

Sunshine Coast All Abilities Action Plan 2024-2028

Towards a more inclusive Sunshine Coast for people with disability



November 2023

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Acknowledgements

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- Sunshine Coast Council's All Abilities Action Plan Reference Group
- Residents of the Sunshine Coast region who have participated and contributed to the engagement activities supporting this project
- All council staff who contributed their time and expertise to the development of the action plan.

Reference document

This document should be cited as follows:

**Sunshine Coast
All Abilities Action Plan
2024-2028.**

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Traditional Acknowledgement

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Sunshine Coast Country, home of the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples, the Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

We recognise that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. The Traditional Custodians' unique values, and ancient and enduring cultures, deepen and enrich the life of our community.

We commit to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians and the broader First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) communities to support self-determination through economic and community development.

Truth telling is a significant part of our journey. We are committed to better understanding the collective histories of the Sunshine Coast and the experiences of First Nations peoples. Legacy issues resulting from colonisation are still experienced by Traditional Custodians and First Nations peoples.

We recognise our shared history and will continue to work in partnership to provide a foundation for building a shared future with the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples.

We wish to pay respect to their Elders — past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the important role First Nations peoples continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Together, we are all stronger.



image: Dawn Awakening, Horizon Festival. Photo: Ben Vos Productions.



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Language of Disability

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges that the preferred language of disability varies between individuals and groups and preferred language may change into the future.

Council does not want to exclude anyone based on the language used. We endeavour to work with and continue to learn from people with lived experience of disability to ensure language choice is respectful.





Mark Jamieson
Mayor

Mayor's and Councillor's Foreword

Our Sunshine Coast community consists of people with a diverse range of strengths, talents and abilities. Our community is stronger when everyone feels valued, can participate in all aspects of community life and reach their potential. This is what inclusion is about.



Cr David Law
Division 10
Community Portfolio

Almost all residents of the Sunshine Coast will experience disability at some point in their life or care for someone with disability. Council is committed to improving access and inclusion for people with disability and we are proud of the work Council is doing in this area but recognise there is more we can do.

The Sunshine Coast All Abilities Action Plan 2024-2028 outlines detailed actions for Council to undertake, directly or in collaboration, to improve inclusion for people with disability over the next five years. The actions are practical and achievable and will contribute to the priorities and goals outlined in the Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041.

The action plan was developed through extensive community engagement, with particular focus on connecting with people with disability, carers and support workers. A reference group, made up of people with lived experience of disability, was fundamental in the development of the action plan. This reference group also decided on the name, All Abilities Action Plan, to reflect their view that this is a plan for everyone in our community to increase awareness and improve inclusion.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the engagement process to create this action plan.

The All Abilities Action Plan helps to create a more inclusive region where everyone can participate equally, contribute fully and feel respected and valued, with a sense of belonging. Together we can continue the great work to ensure that people of all abilities have equitable opportunities to live, work, visit and play in our beautiful Sunshine Coast.



Message from the All Abilities Action Plan Reference Group

On behalf of the Sunshine Coast All Abilities Action Plan Reference Group, I wish to express our collective gratitude and pride in contributing to this important strategic initiative. Our group, which comprised of members with diverse backgrounds and unique experiences of disability, has been instrumental in shaping an action plan that we believe is not only comprehensive but also aligned to the specific and nuanced needs of the Sunshine Coast community.

The creation of this reference group was essential for several reasons. Primarily, it underscores Sunshine Coast Council's commitment to listening, learning, and integrating the perspectives of those directly affected by disability into the heart of the action plan. Our voices, experiences, and narratives have breathed life, depth, and authenticity into the action plan, ensuring it goes beyond theoretical concepts and translates into practical, tangible, and meaningful outcomes for our community.

Being part of this reference group has been a journey of collaboration, learning, and mutual respect. We found a space where our voices were not just heard but valued, and our suggestions transformed into actionable strategies. We shared our stories, exchanged insights, and collectively envisioned a Sunshine Coast where inclusion, accessibility, and equality are not ideals but realities.

The action plan, in its essence, mirrors our diverse contributions, echoing the need for a Sunshine Coast that is universally accessible, inclusive, and accommodating. The actions outlined, from enhancing physical accessibility in public spaces to fostering broader societal inclusion and breaking down barriers to employment, reflect a comprehensive approach to transforming the lives of people with disability.

We are optimistic about what the future holds. This action plan is more than a document; it is a commitment to making real change. We envision a Sunshine Coast where everyone has equal access and opportunity, where our differences in abilities aren't barriers but are celebrated.

We are encouraged that this plan sets in motion concrete actions to make inclusivity and accessibility a normal part of life here. We want to see a community where everyone's needs are considered, and each person can participate fully in all aspects of life.

In this plan, we see a practical roadmap to make this a reality. Every action is a step towards creating a place where everyone belongs and can thrive.

In the end, our shared mission is clear: to create a Sunshine Coast that welcomes, understands, and includes everyone, regardless of their abilities. This action plan stands as a testament to the commitment, collaboration, and community spirit that has driven our efforts. We look forward to seeing the positive impact of this plan in the lives of all residents and thank everyone involved for their dedication to building a more inclusive and accessible Sunshine Coast.

Dane Cross, on behalf of the All Abilities Action Plan Reference Group.



1. Introduction

An Inclusive Sunshine Coast for People with Disability

By 2028, the Sunshine Coast will be a region where people of all abilities have equitable opportunities to live, work, visit and play.

According to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*:

'Disability is a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder full and effective participation in society'¹.

Over 21,000 residents of the Sunshine Coast have a severe disability². People with disability are an important part of our community, with most disabilities being invisible. It is likely that everyone either knows someone with disability or will experience disability at one point or another in their lives. Disability is part of being human.

Discrimination, however, is one of the many challenges that people with disability face in their day-to-day lives. Barriers, whether attitudinal or environmental, restrict people with disability from being able to participate in all parts of community life. By removing these barriers, people with disability can reach their true potential as equal members of our community with opportunities to contribute fully, and feel valued, respected and that they belong.

The Sunshine Coast region is growing and changing, from our built environments to our evolving communities. With 8000 new residents arriving to the Sunshine Coast each year, this trajectory is set to continue to 2041 when our region will be home to more than 500,000 people³. The number of people on the Sunshine Coast with severe disability will increase. We have the opportunity now to expand on

the great work to date to remain inclusive, connected and accessible as we grow — to build a Sunshine Coast region with opportunities for all to participate socially and economically. Inclusive communities provide a broad range of benefits for everyone in our community, from the economic aspects of broader workforce participation and improved tourism potential and attraction, to increased social connections, a sense of belonging and enhanced wellbeing.

Whilst Sunshine Coast Council is proud of the work we are already doing to improve inclusion for people with disability, we recognise there is always more work to be done.

The Sunshine Coast All Abilities Action Plan 2024-2028 is a demonstration of Council's continuing commitment to improve inclusion for people with disability on the Sunshine Coast.

The action plan has a 5-year timeframe and closely aligns with Council's Community Strategy 2019-2041 and its goal to build a 'strong community', which meets the needs of people of all abilities, and where opportunities are available for all. The Sunshine Coast will also be the backdrop for a number of events at the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This action plan supports the legacy vision for a more connected, active and sustainable future Sunshine Coast.

Through implementation of the action plan, Council aims to increase inclusion for people with disability, to create a region where people of all abilities belong, can participate and thrive.



2. About the Action Plan

The action plan outlines four principles and commitments for how Council will implement actions over the next five years to build an inclusive, accessible region. Actions are outlined across five priority areas.

The priority areas were developed with input from the All Abilities Action Plan Reference Group. The reference group was set up for the project and comprised of members of the community with diverse lived experience.

Each priority area is also accompanied by a personal story of a person with lived experience.

Lived Experience

Lived experience is gained through first-hand experience of a particular topic or situation, rather than knowledge that is gained through research. Involving people with lived experience in action plan development ensures that the perspectives, needs and insights of people with direct experience are appropriately heard, valued and understood.

By 2028, the Sunshine Coast will be a region where people of all abilities have equitable opportunities to live, work, visit, and play.

