



FLINDERS SHIRE COUNCIL

Arts, Culture and Heritage Development Action Plan





ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Flinders Shire Council would like to acknowledge the Yirendali people as Traditional Owners and the oldest living culture of the land on which our Council operates, and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



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**Queensland
Government**

The Regional Arts Development Fund is a partnership between the Queensland Government and Flinders Shire Council to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.



A STRATEGIC OUTLOOK TO DEVELOP AND ENHANCE ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE ACROSS THE SHIRE





Message from the Mayor

I am proud to present the Flinders Shire Arts, Culture and Heritage Action Plan 2023-2028. This plan outlines strategies for Council and the community to work together to ensure that arts, culture and heritage are kept in the forefront of our priorities over the next five years and beyond.

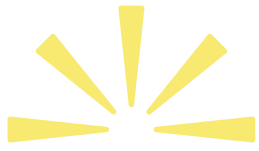
In our community, how we access arts and cultural opportunities locally has changed over time and Council are committed to supporting these efforts and being responsive to the evolving community needs. This plan reflects on our past achievements in sharing our stories through storytelling and public art initiatives and will guide us as we navigate and implement new ideas and concepts into our community reflective of our beliefs, culture and who we are.

The importance of capturing our important stories of our past is highlighted through this action plan, as is the vital role the performing arts and events in supporting community cohesion and celebration of our unique identity.

I thank all who have contributed to sharing their feedback to ensure that this action plan reflects the needs and wants of the community and look forward to working together towards a shared vision of ensuring that cultural vitality remains alive and well in the Flinders Shire.

Regards,

Kate Peddle, Mayor



ASPIRATIONS PRIORITIES VALUES

A clear way forward for Flinders Shire Council as a culturally rich, and creative region.





Our Plan

The Flinders Shire Council Arts, Culture and Heritage Development Action Plan (ACHDAP) is a whole of Council document that is based on the aspirations, priorities, and values of our community and sets out a clear way forward for Flinders Shire as a culturally rich, and creative region.

The ACHDAP, is a shared vision and has been developed by balancing what the community has asked for and what needs to be done. Flinders Shire Council has developed this plan through consultation with community and cultural stakeholders via online, telephone, face-to-face community survey and forums. When the plan refers to 'we' and 'our' it refers to the collective Flinders Shire community, including Council, other levels of government, businesses and organisation and residents.

Like a roadmap, the ACHDAP serves to aid Council in implementation of its arts, culture and heritage projects and outline areas where Council will work to develop more opportunities for arts, culture, and heritage across the community. The plan highlights what the current challenges are, what will be done, who will be doing it and how these goals will be accomplished and directly support the overarching Council strategic and annual operating plans.

The ACHDAP directly aligns with Flinders Shire Council Corporate Plan (2023-2028), Flinders Shire Council Tourism Development Plan (2023-2028), Flinders Shire Council Community Plan, and Flinders Shire Council Operating Plan (2023-24), and includes practical, actionable ideas that can be made a reality through a collaborative approach.

Council's Corporate Plan identifies the region's vision as A thriving community in outback Queensland. The vision embodies Council's expectations and desire for the future of our city and is underpinned by four priority areas:

- A strong and diverse economy
- A cohesive and growing community
- A high-performance Council
- A protected and productive natural environment

A strong and diverse economy and cohesive and growing community are the most relevant priority areas for this plan, and the Flinders Shire cultural and creative community are a key contributor to the fabric of the region.

Objectives

The objectives of the Flinders Shire Council Arts, Culture and Heritage Development Action Plan over the next five years are to:

- Maintain and develop quality spaces to actively engage and serve our people to provide opportunities to take part in arts, culture, and heritage activities.
- Consolidate our history through one overarching channel, providing residents and visitors an opportunity to engage and learn from our shared heritage.
- Champion innovation by developing a culture of engaged residents supporting new and creative endeavours.
- Deepen connection and engagement with the region's identity and heritage to enrich and enhance the lives of the community.
- A strong, creative community that is vibrant, innovative, and diverse and attractive to residents, visitors, and investments.

Measuring Progress

Our outcomes are listed in this plan under each theme heading and our progress will be measured and monitored through quarterly and annual reports.



The Engagement Process

Background

To inform the development of the ACHDAP, Flinders Shire Council designed an engagement program in accordance with the internationally recognised best practice IAP2 framework for engagement and is based on the fundamental principles for engagement of social equity and justice.

