

Emerald Shire –

Where people make a difference

CORPORATE PLAN

2005 - 2010



Message from the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer

Foreword

We are delighted to introduce this Corporate Plan (2005 – 2010) which describes the challenges, vision and strategies for the Shire over the next five years.

The Shire is undergoing rapid growth complementing the increased coal mining activity in the area due to the demand for coal on the world market. Emerald Shire is also very diverse in industry due to cotton, cattle, grain, sunflowers, horticulture, viticulture, tourism, sapphires and service industries associated with coal.

Emerald town is the regional centre for the Central Highlands and has most facilities for a large rural town. The Shire population is estimated at 15,000 people with Emerald town having a population in the vicinity of 12,000. Recent studies project Emerald town's population to 15,000 by 2010.

It is intended to position the Shire as a vibrant, attractive place, with a friendly and safe community where innovation and lifestyle are paramount.

This plan and the eight Key Strategic Issues developed and/or endorsed during the consultation phase, will assist in achieving the vision "*Lifestyle, Industry and Opportunity*".

We look forward to progressing this plan with the community to achieve the various challenges and outcomes formulated. With the support of our councillors, staff and citizens, we believe we can provide Emerald Shire with an exciting and prosperous future.

Under the banner of "Emerald Shire - where people make a difference" we are confident our wonderful citizens will forge the way ahead in harmony and enhance the Shire as a great place to live.

Councillor Peter Maguire
Mayor

Bryan Ottone
Chief Executive Officer

EMERALD SHIRE

A SNAPSHOT

This corporate plan reflects the Shire's capacity and ability to meet many challenges it will confront in the coming years.

The Shire has branded its strategic focus under the banner:

"Emerald Shire – where people make a difference"



Lifestyle is a critical component of the Shire's future. The Shire is experiencing rapid growth and it is important this growth is complemented with a corresponding enhancement of community services, housing, economic development and employment opportunities.

Emerald Shire is very diverse in industry. Emerald is a large rural town which is the regional centre for the Central Highlands.

So that Emerald Shire can capitalise on the opportunities confronting it, we must build flexibility and innovation into our planning for the development and future management of Emerald Shire.

This plan will build upon the strengths of previous plans and, together with the community, will strive to achieve a safe and healthy environment for both residents and visitors.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CORPORATE PLAN

The Corporate Plan establishes the overall policy framework for all activities of local government. These policies are then carried through into the various planning and management documents of the Council. They provide a framework for operational planning within the Shire.

It is a requirement under the Local Government Act 1993 to prepare and adopt a Corporate Plan covering a period of at least four years.



The Local Government Finance Standards (1994) also stipulate that Corporate Plans must include the following:

- An assessment of local and regional issues, and external and internal factors affecting its area and its response to the issues.
- A statement of its strategic direction.
- A statement of objectives about the issues affecting its area, and
- Strategies for achieving the objectives.

Reporting on Corporate Plan performance is undertaken on a yearly basis in Council's Annual Report. This document presents the results achieved for the period under review with direct reference to the key strategies identified for each key strategic issue listed in the Corporate Plan. Performance is assessed with reference to compliance or achievement of the specific strategy.

A copy of Council's Annual Report is available for perusal at the Shire Office or Library; can be purchased at the Shire Office; and viewed on Council's website: www.emerald.qld.gov.au

Achieving the objectives and strategies of the Corporate Plan is coordinated through an operational plan which is adopted yearly and is closely aligned with the respective annual budget.

This corporate plan was developed as a draft document by councillors and staff incorporating issues gathered from annual community consultation meetings held throughout the Shire. Further community consultation was requested by mailing copies of the draft plan to many core agencies, associations and groups within & outside the Shire for comment and input as well as advertising the document in the media and placing it on the Council's website. Council considered all submissions received and enhanced the plan from such input.



OUR APPROACH



Emerald Shire Council is committed to the following principles:

- Ensuring that the Council is coordinating and managing its internal organisation in a progressive, efficient and effective manner.
- The provision of infrastructure that supports, develops and reflects a unique sense of place and identity for all Shire citizens.
- The timely provision of Council's core services in accordance with the needs of the community.
- Effective and efficient interaction between Council staff, Councillors and the Community.
- Effective dissemination of information to residents regarding Council services, activities, decisions and matters that affect the Shire.
- Adapting to the information needs of the community by developing technological tools that keep pace with the global thrust of change.
- The provision of a safe working environment, free of harassment and discrimination.

Council is also strongly committed to improving the way it does business.

While adopting an holistic approach to service delivery, the ultimate goal is to ensure that the desired outcomes (Council's Corporate Plan vision and objectives and identified valid community expectations) are always achieved and the quality of services provided is consistently delivered.

