

# Mareeba Community Taskforce 3 Year Action Plan & Progress Report



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# Mareeba Community Taskforce 3 Year Action Plan & Progress Report

## Mareeba Community Taskforce

The Taskforce is a joint initiative of the Mareeba Chamber of Commerce and Mareeba Shire Council to continue to promote Mareeba's prosperity and wellbeing and unite the community to tackle the big issues:



GROWING THE  
ECONOMY



OVERCOMING  
DISADVANTAGE



CREATING  
HEALTHY, ACTIVE  
COMMUNITIES

### 2021 - Establishing the Taskforce

- On 6th September 2021, the inaugural meeting of the Mareeba Community Taskforce was hosted by the Chamber and Council, and attended by sixty business, community, and government representatives.
- Attendees agreed to the proposed Taskforce's Terms of Reference, identified actions, and voted on the priorities to promote Mareeba's economic growth and community wellbeing.

### 2022 - Developing, implementing, and reviewing the action plan

- A *Mareeba Community Taskforce Action Plan* was prepared from the 6 September Forum and focusses on the five top priorities. The Action Plan was published early in 2022.
- A second Taskforce Forum was held on the 15th November 2022 to review the priorities and report on progress with the actions taken. Feedback from participants at the November 2022 forum was overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the original five priority actions.
- The *Mareeba Community Taskforce Action Plan & Progress Report 2022* outlines some of the progress achieved against the five priorities by multiple stakeholders, but there is much more being done! Organisations are welcome to reach out to connect with the Taskforce about other actions in these areas.

### 2023 and beyond - 12 month progress report and further action

- The *Mareeba Community Taskforce Action Plan - 12 Month Progress Report* is published and the Action Plan continues to be implemented.
- A decision will be made in 2024 regarding further review.



# Mareeba Community Taskforce 3 Year Action Plan & Progress Report

## COMMUNITY PRIORITIES



HEALTH  
SERVICES



TRANSPORT  
CONNECTIVITY



WORKFORCE  
ATTRACTION AND  
RETENTION



AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING



COMMUNITY  
SAFETY

## PROGRESS UPDATE

A Progress Report tackling the five community priorities in 2022 has been prepared. It lists more than 70 targeted actions undertaken and outcomes achieved by multiple agencies, over and above standard day to day operations.

This report is by no means exhaustive and there is much more being done. Organisations are encouraged to reach out to connect with the Taskforce about other actions and outcomes in these areas.



## MORE TO BE DONE...

Notwithstanding these actions and outcomes, many big issues facing the people of Mareeba are complex with long standing legacy issues impacting some of the community problems and other priorities cannot be tackled without an injection of large amounts of capital, so much more is required.

Ongoing collaboration between all levels of government, community, businesses and industry sectors, as well as appropriate resourcing and committed leadership at all levels is essential to achieving good outcomes.

**Read on for further details on the actions and outcomes!**

**Please contact the Chamber or Council to share other actions and outcomes.**





# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 1. IMPROVED HEALTH SERVICES

**ACTION OUTCOME:** *Health services are improved to meet the needs of a growing rural population in the Mareeba district with high risk of chronic disease, ageing faster than Australia and experiencing high socio-economic disadvantage.*

##### **Mareeba Shire Council**

- Advocacy material for improved primary health care services prepared and used to lobby the Queensland Minister for Health and the Cairns & Hinterland Hospital & Health Service Board
- Advocated to Queensland and Federal Governments to attract and retain skilled rural GPs
- Presented and provided input to 'Exploring Workforce Solutions for Delivery of Quality Clinical Services' Forum for more GPs and health professionals in Mareeba
- Provided ongoing maintenance and other support for accommodation facilities in Mareeba for medical and allied health professionals

##### **Mareeba Chamber of Commerce, Mareeba & Community Family Health Care Board**

- Established Mareeba & Community Family Health Care
- Transitioned Mareeba Medical Clinic to community management and Mareeba & Community Family Health Centre established to sustain current level of GP services in Mareeba with aims to increase health services
- Established Mareeba Health Professional Workforce Alliance to attract and retain medical officers for GP and hospital positions, nursing, and allied health professionals
- Established Black Cockatoo Foundation to improve mental health outcomes in the community

##### **Cairns & Hinterland Hospital and Health Service, Mareeba Hospital**

- Expanded clinical services with new keyhole and laparoscopic surgery services, and new endoscopy service
- New ultrasound machine now available due to generous community support and donations by local businesses
- More general surgery delivered through a more sustainable rural generalist surgeon model
- Increase in physical outreach services, telehealth services and focus on women's health services



# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 1. IMPROVED HEALTH SERVICES CONT.