Level of engagement.

Using the IAP2 Framework for Engagement, Flinders Shire Council engaged in three levels of engagement to connect with the community and the cultural community.

INFORMING

CONSULTING

INVOLVING

Residents across the Flinders Shire provided extensive insight and feedback during the engagement activities with close to 10% of the region's population directly or indirectly engaged over the program. Overall, the community valued having the opportunity to voice their opinions and be heard on other topics in addition to the themes discussed.

A key focus of the engagement plan was to ensure that activities were undertaken in Hughenden as well as the smaller towns, providing a sufficient geographic coverage to afford as many community members as possible with an opportunity to participate.





DRIVING THE COMMUNITY TOWARDS ITS DESIRED FUTURE.

Bringing the Plan to Life

Role of Council - Consultation, Delivery and Monitoring

Council has a key role in driving the community towards its desired future. Council has developed the Arts, Culture and Heritage Development Action Plan on behalf of the community and will continue to take a lead role in delivering, facilitating, and monitoring the plan's objectives.

Community engagement activities will continue during the five-year life of the plan to make sure our goals for the future meet the changing needs of our community. Council also has a role in delivering key strategies within the plan and will advocate on behalf of the community those activities not resourced by Council by partnering with other government agencies, non-government organisations and residents.

This plan is supported by Flinders Shire Council key planning instruments:

- Operational Plan (2022 – 2023)
- Corporate Plan (2023 – 2028)
- Tourism Development Action Plan (2023-2028)
- Library and Youth Services Development Action Plan (2023 – 2028)
- Economic Development Strategy

Key action areas for Flinders Shire Council include:

- Local Business Engagement
- Initiative de-risking
- Planning for growth
- Implementation of existing plans
- Advocacy
- Investment attraction
- Regional promotion and major events



Community Aspirations

Our community's aspirations will not be achieved without sufficient resources – time, money, assets, and people – to carry them out. Council is committed to allocating resources to ensure the successful delivery of the strategies within the ACHDAP, while ensuring the continuation of basic services in a fiscally responsible manner.

Role of residents and local organisations - Participation

Bringing the ACHDAP to life requires working together. Our residents, community groups and local businesses have an ongoing role in providing input and actively participating in delivery of programs and activities. Moreover, the community and local businesses should feel inspired and passionate about the plan to champion, run, and develop activities to deliver on some of the key actions highlighted in this plan. Residents are encouraged to seek out guidelines provided by Council to apply for grants to help support their vision for arts and culture for the region which directly contributes to the actions outlined in this plan.

Role of other agencies - Partnership

Through the development of robust and strategic partnerships and sharing resources with other government and non-government agencies, our plans can be brought to life.

Council is committed to working with other levels of government and neighbouring local Councils to support objectives that reach beyond our local government area.

State and Regional Context

Flinders Shire Council is influenced by external legislative and regulatory requirements.

Key planning instruments include – State:

- QLD Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Northwest Regional Plan (2010-2031)
- Creative Together (2020-2030) – 10-year roadmap to arts, culture, and creativity in Queensland
- Activate Queensland Strategy (2019-2029)
- Revive: National Cultural Policy—Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place (2023)

As part of this strategy, Flinders will align with the Queensland Creative Together on four of their key strategy pillars. These include:

- Elevate First Nations arts.
- Activate Queensland's places and spaces.
- Drive social change and strengthen communities.
- Share our stories and celebrate our storytellers.

Additionally, the Premier has identified key focus areas for that government agencies and Council are to consider in their overall planning process. The Flinders Shire Council will align with these priorities listed below:

- Good jobs - Good, secure jobs in our traditional and emerging industries.
- Better services - Deliver even better services right across Queensland.
- Great lifestyle - Protect and enhance our Queensland lifestyle as we grow.



Arts, culture, and heritage profile

Arts, culture, and heritage play an important role in the Flinders Shire. With the extensive history of the railway, farming and indigenous connections, the area is rich in heritage and opportunities to recognise its past.

A total of 27,467 visitors came through Flinders Discovery Centre from July 2021 to June 2022, an 11 per cent increase on the previous year and a huge 42 per cent increase on 2019-2020 during the travel restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Flinders Shire Council has placed tourism in the region as a key economic platform to support the community into the future, with a new wave of developments underway including a \$200 million wind farm project, Kennedy Energy Park, and the Hughenden Horticulture Expansion Project, including the development of Riverside, and the implementation of the Flinders Shire Water Strategy.