Guiding Principles and Commitments:



Increasing disability awareness



Promoting and protecting human rights



Removing access barriers



Valuing lived experience

Priority Areas for Action:



Awareness and Education



Built Environment and Public Spaces



Employment and Training



Events and Programs



Participation and Communication



Information Sheets

Supporting this action plan is a series of information sheets on relevant topics to help provide further context for this plan.

- Information Sheet 1: What is Disability?
- Information Sheet 2: Concepts and Principles
- Information Sheet 3: Our Engagement Process
- Information Sheet 4: Policy Context
- Information Sheet 5: Benchmarking Analysis

Evaluation and Review

Each action in this action plan will be delivered by Council between 2024 and 2028. Some of the actions are written to be specific and others are flexible to allow community need to determine what is delivered, and allowing for partnerships between Council and community.

Each action is accompanied by associated measures to monitor implementation. The action plan will be reviewed halfway through the plan's implementation, with annual reporting of achievements.

Council will track the impacts of the action plan through the existing Community Strategy evaluation framework.



Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games presents a unique opportunity for the Sunshine Coast to put itself on the map as an accessible and inclusive region, and destination for people with disability. This action plan recognises the value the upcoming Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games brings to the region, in serving as a catalyst for change, to improve inclusion across our region for people of all abilities.

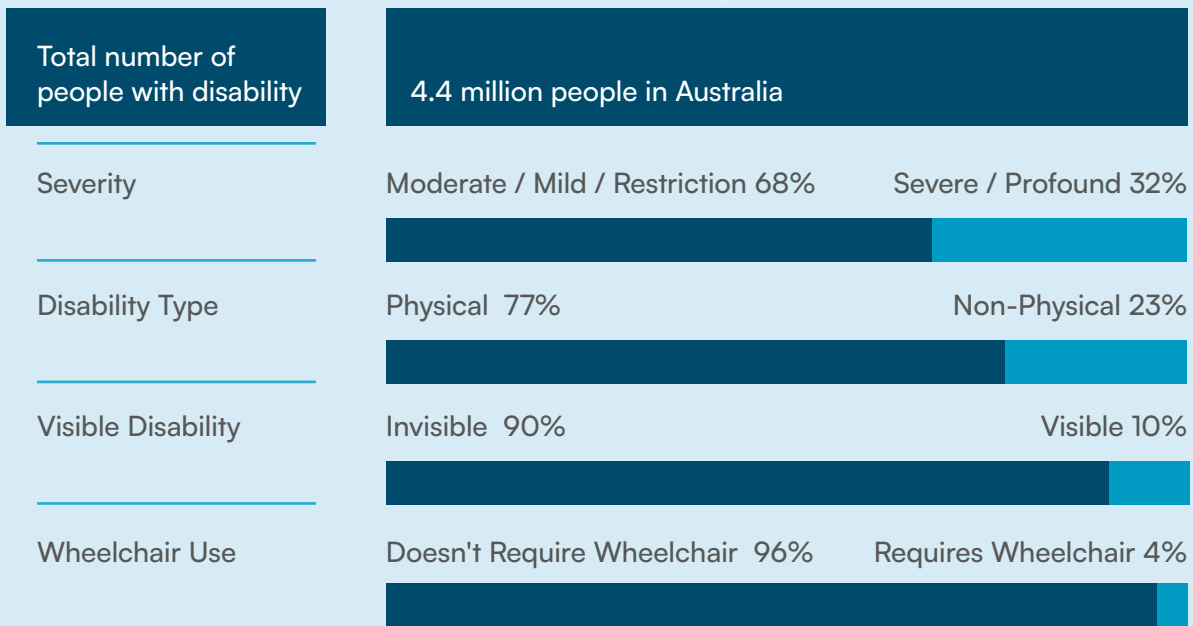
Accessible Tourism

2023 was the year of accessible tourism in Queensland. Accessible tourism means that all people with disability have the opportunity to visit and enjoy the quality lifestyle that our region offers. Council endeavours to continue partnering with the community sector, government and private organisations to support opportunities to increase accessible tourism in our region.

3. Snapshot of People with Disability

Australia

4.4 million Australians had a disability in 2018 (18% of the population)⁴. This includes 1.4 million people with a severe or profound disability (32% of those with disability) and 1.0 million people with a non-physical disability (as their main disability – 23% of those with disability). Up to 90% of disabilities are invisible (not immediately evident to others)⁵ and only around 4% of people with disability use a wheelchair⁶.



1 in 6 working aged people with disability experienced discrimination in the previous year, and 4 in 9 avoided situations because of their disability⁷.



Sunshine Coast

21,211 residents of the Sunshine Coast have a severe disability (6.2%)⁸. The number has more than doubled in the last 15 years and is expected to double again in the next 20 years⁹.

Rates of severe disability were higher for older people (16% of older people aged 65 years and older have a severe disability), and First Nations people (9.0% of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people have a severe disability)¹⁰. Rates of severe disability were lower for residents born overseas (4.9% of residents born overseas have a severe disability)¹⁰.

Rates of severe disability:

Higher for:

16%

Older people

9.0%

First Nations people



Lower for:

4.9%

Residents born overseas



20% of people aged 15-64 years with a severe disability were employed which is significantly lower than for those without a disability (79%)¹⁰.

More statistics about people with disability in Australia and the Sunshine Coast are included in Information Sheet 1.



4. Policy Context

International, National and State Policy Context

The development of this action plan was informed by a review of the relevant international, national, and state strategies and legislation for people with disability, which includes:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008
- United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- United Nations Disability and Development Report 2018
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031
- *Human Rights Act 2019 (QLD)*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)*
- *Disability Services Act 2006 (QLD)*
- *Local Government Act 2009 (QLD)*
- Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-2027
- Communities 2032 Strategy (QLD)
- Disability (Access to Premises-Buildings) Standard 2010 (Cth)
- Building Code of Australia & Standards
- National Construction Code.

Further information about the policy context is provided in Information Sheet 4.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

As we advance our vision as Australia’s most sustainable region — Healthy. Smart. Creative. the environmental, social, cultural and economic activities across the region must be carefully balanced to ensure we advance our vision sustainably.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) for peace, prosperity, people and planet provide a comprehensive and internationally recognised framework for us to collectively align the way we each live, work,

learn and play every day — and form an important foundation of the performance measurement framework of our Biosphere.

Council is demonstrating regional leadership by committing to embed the UNSDGs in our strategies, plans and associated progress reporting. Each Corporate Plan goal identifies how it contributes to the UNSDGs and, in doing so, assists to progress our Sunshine Coast Biosphere aim and objectives.



Our global commitment

This All Abilities Action Plan embeds the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) into its actions. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for peace, prosperity, people and planet provide a comprehensive and internationally recognised framework to collectively align the way we each live, work, learn and play every day.

UNSDG 03 — The action plan seeks to support good health and wellbeing by reducing barriers for people with disability to access activities, programs and events that support physical and mental health.

UNSDG 04 — The action plan recognises the right of people with disability to access inclusive and equitable education and lifelong learning opportunities. It supports this goal through multiple measures, including raising awareness.

UNSDG 05 — The action plan recognises that a person's gender influences their experience of life. It emphasises valuing lived experience and engaging with different people with disability to capture the different experiences we each have.

UNSDG 08 — Council understands that employment provides benefits to our community. The action plan includes initiatives targeted at reducing barriers to employment at Council and in the private sector for people with disability.

UNSDG 10 — The action plan has a core focus on reducing inequalities by removing the physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers that limit participation.

UNSDG 11 — The action plan seeks to improve the physical environment across the region to be more accessible and inclusive through specific actions related to the built environment and public spaces.

UNSDG 16 — The action plan works to strengthen community involvement in Council activities through efforts to improve the accessibility of Council information and access to Council facilities.

UNSDG 17 — The action plan acknowledges the need to work with others to achieve our shared goal of a more inclusive Sunshine Coast for people with disability. Many of the actions will be delivered collaboratively with the private and community sector.



In June 2022, our Sunshine Coast local government area was recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a biosphere reserve - where responsible development and people living sustainably sit alongside active conservation.