OUR KEY CHALLENGES

(i) IMAGE/IDENTITY

The continual growth of the Shire has meant the provision of essential services is a key priority. As population growth and diversity increases, it is important to establish a recognisable slogan/identity for the Shire.

“Emerald Shire – where people make a difference” is a key ingredient in achieving appropriate outcomes for the future. Our “wonderful people” are a trademark for the Shire. A new logo to complement the existing emblem will also provide further identity/image/**badging** of the Shire.

(ii) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The constant upgrading and enhancement of telecommunications and information infrastructure will provide the foundation for successful global commerce and quality of life in the Shire. Increased use of E-Commerce and the internet will enhance the way Council will conduct business with its citizens.

(iii) LIFESTYLE

With a continual increase in population and changing community expectations, **it is important to ensure future planning maintains and provides the quality lifestyle that has been reminiscent in the Shire for decades.**

(iv) PLANNING

The new IPA Planning Scheme for the Shire will provide a good tool **for triple bottom line sustainable development and strategic planning to meet future community needs.**

(v) SAFETY

Community demands for a safe and friendly environment with less crime are paramount for future planning and delivery. This can be achieved in partnership with Council, government agencies and the community.

(vi) **LEARNING & INNOVATION**

With the educational facilities in Emerald Shire including the CQU Campus, the Emerald Agricultural College, the TAFE College and excellent schools and libraries, it is important for the citizens to utilise these local institutions to enhance learning and innovations.

(vii) **JOBS**

The diversity of area in industry and commerce provides a wonderful network of job opportunities. Like many areas, there is a shortage of tradespeople and it is important to encourage our youth to consider acquiring a trade and other skill based qualifications and stay in the area.

(viii) **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Due to the diversity of industry, it is important to attract more industry to the area to build on what we have, **value add and provide more opportunity for the future economic well being of the area.**

(ix) **ARTS & CULTURE**

Coordination and promotion of the local arts and cultural industry is seen as an important component of providing a good balance. Supporting multi-cultural initiatives is also important.

(x) **TOURISM**

Tourism is emerging as a very important industry, particularly in the area of the Gemfields. The Shire is strategically located to capture the travelling tourists and every endeavour must be taken to enhance the promotion and capture of this market.

(xi) **REGIONALISM**

It is important to work regionally and in partnership with our neighbouring Councils and government agencies to achieve desired outcomes in partnership. This concept will enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

SWOT ANALYSIS – CONSIDERED FIRST IN THE PROCESS

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Economic Diversity	Lack of secondary industry	Investment/Industries/Urban Development	Industry Downturn
Water	Drought/Climate	Regional markets	Drought
Soil Types	Lack of specialist medical services	Higher value use of water	Greenhouse/Climate Change
Demographics/Younger Age Groups	Lack of Public Transport	Agricultural Diversification	Change to Government Policies
Vital/Strong Industries, eg coal mining, cotton	Attracting skilled staff	Value adding	Cost Shifting
Strong Government Sector	High cost of living/housing	Conference Centre	Increase in community expectations
Regional Centre	Lack of housing	Transport – Infrastructure	Natural/Man made Disasters
Transport	Communication	Coal Mine Developments	Crime
Growth	Remoteness	Partnerships	Sea Change
Strong Private Sector	Entertainment Venues/Conference Venues	Tourism	Accommodation
Our People/Community/Citizens	Youth/Aged Activities	Research	Skilled labour
Climate	Disability Access	Natural Resource Management	Shortage of Residential & Industrial Land
Education	Perceived lack of confidence – external investors	Education	Advanced Technology
Lifestyle		Advanced Technology	Global/Local Markets
Local Shopping		Employment	Lack of seasonal workers
Governance			
Tourism – Dam & Gemfields; Business Tourism			
Low Unemployment Rate			

Core Values/Principles

- Leadership
- Integrity – Honesty and Respect
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Consultative/Participative
- Service excellence
- Equity
- Quality
- Efficiency & effectiveness
- Sustainable development
- Staff & Councillors
- Innovative
- Ethics

Vision

LIFESTYLE, INDUSTRY AND OPPORTUNITY.

Mission

“Lead, build and promote sustainable development and diversity”.