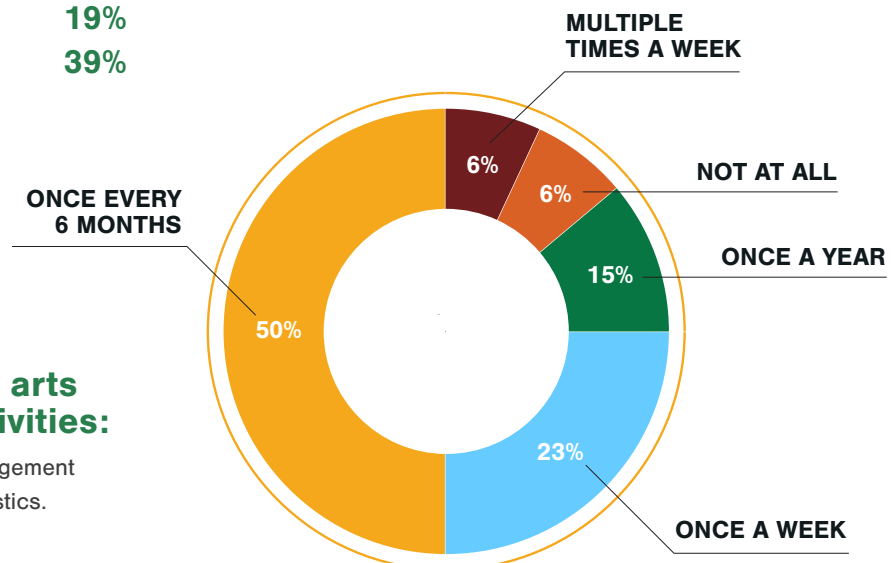
Arts participation in the region

Flinders Shire residents' engagement with arts and cultural activities:

LEARNING	52%
PERFORMING	10%
CREATING	39%
ATTENDING	89%
ONLINE	19%
VOLUNTEERING	39%

Frequency with arts and culture activities:

From the 2023 Arts engagement participation survey statistics.





Strengths

Engaged and active community

The residents of Flinders Shire are passionate participants of volunteer-based events groups. While much of the focus is given to sporting committees, a growing interest in arts and culture-based activities was seen during the engagement process.

Events

The Flinders Shire has fostered a good relationship with residents, supporting innovation and community led initiatives with the Council funded Events Stream grants which offers two-tiered support. The grants are designed to build relationships with community organisations to provide benefits to the Flinders Shire residents and visitors by ensuring Flinders Shire is a vibrant active community. Council run events are well attended and enjoyed by the community and committee run events ensure the region has a strong calendar of events year-round.

Festival of Outback Skies

2023 saw the first Festival of Outback Skies. This three-day festival showcases live music, art, workshops, and events.

Hughenden Country Music Festival

The annual Country music festival celebrates local music and champions community spirit. With participants of all ages, the event is held in the Diggers Entertainment Centre across three days each year in July.

Hughenden Show

The annual Hughenden Show has been a centre point of the Flinders Shire events calendar. For the past 140 years, the historic and community value of the event has helped support strong community ties and participation across the three-day program. The show celebrates the region's agriculture achievements and brings the community together across a range of different events, competitions and shows.

Flinders Shire Racing

The Hughenden Jockey Club runs two horse race meets each year in May and July. Attracting locals and visitors to the region, the annual events have a long history having run since 1884. Within the Shire, race meets are also held at Stamford, Prairie and Kooroorinya.

Public Art

The Flinders Shire Public Art Policy oversees public art development and provides direction for the consolidation of existing public art and the further development of public art in the region.



Challenges and Opportunities

Space

One of the areas challenging the advancement of arts, culture and heritage in the Flinders Shire is the provision of adequate space. With competing needs of community groups and limited indoor spaces to facilitate meetings and running of events, residents have indicated a desire for dedicated rooms and space to help their efforts in advancing arts and history initiatives across the region. There is a need to supply and improve maintenance of existing spaces for the community to actively engage in ongoing activities in arts, culture, and heritage.