Our region has joined a global effort of 738 biospheres in 134 countries to balance the environmental, social, cultural and economic needs of today, without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Our region's international recognition as a special place where people are living, working, learning and playing

sustainably highlights the values of our region that we are seeking to protect and enhance, brings new opportunities and a range of possible benefits to our natural environment, community, lifestyle and economy.

Being recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere reserve and maintaining this credential is our region's commitment to create a positive legacy for future generations. Every resident, visitor, business and government entity has a key role to play in maintaining and enhancing the Sunshine Coast Biosphere reserve for our children, grandchildren and all those who will enjoy the prosperity, beauty and liveability of our region into the future.

Strategic Framework



All Abilities Action Plan 2024-2028

The All Abilities Action Plan 2024-2028 aligns with the Community Strategy outcome of an inclusive Sunshine Coast community. It also has relevance to the Environment and Liveability Strategy and the Regional Economic Development Strategy as it relates to access to the natural environment, accessibility of the built environment and participation in employment and training for people with disability.

Strategic Alignment

Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041

The Sunshine Coast Community Strategy provides the strategic pathways towards a future where together we thrive. We thrive through connection with people, places and spaces and where we stay true to our values as a welcoming, caring and vibrant community, with opportunities for all to participate.

One of the desired outcomes of the Community Strategy is to improve inclusion for all members of our community, including people with disability. Improving inclusion enhances wellbeing and enables full participation. It also helps people feel valued and respected and to enjoy better connections to people, places and spaces. The All Abilities Action Plan outlines detailed actions to be undertaken by Council to improve inclusion for people with disability. The action plan contributes to achieving many of the priorities outlined in the Community Strategy.

Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017

The Environment and Liveability Strategy provides strategic pathways to guide growth and shape the Sunshine Coast for future generations to 2041. It focuses on the natural environment and how it can be preserved and enhanced, as well as the liveability of the region. It enables a good quality of life for all residents, while supporting a strong economy in an accessible and well-connected built environment.

The ability for people with disability to access the natural and built environment is important for their quality of life and the liveability of the Sunshine Coast. Removing the barriers that reduce access to housing, social infrastructure, open space and transport improves the ability for people with disability to participate and makes our region more inclusive. More compact and self-contained neighbourhoods can also reduce barriers to mobility. The All Abilities Action Plan helps to achieve a more liveable region for people with disability.

Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013-2033

The Regional Economic Development Strategy provides the strategic pathways to transition into a regional economy that is innovative, adaptive, resilient and climate ready. It encourages a more sustainable and equitable future economy, attracting investment and supporting local businesses to innovate, grow and enable diverse employment opportunities.

A robust and diverse Sunshine Coast economy can provide a wider range of employment and training options for people with disability. Reducing and removing the physical and attitudinal barriers to employment and training is important to ensure people with disability can attain the social and financial benefits of employment. Increasing the size of our workforce and including people with diverse life experiences in the workforce also results in financial benefits for businesses and economic growth for our region.



Sunshine Coast Council

Other Strategies and Plans

Other relevant Council strategies and plans include:

- Active Transport Plan 2011-2031
- Aquatic Plan 2011-2026
- Asset Management Plans (various)
- Community Engagement Policy and Excellence in Engagement Framework 2021
- Creative Arts Plan 2023-2038
- Design Strategy 2019
- Human Rights Policy and Implementation Plan (in development)
- Integrated Transport Strategy 2019
- Local Disaster Management Plan 2019-2022
- Local Laws
- Major Events Strategy 2018-2027
- Open Space Landscape Infrastructure Manual (LIM)
- Parking Management Plan 2017
- People Plan (in development)
- Recreation Trail Plan 2012
- Recreation Parks Plan 2021-2031
- Smart City Framework and Implementation Plan 2022-2025
- Sport and Active Recreation Plan 2011-2026
- Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme
- Urban Lighting Master Plan 2016.



5. HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED



5. How this Plan was Developed

All Abilities Action Plan Reference Group

Fourteen members of the Sunshine Coast community with lived experience of disability volunteered to be part of the All Abilities Action Plan Reference Group to guide development of this action plan.

Members included people with a broad range of disabilities and representatives from organisations and advocacy groups. The group had a mix of young people and older people and a balanced gender mix.

Members participated in workshops to develop a list of their priority actions which were then further developed by Council to inform the development of this action plan.

Access and Inclusion Coordination Group

Council coordinates an Access and Inclusion Coordination Group which was set up as part of the previous Access and Inclusion Plan 2011-2016. The group includes Council officers, representatives from stakeholder organisations, and community members with disability. It continues to meet regularly.

The group was briefed about the project and helped to spread the word about engagement opportunities for people with disability and the disability sector. The group also provided feedback on the project development and provided input into priorities for action.

Targeted Surveys

Targeted surveys were developed for residents of the Sunshine Coast with disability and carers, and workers in the disability sector. The surveys gave residents the opportunity to provide input into improvements that could be made, to make the region more inclusive for people with disability.

A total of 97 people completed the surveys, including people with disability, carers, and people who work in the disability sector.

The top five issues/challenges raised were:

- 1 Discrimination
- 2 Connectivity and transport
- 3 Accommodation and housing
- 4 Having a say
- 5 Job opportunities.

The top three places to improve accessibility were: beaches; bushland and natural reserves; and pools and leisure centres.

A summary of the results of the surveys is included in Information Sheet 3.

“ Please educate the greater community that disability is more than just a wheelchair spot. ”

Internal Engagement

Focus group sessions were undertaken with Council staff from a range of teams to identify existing initiatives and future opportunities to increase inclusion.

The top five areas for Council to improve inclusion for people with disability were:

- 1 Organisation-wide communication and engagement
- 2 Public realm
- 3 Disability awareness training for Council staff
- 4 Council-owned venues and facilities
- 5 Support for accessibility in private sector development

Local Government Policy Comparison

Disability inclusion plans from local governments in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria were reviewed to identify possible initiatives.

Common actions pursued by other local governments were:

- Physical improvements to the public realm and community facilities
- Inclusive council and community events
- Disability awareness training for council staff
- Inclusive council communications and engagement.

A summary of the analysis is included in Information Sheet 5.

Broad Community Engagement

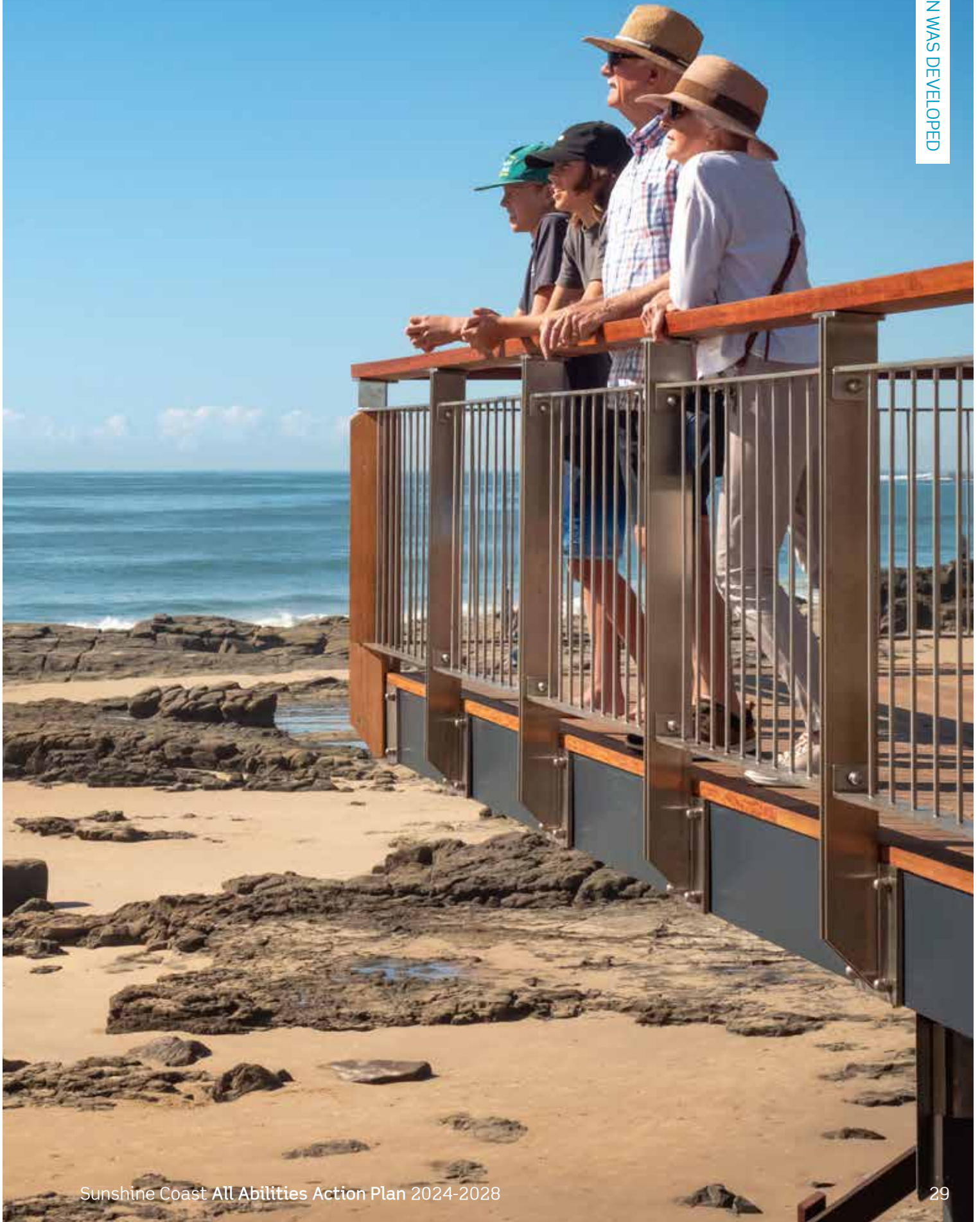
The Sunshine Coast community provided feedback on the draft action plan before it was finalised and adopted by Council.