Key Strategic Issues

- Governance & Leadership (Vision, Statutory Compliance)
- Economic Development, Tourism, Sustainability & Land Use Planning
- Shire Services, Infrastructure & Facilities (expectations)
- Community Engagement
- Engaging State/Federal Government and Regionalism
- Lifestyle
- Skilled Human Resources
- Learning and Innovation

VALUES

Council is guided by a number of important values which complement our vision and mission:

- **Leadership**
Council will display initiative and leadership in achieving its vision and activities.
- **Integrity – Honesty and Respect**
We will act with honesty, integrity and with respect.
- **Transparency**
We will be open and honest in our decision making.
- **Accountability**
We will ensure that our actions, conduct and relationships are ethical, responsible and honest.
- **Consultative/Participative**
We will consistently consult with citizens and keep them informed.
- **Service Excellence**
We will strive to be a community based organisation that aspires to professionalism and excellence in everything it does.
- **Equity**
We will ensure services are provided fairly to all people and groups, taking into account special needs.
- **Quality**
We will regularly review our performance to continually improve our service.
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness**
Services, operations and management of resources will be carried out efficiently and effectively.
- **Sustainable Development**
We will pursue the principles of economic and social sustainability into our policies, programs and services.
- **Staff and Councillors**
Staff and Councillors will in partnership be resilient, keep abreast of change, and provide a high standard of service.
- **Innovative**
We will strive to pursue the principles of innovation into our decision making and conduct.
- **Ethics**
We will act with high moral standards in accordance with a responsible code of behaviour.

KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

1. Governance

Objective: *To provide leadership and an open and accountable system of local government.*

Strategies:

- Develop a “code of conduct” for Councillors.
- Review the “code of conduct” for staff.
- Review all local laws and policies.
- Review all General policies of Council.
- Develop a whole of organisation “customer enquiry” system.
- Develop a risk management procedure for whole of organisation.
- Construct a new Council Chambers/Offices to cater for the future needs.
- Provide a safe and healthy workplace and meet OH&S obligations.
- Carry out independent community surveys and compare with other like Councils.
- Continue to provide informative “Shire Wire” communications to the citizens.
- Review and update the website continuously.
- Encourage Councillors and Senior Staff to participate in a Company Directors’ Course.
- Strive for excellence within the organisation.
- Regularly engage the community to seek feedback on organisational effectiveness in meeting community needs.

2. Economic Development, Tourism, Sustainability and Land Use Planning

Objective: *To maximise the Shire's economic potential and diversity.*

Strategies:

- Actively and progressively target potential “new” industries to the area and work in partnership with all government and industry sectors to maximise business and development opportunities.
- Promote Council's Development Incentives Policy.
- Investigate and facilitate the provision of low cost housing and “fast build” to the area to meet market demand.
- Review the “Tourism Industry Development Plan” (Rob Tonge) and the Central Queensland Discovery Centre Feasibility Report (ATS) and develop a tourism strategy for the Shire.
- Investigate the provision of a full-time salaried Tourism Officer at the Visitors Information Centre.
- **Promote the Visitor's information Centre and generate revenue.**
- Investigate the facilitation of affordable broadband internet communication services in the Shire.
- Market the new IPA Planning Scheme (when adopted) to foster community understanding and acceptance.
- Implement the CBD Revitalisation Strategy for Emerald in stages in consultation with the community.
- Develop a strategy on Natural Resource Management.

- Continue to develop systems that improve Council's environmental performance and provide sustainable outcomes.
- Acquire more land for future residential land development.
- Develop preliminary plans for industrial land at Yamala.
- Continue to work regionally with the CHDC & CHROC for the provision of appropriate skills development & partnerships to support specific strategies in economic development.
- Advance the Intermodal freight terminal concept in both strategic and land planning actions.
- **Investigate and facilitate the provision of residential land, low cost public housing and/or housing for the aged in the Sapphire/Rubyvale area.**
- In partnership with private enterprise **and the community**, investigate the development of a Sapphire Fields Interpretive Centre.
- Investigate ways of enhancing economic development return at the Gemfields through local products.
- **Establish the Pioneer Cottage as an interesting site to visit.**

3. Shire Services, Infrastructure & Facilities

Objective: *To provide appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities for the community which enhance their quality of life.*

Strategies:

- **Seek funding for the review of the “Emerald Open Space & Recreation Plan.**
- Investigate the relocation of the “burnout facility” with a view to it being included in a multi-use recreational facility outside town to cater for noisy **type** sports.
- Facilitate the completion of the building at the Rugby League Sporting Facility (McIndoe Park).
- Investigate and plan for the future development of land for open space and recreation in the South East section of Emerald township.
- **Develop and implement appropriate strategies that market Emerald Shire’s recreational opportunities.**
- Ensure effective communication channels are maintained between sporting organisations and Council, including an awareness of Council’s “Open Space & Recreation Plan” and policies.
- Investigate and facilitate the provision of a Convention Centre through partnerships to serve the Central Highlands.
- Investigate and implement the provision of water and sewerage reticulation infrastructure required for the future growth of Emerald.