Across the region, lack of adequate space was a common theme particularly as the community's needs grow and develop. Moreover, with the focus on activating community led innovation across arts, culture, and heritage, it is important for Council to support these endeavours through the provision of well-maintained spaces. This includes spaces that current host community and council led initiatives such as the showgrounds, Diggers Entertainment Centre, and lake precinct. Council is currently seeking to undertake consultation on an events precinct plan which will guide the required upgrades to council owned, community used facilities. This includes the potential to utilise space within the Flinders Discovery Centre's redevelopment and potential redevelopment of Hughenden Library.

Ownership

Flinders Shire is rich in history, however, there is no centralised group or organisation leading the consolidation and classification of historical artefacts and chronicling the region's history. Often this task is placed on Council's Community Services Department. Community members are passionate about their history and want to celebrate the region. Additionally, there is great potential through the raising of historical places of importance to showcase and add as a tourism asset for visitors. The Flinders Discovery Centre features historical information boards covering the region's history with dinosaurs and graziers. Yet there is great opportunity to continue historical education throughout the region.

Investment and Innovation

Our community has identified the need for further investment and encouraging new businesses to start up in the region as the key for future sustainability and economic resilience. We need to encourage and incentivise a diversity of investment to promote economic growth in the development of new sectors, as well as the growth and expansion of existing businesses through Council's Economic Development Strategy.

By fostering a culture of innovation, being open to new ideas and promoting entrepreneurship we can promote ourselves as being "open for business." Arts and culture can manifest throughout the community not just through the development of public art and music, but through the culture of innovation and creativity in the residents as new businesses are developed, celebrating originality and advancement. This is especially important to develop within the residents of Flinders Shire to be a driving force for new ideas, incorporation of new technologies and raise the profile of the area to be recognised for its innovation and business accomplishments.

Access to transport

One of the biggest concerns from the residents in the Flinders Shire, is the lack of transport options and access to transportation services. Having improved public transport for the community would improve engagement and participation in arts and culturally based activities.



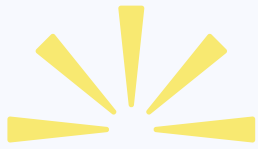
Big Ideas

Through extensive consultation with the Flinders Shire community, the reoccurring themes and ideas for arts, culture and heritage included:

Priority Areas

- The provision of spaces and upgrading existing spaces for the community to engage, lead and foster ongoing activities in arts, culture, and heritage.
- Ease and accessibility for Council owned assets for community led events, desired changes include upgrading of booking and administration process, opening hours and regular maintenance and checking of facilities to ensure spaces are safe and operational.
- Encouraging community groups and events to utilise the Australian Date Tourism Warehouse (ATDW). This automatically feeds into the Visit Hughenden website as well as other tourism houses.
- Leveraging and enhancing the Arts Advisory Group to champion community led artistic and cultural endeavours through information sharing, aiding, and partnering with local art activity.
- Encourage residents to seek out and apply for grants with the Regional Arts Development Fund and Arts QLD.
- Develop a plan to consolidate heritage and archival material.
- Continue to work with local indigenous groups to highlight and explore cultural ties to share with the community and create meaningful opportunities for exchange.