Broad community engagement occurred during June-July 2023 and included a range of activities to hear from as many people as possible.

Activities included:

- Online resources, including information sheets
- Online and printed survey
- Phone survey option
- Easy English version of the draft action plan
- Face-to-face events attended by people with disability
- Presentations to groups of people with disability, community organisations, networks and agency groups
- Meeting of the Access and Inclusion Coordination Group.

“ We can be proud of what we are doing and where we can work together to make a difference in other areas. ”





6. Guiding Principles and Commitments



1. Increasing Disability Awareness

Disability awareness includes understanding the impacts that attitudes, stigma and discrimination have on the lives of people with disability.

A disability may be visible or invisible. A person may have multiple disabilities or other personal characteristics that interplay with disability, to create different experiences of life. Disability may or may not be a significant part of a person's identity. A person's perception of disability identity is unique.

We commit to treating people of all abilities with care and respect as part of our core values and increasing understanding about the challenges of having disability.



2. Promoting and Protecting Human Rights

Everyone has the right to participate with dignity, independence and respect, without discrimination.

We commit to promoting and protecting the human rights of people with disability in our activities and will contribute to a region where everyone has equitable opportunities to live, work, visit and play.



3. Removing Access Barriers

There may be physical and non-physical barriers in places that restrict people with disability from accessing Council infrastructure, programs, services and resources. We recognise that people with disability may require additional support to achieve equitable access.

We commit to working with people with disability proactively to understand their needs and help overcome barriers to accessing Council-led initiatives.



4. Valuing Lived Experience

The value of listening to and learning from the lived experience of people with disability, is understood and prioritised.

We commit to providing people with disability the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes, particularly those directly concerning them.



7. Achievements to Date

There are many Council achievements to date to improve inclusion for people with disability, including national recognition of some of our projects and programs. Council has delivered a wide range of initiatives to increase opportunities for people with disability to enjoy the best of what the Sunshine Coast has to offer.

Achievements



719 out of 730 (98%) of bus stops are now DDA compliant.



11,203 passengers travelled a total of 59,924km using the Council Link service.



Pool hoists now available at all nine aquatic centres, and pool wheelchairs will be available at all centres soon (wheelchair to be provided at Kawana Aquatic Centre as part of upgrade works).



All abilities exercise classes included as part of the Healthy Sunshine Coast program.



Mobility mapping of accessibility features across multiple areas of the region making the Sunshine Coast the most mapped local government area in Australia.



Council's corporate website WCAG¹ upgraded for greater accessibility.

¹Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Awards



Sunshine Coast Mobility Mapping — National Award for Local Government 2022



Caloundra Main Street Urban Revitalisation project - Landscape Architecture Award in Urban Design category at the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects 2021 Awards.



Community Strategy 2019-2041 — A Commendation for Public Engagement and Community Planning at the Planning Institute of Australia 2021 Awards



Stage One Northern Parkland Mooloolaba Foreshore Revitalisation Project — Project of the Year at the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia 2022 Awards



Community Engagement: Excellence in Engagement Framework 2021 — Highly Commended for Organisation of the Year at the IAP2 Australasian 2022 Core Values Awards



8. Action Plan

Council already delivers a range of activities that support inclusive communities and outcomes for people of all abilities. This action plan seeks to recognise that work, but also extend upon this impact by focusing on key initiatives over the next five years.

A summary of the current and future actions for each priority area is detailed below.

The five priority areas are:

1. Awareness and Education
2. Built Environment and Public Spaces
3. Employment and Training
4. Events and Programs
5. Participation and Communication

1. Awareness and Education

Our community is aware and educated about disability which contributes to people with disability being valued and included and feeling that they belong.

This priority area includes disability awareness and education for Council staff and the community (including business community and industry groups).

Awareness and education are the first steps to removing participation barriers and reducing discrimination of people with disability.

Our community told us that discrimination was a major challenge for people with disability. Community members also suggested that greater community awareness and education would make it easier for people with disability to participate in community life. Disability awareness and education were also suggested as opportunities to improve interactions with Council and local businesses.

Our research suggested that some important concepts that need to be understood to reduce discrimination include:

- 90% of disabilities are invisible (not immediately evident to others)
- Disability is diverse and each person has unique needs and experiences. People with disability should be engaged and worked with to achieve shared goals
- People with disability often want to participate but societal barriers prevent this. These societal barriers include attitudinal, environmental, organisational and communication barriers.

Project Highlights

Disability Awareness Training

In 2022, elected Councillors, the Executive Leadership Team and some Council staff members participated in a disability awareness training day held by Spinal Life Australia. The training was run as a 'Realistic RACE' and provided participants with the opportunity to assume a disability in the built environment for part of a day. Feedback from the training was very positive and participants reported a broadening of understanding about some of the barriers people with disability face out in community.

Current Actions

Examples of what Council is currently doing:

- Disability Awareness Training for Councillors and Executive Leadership Team by Spinal Life Australia in 2022.
- Inclusive Habits training for Branch Managers across the organisation to foster inclusive leadership.
- Unconscious Bias training for all Council staff.
- Human Rights Awareness Training available to all Council staff based on the *Queensland Human Rights Act 2019*.
- Training for library staff on disability inclusion by Spinal Life Australia.



Future Actions

Action 1.1 Deliver disability awareness training designed by people with lived experience for all Council staff and elected Councillors.

Action 1.2 Coordinate an annual week of activities that celebrates Disability Action Week within Council and the community.

Action 1.3 Develop and deliver a community education campaign to improve understanding of disability and the value people with disability bring to Council and the community.

Action 1.4 Work with business and tourism event organisers to promote the benefits related to inclusion.

Action 1.5 Improve understanding of disability and recognition of businesses that demonstrate excellence in inclusion.

Action 1.6 Work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council and region.

Action 1.7 Raise awareness amongst food businesses and relevant Council venues of safe food handling training to limit risk of allergic reactions.



“ One of my big goals in life is to be part of the community through volunteering and helping. ”

Fin's Story

about Awareness and Education

'My name is Finley (Fin) Coll. I'm 15 years old and I'm in Year 10 at Meridan State College and live with Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy. I live at home with my mum, dad, younger brother and my dog, Wilson. I like technology, being with mates, politics and calling hotlines for government services!

My Cerebral Palsy is from complications at birth, and it means I use a powered wheelchair to get around and use a communication device to talk. My device is called Bob!