- Develop a 10 year Capital Works plan for roads so as to improve the Roads network (including safety aspects) for the whole Shire.
- Enhance **long term** planning for the delivery of Capital projects.
- Support small town (re)development.
- Continue to update existing public infrastructure (eg halls, parks, toilets, pool, etc).
- Facilitate a litter reduction **strategy** for the Shire.
- **Review Headworks policy to current values and develop infrastructure charging regimes**
- Work with government agencies, adjoining local governments and private operators to improve public transport services and networks to and within the Shire.
- **Review the methods of disposal of solid waste in an ecologically sustainable manner.**
- Provide services that are competitive and meet the realistic needs and expectations of our customers.
- Investigate and plan the development of an appropriate Multi-purpose sporting facility in Sapphire.
- Investigate and plan for simple low cost sporting facilities in Rubyvale and other centres.
- Investigate youth projects for the Gemfields.
- Investigate enhancing waste management recycling activities

- Benchmark performance in the areas of approval processes and services

4. Community Engagement

Objective: *To encourage greater community engagement and participation.*

Strategies:

- Investigate and implement additional ways of communicating and consulting with target groups that have traditionally been hard to reach
- Inform the community of all major issues facing Council to encourage involvement in Council affairs.
- Continue to facilitate and market an Annual Multi-Cultural Festival.
- Market and facilitate greater use of e-government by the community.
- Develop a closer linkage and partnership with service and community organisations.
- Continue to engage the community with annual consultation meetings at the various towns/townships.
- Involvement and support of Emerald Show, Ag-Grow, Country Music Talent Quest, Australia Day, **Mining Expo, Gemfest and the like.**
- Consider **introducing** regular lunch time discussions with individuals from various community groups.
- **Review the present** community consultation model.
- Consult the local indigenous community to ascertain their specific needs

5. Engaging State/Federal Government and Regionalism

Objective: *To facilitate engagement and participation with all levels of government.*

Strategies:

- Encourage and promote Regionalism to attract better facilities and services to the region.
- Investigate and develop a policy framework on resource sharing on a regional basis.
- Strongly develop and foster a good relationship between Council and the State and Federal Government Ministers and Senior Staff **to assist with future projects and provision of services.**
- Minimise the threat of communicable diseases in conjunction with other levels of government and the private sector.
- Identify missing service links and communicate findings to an inter-government forum.
- Enhance existing regional involvement to promote “know global, plan regional, act local”.

6. Lifestyle

Objective: *To further enhance the quality lifestyle of the community.*

Strategies:

- To investigate and enhance street lighting in the townships.
- To facilitate the provision of more recreational walkways.
- Continue to provide and market participation in the Annual “Light Up Our Town” Competition.
- Encourage the community to participate in the Annual Garden Competition.
- Undertake planning to ensure that community cultural development, cultural industry development and the promotion of arts and culture in the Shire is strategic and long term.
- Support and promote appropriate festivals and events which foster the Shire’s unique and diverse lifestyle.
- Promote urban planning principles such as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).
- Encourage the creation of commercial community gathering places such as alfresco dining.
- Promote increased community and business sponsorship and support of activities and facilities.
- Increase the usage of community facilities through improved management, multi purpose design and improved accessibility.

- Support community initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch.
- Encourage active lifestyle in exercise (“10,000 Steps” program), learning and cultural activities.
- Upgrade and increase the number of picnic tables/chairs/shelters and water bubbler facilities in public parks.
- Support PCYC.
- Promote sustainable housing development to build a quality community lifestyle.
- Encourage greater urban/rural interaction to showcase the whole of Emerald Shire.

7. Skilled Human Resources

Objective: *To recruit, develop and retain skilled personnel.*

Strategies:

- Review recruitment and selection policies and procedures **and provide staff training.**
- Develop a staff rewards and recognition policy.
- Review the performance management strategy.
- Review the provision of staff accommodation.
- Review the educational policy and encourage staff to carry out further studies.
- Review and development of a strategy to encourage people to make application for Council positions.
- Investigate the provision of a qualified HR Officer.
- Foster an organisational culture that is challenging, rewarding, and values staff committed to innovative, quality outcomes and teamwork.
- Institute a “cadetship” programme to develop staff with specialist skills and education.
- Develop a staff advancement and retention policy.
- Implement a bonded student/graduate structure to give local residents employment opportunities.

8. Learning & Innovation

Objective: *To promote knowledge, learning and innovation.*

Strategies:

- Promote and develop Council libraries as “learning centres” in the community which capture the innovative potential of our citizens.
- Support comprehensive community-based education and training initiatives by facilitating greater use of the TAFE College in the evenings and at weekends.
- Capitalise on opportunities presented by advances in technology (eg. internet/e-commerce) to improve and enhance communication with the community and enable easier access to Council services.
- To provide complete and easily accessible information to assist the community in better **understanding Council decision making and policies.**

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Comments, suggestions and questions about Emerald Shire Council's Corporate Plan are always welcome.

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