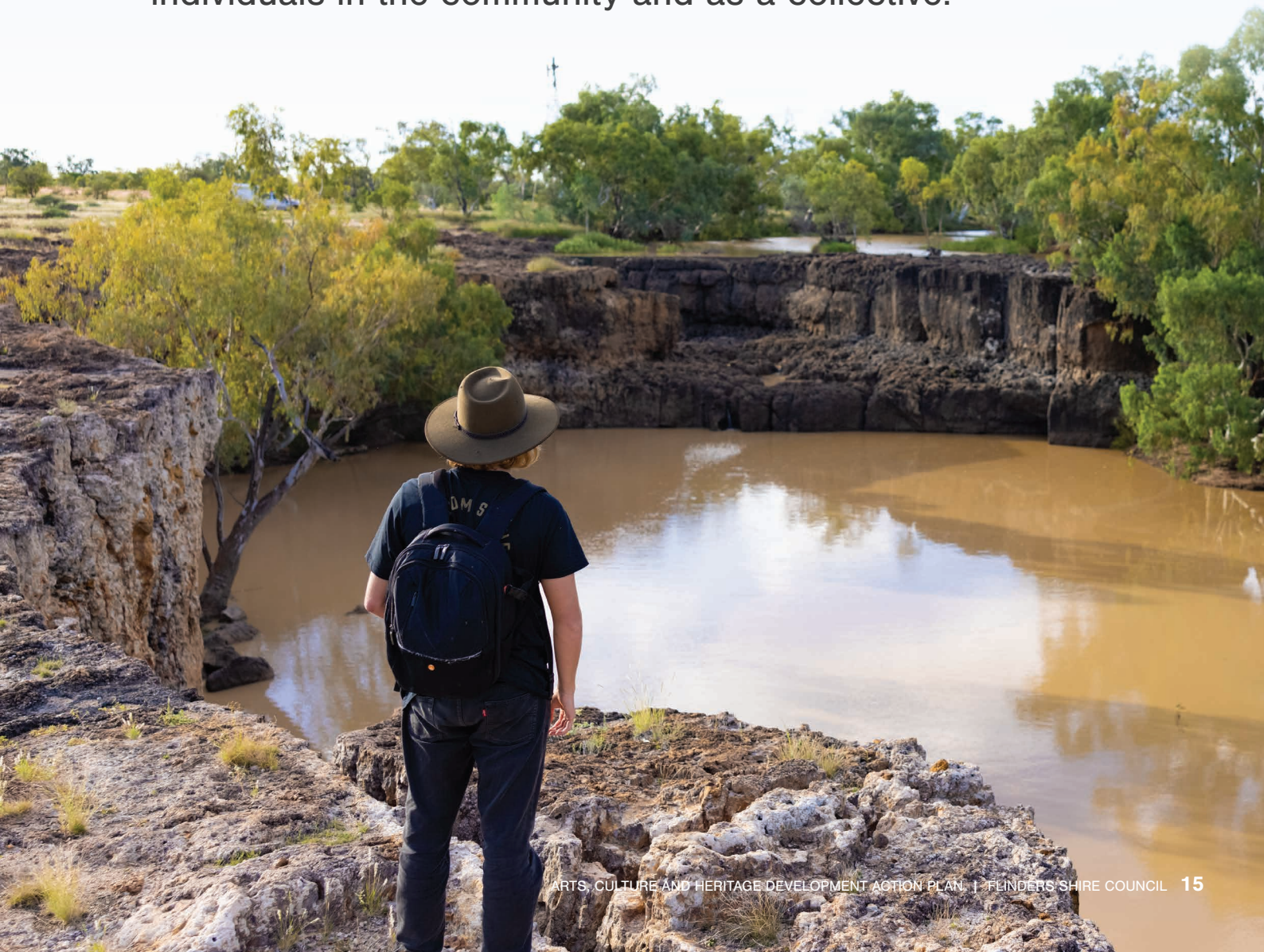




ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Community themes,
strategies, and outcomes.

We have a thriving community where arts, culture and heritage are celebrated, where we provide opportunities to express our story and our history as individuals in the community and as a collective.





Outcome 1

What do we want?

Recognised as a community that champions the arts and culture

Partners

- Community members
- Community groups
- Local schools
- Arts QLD
- RASN
- Cultural groups
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups
- Multicultural groups

How will we get there	Timeframe			
	Ongoing	Now	Next	Later
1.1 Engaging and partnering with the community to deliver new and innovative arts, cultural and heritage programs – both Council and community led.				
1.2 Maximise awareness and usage of Council owned assets and buildings for community led events and activities.				
1.3 Provide grants for community led arts, culture, and heritage initiatives, including those that look to value-add to existing events, public spaces and workshops.				
1.4 Provide advice and professional development opportunities to individuals and community groups interested in arts, culture and heritage initiatives				
1.5 Support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to tell its stories and celebrate its history and culture by providing access to facilities to be used as meeting places where stories can be shared through arts and cultural expression.				
1.6 Continue working with local indigenous groups to establish community connection through the implementation of Council's RAP and NAIDOC events.				
1.7 Support members of the region's multicultural community to tell their stories and celebrate their history and culture.				
1.8 Actively enhance the region's identity through art and cultural opportunities as an 'Outback Town with Endless Horizons' as per the Tourism Brand.				
1.9 Promoting and celebrating cultural achievements of individuals, community groups and Council.				
1.10 Advocate for the current work our local Traditional Custodians to develop language mapping and the cultural centre development.				
1.11 Establish corporate gift policy which embraces locally made arts/crafts.				
1.12 Ongoing promotion and utilisation of Hughenden brand for retailers to utilise on arts and crafts and other products.				
1.13 Continue to promote partnership with RADF and encourage more community members to apply for RADF grants.				



Outcome 2

What do we want?