One of my big goals in life is to be part of the community through volunteering and helping.

Unfortunately, the few times I've tried to volunteer, people have shut me down before they've got to know me to find out what I have to offer. This has made me feel sad and angry. But I think this is often because people haven't met people like me before and don't know how to work with me.

One of the ways we can get better at understanding how to work with and support people with disability is to have people like me in mainstream schools or the community. It becomes normal.

A great example of this for me was at school when I approached my case manager, Jacki. I shared with her my idea about Disability Action Week (DAW) becoming a big celebration in our school, similar to NAIDOC week.

My simple, small idea to start with was to organise a game of wheelchair basketball for the teachers to play during Disability Action Week, where I got to be the referee. Jacki was a huge support because she thought it was a great idea and would help to create awareness of disability. She helped organise the wheelchairs, locked dates in and organised with the school to make it happen.

When Jacki agreed to help and took me seriously, I was so happy and excited.

After the game, my PE teacher, who'd had a good time, realised that wheelchair basketball would be a good unit for all the students to do. He set about making that fit the curriculum alongside the standard basketball unit. That unit of study continues each year along with the DAW teachers' game.

Since then, the school has also made me the first Access Liaison Leader to help lead access and inclusion across the school.

This makes me proud.

Awareness and education on disability helps us change thinking and responses to disability and that makes us more inclusive!

2. Built Environment and Public Spaces

Our built environment and public spaces are designed to be inclusive by delivering on the principles of universal design but also involving a diversity of people with disability in the planning and delivery to maximise inclusion and accessibility.

This priority area includes buildings, community facilities, housing, streets and streetscapes, pathways and sidewalks, beaches, parks, sports facilities, pools, public amenities and transport.

People of all abilities should be able to access and utilise buildings and public spaces and be able to get around. This is fundamental to inclusion. Access to buildings and public spaces for people with disability should be similar to people without disability, for example, people with disability should not need to use a back entrance or travel a significantly longer distance than others. Public transport should be an option available to anyone, and community transport can help fill gaps in the network.

There are building regulations for disability access, however, there are still examples of poor outcomes that meet the requirements of regulation. Involving

people with disability in planning and design may assist in delivering better outcomes. The principles of universal design are well understood, however there is lower uptake of universal design in commercial and residential development than is needed.

Our community told us that difficulty getting around and access to suitable and affordable housing were challenges for people with disability. Improvements to the public realm, transport and parking were identified as priorities to make it easier for people with disability to participate in community life. The top five places that people with disability value were beaches, bushland and natural reserves, pools and leisure centres, town centres and playgrounds. There is the opportunity to continue to improve accessibility outcomes in these areas to enable inclusion and participation for all.



Image: Mooloolaba Northern Parkland accessible boardwalk.

Project Highlights

Mooloolaba Northern Parkland

The Mooloolaba Northern Parklands Development provides a coastal link between Alexandra Headlands to Maroochydore Foreshore. The Northern Parklands development includes the following accessibility features:

- 200 metre accessible boardwalk — connecting Alexandra Headland to the Mooloolaba Esplanade
- Accessible ocean pathways and public seating which enable people in wheelchairs to enjoy the ocean views and sit alongside family and friends.
- Inclusive play elements which foster the physical, cognitive, sensory and social skills in children of all abilities.
- Accessible BBQ areas and picnic benches
- Accessible toilets.

The Mooloolaba Foreshore project won Project of the Year at the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Queensland and Northern Territory (IPWEA) 2022 Excellence Awards in 2022.

Council plans and strategies

There are various Council plans and strategies which contribute towards the development of accessible and inclusive built environments and public spaces for people with disability. These include, but are not limited to:

- Community Strategy 2019-2041
- Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017
- Design Strategy
- Recreation Parks Plan 2021-2031
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Aquatic Plan
- Smart Infrastructure Manual 2023
- Sport and Active Recreation Plan
- Open Space Landscape Infrastructure Manual

Council is committed to continuing to prioritise accessibility and inclusion in our strategic planning and place and space outcomes.

Current Actions

Examples of what Council is currently doing:

- Open Space Landscape Infrastructure Manual outlines design principles, including the accessibility required for Council controlled open space.
- Play Opportunities Plan (in development) will provide a framework for planning a network of inclusive playgrounds.
- Development of new Capital Renewal Prioritisation Matrix for public amenities which will better ensure accessibility is a key driver for renewal or replacement of public amenities.
- Changing Places facility at Grahame Stewart Park.
- A Changing Places facility is planned to be delivered at Mooloolaba as part of the Mooloolaba Foreshore Stage 2 Central Meeting Place project.
- Investigation of the delivery of a regional-scale accessible kayak pontoon.
- Braille incorporated into venue signage at Beerwah Meeting Place, Venue 114, Caloundra Indoor Stadium and Maroochydore Library.
- The stage one upgrade of Kawana Aquatic Centre is currently underway to provide new 20m indoor pool with accessible access.
- Pool hoists are available at all nine aquatic centres, and pool wheelchairs will be available at all centres soon (wheelchair to be provided at Kawana Aquatic Centre as part of upgrade works).
- Upgrade of boardwalk at Mary Cairncross to increase accessibility.
- Involving people with disability in streetscape improvement works and accessibility requirements in all placemaking projects.
- Working with business owners when completing streetscape improvement works to provide more accessible access to business entry points.
- Streetscape funding specifically targeting accessibility improvements including pathways, kerbs and ramps.
- Bus field trips with people from the Sunshine Coast Access Advisory Network (SCAAN) and other people with lived experience of disability to review the accessibility of bus stops across the region.
- Council Link — provides a transport service for people 60+ years and people with disability to be picked up from their home and taken to a nearby shopping centre.
- Working with community groups to ensure evacuation and disaster management centres are more inclusive during events.



Future Actions

Action 2.1 Plan and deliver new physical and mobile Changing Places facilities.

Action 2.2 Investigate locations where permanent accessible beach mats can be installed safely and raise awareness of their availability.

Action 2.3 Review prioritisation of existing Accessibility Improvements Fund investments to improve inclusion outcomes.

Action 2.4 Raise awareness with development industry about the social and economic benefits of universal design for private developments.

Action 2.5 Raise awareness of the importance of physical and portable location specific communication boards² at Council facilities, service centres, recreational spaces and events.

Action 2.6 Deliver additional accessible on-street parking bays in activity centres.

Action 2.7 Investigate smart city solutions to improve accessibility in the built environment and public spaces.

Action 2.8 Expand existing program of mobility mapping to new areas of the region.

Action 2.9 Improve accessibility of cabins at Council's Holiday Parks as they are refurbished or upgraded.

Action 2.10 Provide dignified and equitable access to all stages at Council-owned district and regional level community venues.

Action 2.11 Provide facilities for assistance animals at all Council customer service centres and libraries and display signage that assistance animals are welcome.

Action 2.12 Identify, plan and secure enduring disability inclusion legacy initiatives / outcomes as a Games Delivery Partner in the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

² A communication board is a sheet of symbols, pictures or photos that someone who experiences difficulty communicating can point at to help communicate with those around them.



“ I was determined to find a solution for myself as is my way of dealing with life’s problems. I grabbed the phone book and found a 1800 number and dialed it. ”

Trevor’s Story

about Built Environment and Public Spaces

‘Shortly after I was declared legally blind in 2007, I was sitting at my kitchen bench sipping my coffee feeling very sorry for myself. “What will I do now?” I had no peripheral vision sideways and down, with only 25 percent upper central vision remaining. I could no longer drive, and I stayed at home long-term because I couldn’t safely navigate out in public.

I was determined to find a solution for myself as is my way of dealing with life’s problems. I grabbed the phone book and found a 1800 number and dialed it. It was Vision Australia in Brisbane. I explained my problem and was advised that I needed to be assessed for the use of a long white cane, but they could not get to me for several months. They advised that I try Guide Dogs.

Within about one week I was assessed and subsequently commenced white cane training over a period of 8 weeks. My confidence improved straight away. Once training was complete, I received my first long white cane and have been using it and others ever since. The use of a white cane gave me back my confidence in public and improved my mobility. I could not do without it today.

