pieces that reflect the cultural aspirations of the community.



10. Implementation and Review

Each year Council will review the implementation of this cultural services strategy when preparing the annual budget and operational plan. This will ensure that this strategy will continue to inform Council's decision making in relation to the delivery of Council services across the region. It is also anticipated that from time to time, Council officers will seek feedback from the cultural sector about Council's performance in delivering on the key outcomes and actions detailed in this plan.