Actively engaged and supported arts, culture, and heritage community.

Partners

- Community members
- Community groups
- Local schools
- Arts Council QLD
- Community groups
- Local historical societies
- Artists
- Art & Culture Groups
- Local Aboriginal Community
- Regional Arts Development Fund

How will we get there	Timeframe			
	Ongoing	Now	Next	Later
2.1 Continue to promote local arts, culture, and heritage events.				
2.2 Identify and provide opportunities for building capacity of local artists.				
2.3 Review current guidelines for assessing applications for Council's community grants program that are designed to support community events, and infrastructure to ensure it still aligning with Council's priorities.				
2.4 Widely promote Council community grants opportunities.				
2.5 Explore the need for and viability of the establishment of a Men's Shed as a meeting/workspace in the Shire.				
2.6 Provide and maintain quality accessible, functional, multi-purpose spaces for the community use to develop artistic endeavours. Ensuring the spaces such as Council owned properties, parks, buildings, and venues can support a wide range of practices.				
2.7 Develop partnerships with local businesses, privately owned property or building owners to activate arts and cultural activity by maximising empty properties, shop fronts, building and walls.				
2.8 Support initiatives and facilities that encourage social inclusion and community connection such as intergenerational programs that bring people together from different age groups, such as children, youth and older adults to create opportunities for mentoring, learning and support across generations. Also supporting social service organisations, and establishment of community projects like a community garden.				
2.9 Provide advice and professional development opportunities to community groups and volunteers				
2.10 Promote and build on Council's new residents' event which connects people to town and aims to engage groups and clubs.				



Outcome 2

What do we want?

Actively engaged and supported arts, culture, and heritage community.

Partners

- Community members
- Community groups
- Local schools
- Arts Council QLD
- Community groups
- Local historical societies
- Artists
- Art & Culture Groups
- Local Aboriginal Community
- Regional Arts Development Fund

How will we get there	Timeframe			
	Ongoing	Now	Next	Later
2.10 Promote and build on Council's new residents' event which connects people to town and aims to engage groups and clubs.				
2.11 Investigate opportunities for artists details to be included in the 'My Community Directory' app – and promote to community.				
2.12 Continue to support community events designed to celebrate community cultural values, occasions, and achievements such as race days, Hughenden Show, Country Music Festival and Festival of Outback Skies				
2.13 Be responsive to changing demographics in the community and support cultural events and celebrations of significance.				
2.14 Continue to deliver and support activities for important occasions such as QLD day, Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas, and Australia Day Awards				
2.15 Deliver a suite of capacity building programs to strengthen leadership, develop people and foster connections in partnership with Australian Council for the Arts, Arts QLD and RASN.				



Outcome 3

What do we want?

A vibrant, innovative, and diverse creative community that is attractive to residents, visitors, and investment.

Partners

- QLD Government
- Museums and Galleries QLD
- Community groups
- Local Schools
- Arts QLD
- Local historical societies
- Artists
- Art & Culture Groups
- Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community
- QSport

How will we get there	Timeframe			
	Ongoing	Now	Next	Later
3.1 Review public art policy and ensure it is adequate and reflective of community feedback.				
3.2 Develop Public Art Asset Register and Maintenance Schedule				
3.3 Secure travelling exhibitions, productions, sporting matches, festivals to amplify events calendar and encourage increased visitation to the region.				
3.4 Investigate opportunities for arts and culture masterclasses, workshops, residencies, and school visits.				
3.5 Increase focus on young people through the delivery of programs and identification of pathways for further education and training in the arts.				
3.6 Update region highway and way-finding signage				
3.7 Develop and maintain place making, public art including silo art and mural trail and cultural tourism programs that provide a strong sense of place and add value to the region.				
3.8 Continue to grow and develop the Festival of Outback skies as a flagship event for the Shire				
3.8.1 Finalise Historical signage and interpretation on gates on Brodie Street				
3.8.2 Develop and implement event precinct plan to upgrade infrastructure at the Showgrounds, lake, Brodie St and Diggers Entertainment Centre				
3.8.3 Plan and implement historical display within Rail Shed in Stamford.				
3.8.4 Facilitate annual sculpture competition and acquisition prize to build on public artworks as part of the Festival of Outback Skies				
3.8.5 Plan and develop historical machinery trail project to be implemented within Hughenden, Torrens Creek, and Prairie area.				
3.8.6 Finalise landscaping and artworks at the former Grand Hotel site.				