Longer distances were still an issue.

Driving was no longer an option, so I needed to use taxis or public transport. I obtained a Travel Pass for public transport, and I have a TSS Card (Taxi Subsidy Scheme) for using taxis at a subsidised rate. These have helped me to attend many and varied activities. But it can still be a long wait for a taxi — a 45-minute wait is not unusual.

I have found most bus and taxi drivers are helpful, but occasionally I get a grumpy one. Before boarding a train, I can ring my departing station and arrange assistance there and to be met and assisted at my destination station. Most times the train staff will keep an eye on me in case of unruly passengers. It is inconvenient to call ahead when I want to travel but having transport staff who are aware and helpful makes a big difference.

I want to say that if you have a problem, find a solution and do not sit in a hole waiting for someone else to solve your problem; find your own solution. There is support available.

And when you see someone using a long white cane give them a wide birth so they can navigate freely!

3. Employment and Training

Our community provides equitable opportunities for training and employment of people with disability so that they can experience the independence, self-confidence, and social benefits of work.

This priority area includes training, volunteering, work experience and employment at Council and in the community.

Most workplaces tend to have barriers for employment of people with disability that need to be removed to increase participation.

Stigma and misconceptions from hiring managers can mean people with disability are not even considered for roles. Application processes and face-to-face interviews can disadvantage people with certain disabilities. Physical accessibility and availability of bathroom facilities can be an issue in many workplaces. Some workplaces also have inflexibility in their work practices which preclude people with disability.

Our community told us that job opportunities on the Sunshine Coast were a major challenge for people with disability. Community members suggested that more employment and training opportunities were needed to make it easier for people with disability to participate in community life. Barriers to employment included discrimination, lack of support, inflexible work arrangements and accessible transport.

Innovative options for training and employment of people with disability can also create new opportunities, such as supporting social enterprise development and the impact sector.

Current Actions

Examples of what Council is currently doing:

- Partnering with Disability Employment Services provider to promote employment and work experience opportunities with Design and Placemaking Services and Parks and Gardens branches.
- Volunteering opportunities available for people with disability at Council parks and libraries and Venue 114.
- BushCare Mates program under BushCare Sunshine Coast working with students from Currimundi Special School and Caloundra State High School — Lighthouse Centre.
- Meaningful Employment Project to engage people with disability to help them overcome barriers to employment.
- Council's internal Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group are in the process of developing an action plan to improve diversity and inclusion representation at Council.
- Renewed Regional Economic Development Strategy will help to continue to grow local employment opportunities and will have a focus on impact sector.



Future Actions

Action 3.1 Promote Council's employment opportunities, work experience and traineeship programs to people with disability.

Action 3.2 Continue to expand inclusion of Council's volunteering opportunities and promote to people with disability.

Action 3.3 Promote and expand training initiatives provided by the disability sector to increase disability awareness within local businesses and the value inclusive workplaces bring to individuals and the community.

Action 3.4 Review Council's recruitment and application process to strengthen inclusion for people with disability.

Action 3.5 Undertake an audit of Council physical and digital workplaces to improve accessibility and processes for workplace adjustments.



“ Working has changed my life! Sometimes I do fear that if I didn't have my job, I would end up sitting around feeling like I'm worthless and lose hope. ”

Payge's Story

about Employment and Training

'Finishing up school, I wasn't 100% sure what was going to be my next step. I wasn't sure where my life was heading. I just knew that like anyone else it was time to get my resume together and start looking for my first job. With the help of my mum, I applied for several positions, but it seemed like the word "disability" on my resume was a barrier for everyone but me. The constant feeling of rejection began to wear on me, and it made me feel like I was not good enough. I got the feeling that businesses just saw me as slow and not capable, and they didn't give me a chance to prove myself.

I started to fill in my time with other activities that I enjoyed and began to make some friends to build on my social skills, and my community connections. Having people give me the chance to show my potential in these social areas led to not one but two job interview opportunities. I'm proud to say that I was successful with both and now hold two paid (part-time) jobs with Equity Works and Parent 2 Parent Qld.

Working has given me a sense of freedom and independence. It allows me to make friends outside of my family, it gives me the ability to make my own money, it gives me skills that improve me personally and as an employee. Working makes me happy and keeps me busy, it gives me a sense of belonging

and achievement. It gives me a goal and I feel like it allows me to achieve the things I want to achieve.

I love to be independent and earn my own money.

Working has changed my life! Sometimes I do fear that if I didn't have my job, I would end up sitting around feeling like I'm worthless and lose hope.

I work really hard to be the best I can be in my job and hope to learn new things and get faster as time goes by.

I want people to know that everyone is employable. People can surprise you in unexpected ways so give us a chance to prove ourselves. I may have a disability, but I was brought up never to give up and neither should other people in my situation. Inclusive employers are out there, we just need to continue to connect, and I am doing that now through the Here Now Next Project and through my role at Parent 2 Parent. I enjoy supporting young people to give them the strength to connect with future employers.

People with disabilities have so many abilities — we are worth it.'

4. Events and Programs

Everyone can participate in community events, activities and programs. People are provided with the additional support and information they need to plan ahead and attend important events, activities and programs.

This priority area includes events, activities and programs provided by Council and others, including major events at facilities and in public spaces. This priority area includes community sport.

Our community told us that people with disability enjoy participating in community events and programs because they offer new experiences and the opportunity to learn new skills. They can also offer connection, companionship, a feeling of acceptance and inclusion, and a feeling of safety and comfort.

Participating in activities has been identified as a challenge for people with disability on the Sunshine Coast. Some of our community thought that people with disability should be able to attend all events and programs on the Sunshine Coast — “just like everyone else”. While others thought this might not be possible, and that special events should be offered targeting people with different types of disability.

Removing barriers to participation in events, activities and programs can be achieved by providing information about the activity, accessible features at the event space, or providing extra support. Also, having information available in accessible formats that describes the inclusive features of an event or program can help people with disability to plan their attendance. Some people with disability cannot attend an event without accessible features (such as accessible transport, parking, toilets, quiet room, dimmed lighting, etc.) but not all events and programs provide these options. Additional support may also be required based on individual needs; having disability confident and aware staff goes a long way to having this extra support provided.

Project Highlights

Mindful Art Program

The Mindful Art Program occurs on a monthly basis and provides people living with dementia and their carers in the community a safe and friendly experience within the Caloundra Regional Gallery. Two artworks are selected for each session and are used as a prompt to help stimulate conversation from the visiting group. Each session is attended by Council staff members and volunteers.

The Mindful Art Program recommenced in March 2023 after a three-year break with COVID-19 restrictions.

Accessible Beach Program

Council’s Accessible Beach Program provides an opportunity for people with disability to access and enjoy the beach. Beach matting is available at Coolum Beach, Dicky Beach and Mooloolaba Surf Life Saving Clubs on weekends and public holidays from September until May. Beach wheelchairs are available for hire free of charge from Compass Institute all year round (excluding public holidays).

Current Actions

Examples of what Council is currently doing:

- Healthy Sunshine Coast all abilities classes.
- All Access Day at the Beach event held annually.
- Companion Card accepted at major Council venues and events.
- Beach Clean Up program is working towards becoming all abilities friendly.
- Mindful Art Program held at Caloundra Regional Gallery for people with dementia and their carers.



Image: Mindful Art Program, Caloundra Regional Gallery.

Future Actions

Action 4.1 Promote existing guidelines for holding inclusive events, activities and programs for people with visible and invisible disability.

Action 4.2 Embed minimum inclusion standards into Council's permitting processes for events.

Action 4.3 Raise awareness of disability inclusion initiatives and services amongst business and event organisers.

Action 4.4 Include a quiet or sensory space at all major Council event venues and events e.g., Caloundra Music Festival, New Years Eve, Australia Day.

Action 4.5 Engage an Auslan interpreter for formal Council events, such as announcements, presentations and ceremonies e.g., citizenship ceremonies, media events, disaster management presentations.

Action 4.6 Investigate and install hearing augmentation systems / voice to text technology (or other system) at all major Council venues and events.

Action 4.7 Develop a communication campaign toolkit to improve inclusion and participation for people with disability in community, cultural and sporting groups.