Outcome 3

What do we want?

A vibrant, innovative, and diverse creative community that is attractive to residents, visitors, and investment.

Partners

- QLD Government
- Museums and Galleries QLD
- Community groups
- Local Schools
- Arts QLD
- Local historical societies
- Artists
- Art & Culture Groups
- Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community
- QSport

How will we get there	Timeframe			
	Ongoing	Now	Next	Later
3.9 Review outstanding projects listed on the Public Art Development Plan and continue with those still relevant such as the concept designs for The Hub which include wildflower awning panels, pioneering mural, wool bale panel, genyornis, dinosaur eggs, rock paintings and carvings. Brodie Street concepts which include a Moonrock (fossil broken open to reveal local wildflowers), mosaic and render edges around garden beds, painting of power poles with local images of relevance such as sheep, cattle, fish, and wildlife. Flinders River projects The Dunny Can Bridge and Window Panes. Mount Walker mythical 'Rock of Ages'. Townships entry statements and painted powerpoles, moonrocks, and dinosaur eggs.				
3.10 Review and refurbish all the current historical plaques and identify potential additional plaques, including QR codes to link to further information.				
3.11 Continue to identify partnerships to strengthen regional arts opportunities for Flinders Shire with a particular focus on educational based initiatives.				
3.12 Continue to develop relationships with external arts/cultural service organisations such as Museums & Galleries QLD: Possible collaborations in regards to upcoming Brisbane Olympics, Yirendali Heritage Group, Flying Arts Alliance, Flipside Circus, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts, Full Throttle Theatre Company, Theatre INQ, Dead Puppet Society, Metro Arts, Mike Carney Creative Industries, Dance North, Branches Performing Arts, Northern Alliance Festival of Arts, Queensland Music Festival, Opera Queensland, Queensland Ballet, Neighbouring Regional Galleries and arts venues, Outback QLD Tourism Authority, Tourism and Events Queensland and Regional Arts Services Network (RASN) to identify collaboration opportunities.				
3.13 Continue to investigate public art opportunities in surrounding areas – Stamford, Torrens Creek, and Prairie.				
3.14 Explore and establish use of augmented reality technologies to provide self-guided tours based on different themes – arts, culture and historical, for visitors to access on handheld devices, e.g. create Dunny Can Bridge Art installation, bring dinosaur murals to life				
3.15 Develop POI and heritage trail in other townships featuring historical items and places of significance (Prairie, Torrens Creek and Stamford).				
3.16 Continue to maintain contact register of artists, artisans, and arts workers across the region.				



Outcome 4

What do we want?

Preserved built and natural environments.

Partners

- Landcare
- Community groups
- Historical society / working group

How will we get there	Timeframe			
	Ongoing	Now	Next	Later
4.1 Document, monitor and maintain the character of historical facades, buildings, and remnants, through a monitoring and maintenance plan of Council Owned Facilities				
4.2 Upgrade interpretive signage at Coolabah Tree				
4.3 Pursue options for a major public art commission for Mt Walker and build on the Public Artwork Trail.				
4.4 Maintain and enhance parks, gardens, and open public spaces throughout the Shire with a focus on native flora.				
4.5 Ensure continued preservation of the region's built and natural heritage as well as historic collections.				



Community themes, strategies, and outcomes.

Outcome

Vibrant artistic culture within the Flinders Shire community.

Measure	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative outputs and aesthetic enrichment experienced.• Level of community satisfaction with the provision of local arts, entertainment, and culture• Local economy supported.• Accessible and affordable facilities• Increased volunteering numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flinders Shire community Survey• Facility access and usage rates• Region profile• Volunteer numbers

Outcome

A happy and safe community that recognises and celebrates its heritage

Measure	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance and participation in community and cultural events, activities, and programs.• Level of engagement and relationship built with local indigenous groups.• Cultural appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flinders Shire Community Survey

Outcome

A well informed and engaged community.

Measure	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community is satisfied with Council's level of engagement, accountability and transparency on arts, culture, and heritage initiatives.• Opportunities for genuine community engagement• Bonding, bridging, and linking social capital increased.• Additional support to achieve community outcomes by seeking targeted grant funding.• % Of residents who feel Council communicates with well with the community• % Of residents who know who to contact Council for help and information• New knowledge, insights and ideas gained	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flinders Shire Community Survey• Grant Register



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