“ The ability to choose where I wanted to sit gave me the opportunity to design my own experience. In that moment, I was listening to the music, having fun, and all the other people around me were doing the same... ”

Belinda's Story

about Events and Programs

'Attending concerts and experiencing live music is something I thoroughly enjoy. As an avid concert goer, I have attended numerous live concerts, even traveling to other states to see some of my favourite performers. I have cerebral palsy which affects my mobility and I use an electric wheelchair to get around, which makes the accessibility of a concert or music event of the utmost importance.

In 2019, I attended the Caloundra Music Festival, and it was an absolutely amazing experience, not only for the music, but also for its accessibility. There were two things that really stood out for me — the shuttle buses were accessible and there were various viewing options. For many people with disabilities, including myself, half the battle of attending a festival is getting there.

The event provided free shuttle bus transport from multiple locations which were accessible, which meant I had an easy way of getting to the festival. Riding on the bus was half the fun of attending,

because at the end of the day, festival goers shared their experiences from the day. When I arrived at the festival and started to explore my surroundings, I was pleasantly surprised that there were lots of seating locations that I could choose to access. The ability to choose where I wanted to sit gave me the opportunity to design my own experience. In that moment, I was listening to the music, having fun, and all the other people around me were doing the same, and it seemed as if there was no separation between us.

Festivals and events can get more inclusive in many ways, including giving festival goers access to a variety of viewing options, accessible toilets, quiet zones, pathways if there's an uneven surface, reducing strobe light usage, and having Auslan interpreters, just to name a few. A festival is a unifying experience, a chance to share the heart-swelling transcendence of a favourite band (or find out about the greatness of a new artist) with others.'

5. Participation and Communication

Everyone can access the information they need to participate in community life and be involved in decision making that is important to them.

This priority area includes information provided by Council and others, and participation of people with disability in decision making processes.

Our community told us that having a say on important community issues was a challenge for people with disability. Being involved in decision making was also identified as needed to make it easier for people with disability to participate in community life.

Community members suggested that information should be provided with accessible layouts, large print, Easy English, image descriptions, video with captions and audio format to make it more inclusive.

Providing inclusive information will assist in maximising the involvement of people with disability in decision making processes. But additional planning and tailored engagement methods are also important to reduce participation barriers.

They would also like information about how places, spaces, activities and services are accessible so that people with disability and their carer can plan ahead.

Project Highlights

Inclusive Engagement Guideline

Council is committed to ensuring all people have the opportunity to participate in community engagement. Council has prepared an Inclusive Engagement Guideline for internal staff members which considers groups that may experience additional barriers to participating in community engagement. These include people with disability, older and younger people, people experiencing homelessness, the First Nations community, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD).

Briometrix Mobility Maps

Council has partnered with Briometrix to undertake mobility mapping across the Sunshine Coast region. Maps have now been created for the areas between Maroochydore to Mooloolaba, Caloundra coastal area, the Sunshine Coast University Hospital Precinct, Sunshine Coast Stadium and Maleny. The maps identify footpaths, shared pathways, and accessible toilets and trails for people of all abilities.

Current Actions

Examples of what Council is currently doing:

- Leading the way on Mobility Mapping for residents and visitors of the Sunshine Coast to identify the most navigable route for everyone's varying needs.
- Adventure Sunshine Coast website now adding information on accessibility features of paths.
- Council's corporate website platform upgraded to improve accessibility features.
- Level Up website provides information to assist businesses with improving accessibility.
- Inclusive Engagement Guideline created to encourage Council staff to better reach and involve people with disability in engagement.
- Accessibility features of public amenities across the region audited and updated on the National Amenity Network Map.



Future Actions

Action 5.1 Promote Council's Access and Inclusion Coordination Group internally to increase participation and the opportunity to listen to, and learn from, people with lived experience of disability, and showcase the work Council is doing.

Action 5.2 Fund specialised accessible communication training for interested staff across Council to act as a resource when called upon.

Action 5.3 Update Council's reception check-in system to be more accessible and uphold customer privacy and security.

Action 5.4 Develop a guideline for online content to direct how to convey specific inclusion information for Council facilities (e.g., evacuation centres, venues, holiday parks, parks), events and programs for people with visible and invisible disability.

Action 5.5 Collaborate with Visit Sunshine Coast to improve information about accessible tourism including accommodation, venues and activities to allow visit planning.

Action 5.6 Update Disaster Hub with information on the accessibility and inclusion features of evacuation centres.

Action 5.7 Consider alternative methods of communication for people with diverse needs in a disaster.

Action 5.8 Develop a guideline to outline accessible standards for a range of communication formats including documents, interpretive signage, website content and videos.



“ Being employed in roles I feel passionate about has allowed me to thrive. ”

Drew's Story

about Participation and Communication

'My name is Drew Russell and I grew up on the Sunshine Coast and I have always loved my community in the area. I attended the same school on the coast from pre-school to year 12 and I am a foundation student.

While I hold great memories of the school, the people I know and the friends I have made, I also have felt that near the end of my schooling I was not able to achieve the educational goals I had hoped for myself. I felt left behind compared to some of my friends. This led to a feeling of not being “bright” and caused me to lack confidence in my judgement and decision making and to rely on others a lot instead of trusting my own instincts. Because of this I would tend not to step into the limelight and I missed out on a lot of valuable opportunities for my future.

I, however gained a rejuvenated sense of confidence after being introduced to a community who share my values and beliefs. As well as highlighting my strengths they have provided me with valued support, friendship, and opportunities. I completed my Bachelor's Degree in Film and Television. I have achieved high honours in speech and drama for acting and I have also worked on numerous community-based projects throughout the Sunshine Coast based around community engagement.

Within these roles I have been able to showcase my strengths and I have grown as a person. As a result, I now find that I can be that support for others who have experienced similar situations.

Being employed in roles I feel passionate about has allowed me to thrive. Through the 'Here Now Next' Project I can share my story and help others see the skills and abilities that make them unique and assist them to find meaningful paid employment. I feel that I am a great example of someone who has overcome their barriers and I love the opportunity I now have to share and support others. I continue to work on community engagement and awareness, sharing information and support about services available to young people and their families through the 'Stand by Me' Project.

I have come a long way since finishing school and it hasn't always been easy, but with the support of my family, friends, and community I continue to learn and grow as a person. I urge anyone to keep trying and never give up. Your uniqueness will be of value to your community and your community will value that you are unique.'

9. Detailed Action Plan

Action	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Council Team	Measure	Funding
1. Awareness and Education								
1.1 Deliver disability awareness training designed by people with lived experience for all Council staff and elected councillors.	●	●	●	●	●	People and Culture and Community Development	All staff and councillors receive disability awareness training	Subject to additional funding
1.2 Coordinate an annual week of activities that celebrates Disability Action Week within Council and the community.	●	●	●	●	●	Community Development	Activities coordinated in Disability Action Week	Achievable within existing resources
1.3 Develop and deliver a community education campaign to improve understanding of disability and the value people with disability bring to Council and the community.	●	●	●	●	●	Community Development and People and Culture	Campaign delivered	Achievable within existing resources
1.4 Work with business and tourism event organisers to promote benefits related to inclusion.	●	●	●	●	●	Economic Development	Number of businesses engaged	Achievable within existing resources
1.5 Improve understanding of disability and recognition of businesses that demonstrate excellence in inclusion.	●	●	●	●	●	Economic Development	Number of businesses recognised for inclusion	Achievable within existing resources
1.6 Work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council and region.	●	●	●	●	●	Community Development	Join Disability Friendly program	Subject to additional funding
1.7 Raise awareness amongst food businesses and relevant council venues of safe food handling training to limit risk of allergic reactions.	●					Environmental Health	Information provided and distributed	Achievable within existing resources

Action	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Council Team	Measure	Funding
2. Built Environment and Public Spaces								
2.1 Plan and deliver new physical and mobile Changing Places facilities.					●	Property Management	Number of new Changing Places facilities delivered	Subject to additional funding
2.2 Investigate locations where permanent accessible beach mats can be installed safely and raise awareness of their availability.	●					Environmental Operations and Community Development	Number of new beach mat locations delivered	Subject to additional funding
2.3 Review prioritisation of existing Accessibility Improvements Fund investments to improve inclusion outcomes.	●	●	●	●	●	Design and Placemaking, Property Management, Parks and Gardens, Capital Works, Environmental Operations, Civil Asset Management, and Transport Infrastructure Management	Number of facilities upgraded for better accessibility	Subject to additional funding
2.4 Raise awareness with development industry about the social and economic benefits of universal design for private developments.	●	●	●	●	●	Customer and Planning Services and Economic Development	Engagement with industry associations and groups	Achievable within existing resources
2.5 Raise awareness of the importance of physical and portable location specific communication boards at Council facilities, service centres, recreational spaces and events.	●					Community Development	Meetings with internal teams about communication boards	Achievable within existing resources
2.6 Deliver additional accessible on-street parking bays in activity centres.	●					Transport Infrastructure Management	Number of new accessible on-street parking bays delivered	Achievable within existing resources

Action	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Council Team	Measure	Funding
2.7 Investigate smart city solutions to improve accessibility in the built environment and public spaces.	●	●	●	●	●	Business and Innovation	Recommendations made on opportunities to install smart city solutions	Achievable within existing resources
2.8 Expand existing program of mobility mapping to new areas of the region.	●	●				Design and Placemaking Services	Number of new areas added to mobility mapping	Achievable within existing resources
2.9 Improve accessibility of cabins at Council's Holiday Parks as they are refurbished or upgraded.			●			Sport and Community Venues — Holiday Parks	Number of accessible cabins delivered	Subject to additional funding
2.10 Provide dignified and equitable access to all stages at Council-owned district and regional level community venues.			●	●	●	Property Management	Number of stages retrofitted	Subject to additional funding
2.11 Provide facilities for assistance animals at all Council customer service centres and libraries and display signage that assistance animals are welcome.	●	●	●	●	●	Property Management	Facilities for assistance animals delivered	Achievable within existing resources
2.12 Identify, plan and secure enduring disability inclusion legacy initiatives / outcomes as a Games Delivery Partner in the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.	●	●	●	●	●	SCC Brisbane 2032 Branch		Achievable within existing resources

Action	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Council Team	Measure	Funding
3. Employment and Training								
3.1 Promote Council's employment opportunities, work experience and traineeship programs to people with disability.	●	●	●	●	●	People and Culture	Data collected on annual basis for employees with disability (based on voluntary survey) Number of people with disability who have participated in work experience and traineeship programs	Achievable within existing resources
3.2 Continue to expand inclusion of Council's volunteering opportunities and promote to people with disability.	●	●	●	●	●	Arts, Heritage and Libraries, Environmental Operations, Tourism and Major Events, People and Culture, and Sport and Community Venues	Number of people with disability who have participated in volunteering opportunity with Council	Achievable within existing resources
3.3 Promote and expand training initiatives provided by the disability sector to increase disability awareness within local businesses and the value inclusive workplaces bring to individuals and the community.	●	●	●	●	●	Community Development and Economic Development	Number of training initiatives delivered	Achievable within existing resources
3.4 Review Council's recruitment and application process to strengthen inclusion for people with disability.	●					People and Culture	Review undertaken and improvements made	Achievable within existing resources

Action	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Council Team	Measure	Funding
3.5 Undertake an audit of Council physical and digital workplaces to improve accessibility and processes for workplace adjustments.	●	●	●			People and Culture and Property Management	Review undertaken and improvements made	Subject to additional funding
4. Events and Programs								
4.1 Promote existing guidelines for holding inclusive events, activities and programs for people with visible and invisible disability.	●					Creative Arts and Events, Sport and Community Venues and Community Development	Number of Council staff who receive training/ upskilling on delivery of inclusive events	Achievable within existing resources
4.2 Embed minimum inclusion standards into Council's permitting processes for events.	●					Community Land Permits	Change to permitting process	Achievable within existing resources
4.3 Raise awareness of disability inclusion initiatives and services amongst business and event organisers.		●				Community Development and Economic Development	Information provided and distributed	Subject to additional funding
4.4 Include a quiet or sensory space at all major Council event venues and events e.g., Caloundra Music Festival, New Years Eve, Australia Day.	●	●	●	●	●	Creative Arts and Events, Tourism and Major Events and Sport and Community Venues	Venues / events where quiet or sensory space provided	Subject to additional funding
4.5 Engage an Auslan interpreter for formal Council events, such as announcements, presentations and ceremonies e.g., citizenship ceremonies, media events, disaster management presentations.	●	●	●	●	●	All relevant Council teams	All formal events have Auslan interpreter	Subject to additional funding

Action	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Council Team	Measure	Funding
4.6 Investigate and install hearing augmentation systems / voice to text technology (or other system) at all major Council venues and events.	●	●	●	●	●	Creative Arts and Events, Tourism and Major Events and Sport and Community Venues	Systems installed	Subject to additional funding
4.7 Develop a communication campaign toolkit to improve inclusion and participation for people with disability in community, cultural and sporting groups.	●	●	●	●	●	Community Development	Campaign toolkit developed and implemented	Achievable within existing resources
5. Participation and Communication								
5.1 Promote Council's Access and Inclusion Coordination Group internally to increase participation and the opportunity to listen to, and learn from, people with lived experience of disability, and showcase the work Council is doing.	●	●	●	●	●	Community Development	Participation in Access and Inclusion Coordination Group	Achievable within existing resources
5.2 Fund specialised accessible communication training for interested staff across Council to act as a resource when called upon.	●	●	●	●	●	People and Culture	Number of staff with specialised skills	Subject to additional funding
5.3 Update Council's reception check-in system to be more accessible and uphold customer privacy and security.		●				Customer Response	Check-in process improved	Achievable within existing resources
5.4 Develop a guideline for online content to direct how to convey specific inclusion information for Council facilities (e.g., evacuation centres, venues, holiday parks, parks), events and programs for people with visible and invisible disability.	●					Community Development, Sport and Community Venues, Creative Arts and Events and Parks and Gardens	Guideline developed	Achievable within existing resources

Action	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Council Team	Measure	Funding
5.5 Collaborate with Visit Sunshine Coast to improve information about accessible tourism including accommodation, venues and activities to allow visit planning.	●	●	●	●	●	Economic Development	Information is available to assist visitors pre-plan trips	Achievable within existing resources
5.6 Update Disaster Hub with information on the accessibility and inclusion features of evacuation centres.	●					Community Development and Disaster Management	Disaster Hub updated	Achievable within existing resources
5.7 Consider alternative methods of communication for people with diverse needs in a disaster.		●				Community Development and Communication	Information is provided in a range of accessible formats	Achievable within existing resources
5.8 Develop a guideline to outline accessible standards for a range of communication formats including documents, interpretive signage, website content and videos.	●					Communication and Community Development	Guideline developed	Achievable within existing resources

Glossary

Disability

A disability is a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder full and effective participation in society (according to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*).

According to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (S4)*, disability in relation to a person, means:

- a total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions or
- b total or partial loss of a part of the body or
- c the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness or
- d the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body or
- e a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction or
- f a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perceptions of reality, emotions or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour; and includes a disability that:
 - i. presently exists or
 - ii. previously existed but no longer exists or
 - iii. may exist in the future or
 - iv. is imputed to a person.

Notes

1. United Nations 2006, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html.
2. ABS 2022, Census 2021, www.abs.gov.au/census
3. Queensland Government (Queensland Treasury) 2019, Population Projections: 2018 Edition, www.qgso.qld.gov.au/.
4. ABS 2019, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/2018>
5. University of Sydney 2021, Invisible disabilities: they are more common than you think, www.sydney.edu.au/study/why-choose-sydney/student-life/student-news/2021/09/14/invisible-disabilities--they-are-more-common-than-you-think.html
6. ABS 2019, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/2018
7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022, People with disability in Australia, www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia
8. ABS 2022, Census 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/census>
9. Based on continuation of current trend and medium series population projections for Sunshine Coast LGA. Queensland Government (Queensland Treasury) 2019, Population Projections: 2018 Edition, www.qgso.qld.gov.au.
10. ABS 2022, Census 2021, www.abs.gov.au/census