##### Amaroo Medical Centre

- Secured additional funding to continue Nurse Practitioner Program for further 12 months to provide bulk-billed services 3 days/week by Nurse Practitioner.
- Nurse Practitioner Services include general medical appointments to current patients for scripts, referrals, medical certificates and follow up results etc. to free up GPs for more complex consultations.

##### Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation Medical Centre

- Increased wellbeing activities, provided outreach and visiting services and culturally competent health services
- Planning for new dental health service well underway with capital works commenced

##### Mareeba & Community Family Health Care Board

- Advocated for renal dialysis machine, laboratory, chemotherapy, epidurals, and increased theatre use at Mareeba Hospital and provision of medical services through the Ambulance service

## 2023 FOCUS

##### All Organisations

- Continue lobbying for health services appropriate to the health status of the growing Mareeba Shire population including extending an invitation to Minister for Health to visit Mareeba and discuss local health service issues.
- Support plans for the proposed expansion and upgrades at the Mareeba Hospital and Mulungu's new dental health service and community wellbeing and wellness centre.



# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 2. IMPROVED TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

**ACTION OUTCOMES:** *Transport connectivity is improved to facilitate the resilience of key routes between Mareeba and the Gulf of Carpentaria, Cape York, the Atherton Tablelands and Southern Australia, while also focusing on active recreation and commuting options for residents and visitors.*

##### Mareeba Shire Council

- Advocacy material prepared for improved transport connectivity: Burke Development Road, Ootann Road heavy vehicle capacity upgrade, Mareeba Bypass, Cairns to Mareeba access
- Promoted the availability of leased sites at the Mareeba Airport Aviation Park and the airport has grown
- Completed Stage 1 of the Mareeba Rail Trail (McIver road to airport) for improved commuter connectivity
- Adopted the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy which includes key trails for improved connectivity within Mareeba for staged implementation

##### Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Chamber of Commerce, FNQ Growers

- Ministerial meetings, Minister for Transport guest speaker at Mareeba Chamber of Commerce lunch and other extensive lobbying conducted for key transport connectivity routes: Burke Development Road, Ootann Road heavy vehicle capacity upgrade, Mareeba Bypass, Cairns to Mareeba access
- All but 3.5km of the Burke Development Road now sealed including the intersection with Ootann Road
- Further 3km at southern end of Ootann Road sealed with Federal Government funding

##### Mareeba Shire Council, , Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

- Lobbying to ensure \$20M of \$210M commitment by the Federal Government is spent on planning for a future-proofed road network from Cairns to Mareeba
- Lobbying has led to the engagement of AECOM by the Queensland Government to deliver a \$1.3M planning study for the alignment of the Mareeba Bypass.

##### Mareeba Shire Council, Dept Transport & Main Roads

- Adopted the Mareeba Walking Trail Network Plan for enhanced commuter connectivity which has staged implementation as funding becomes available.



# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 2. IMPROVED TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY CONT.

### 2023 FOCUS

**Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Chamber of Commerce, Transport Businesses, FNQ Growers**

- Maintain focus on lobbying for priority road improvements for improved transport connectivity.

#### Transport Businesses

- Explore new ways of attracting and retaining staff in the transport industry including advertising practices and employment packages.

#### Mareeba Shire Council

- Implementation of Parks and Open Spaces Strategy including Bi-Lakes upgrades for improved commuter connectivity.
- Explore opportunities to realise the potential of the Mareeba Airport as a key regional aviation services hub after being upgraded with public funding.





# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 3. ATTRACT AND RETAIN A SKILLED WORKFORCE

**ACTION OUTCOMES:** *Improved focus on attracting and retaining a skilled workforce to support industry objectives, meet the demands of a growing rural population and keep pace with a quickly changing world to ensure future economic sustainability and livability.*

##### **Mareeba Shire Council**

- Lobbied Queensland and Federal Governments to attract and retain skilled rural GPs and Medical Practitioners
- Provided local data and feedback to state and federal government and health industry initiatives to find workforce solutions for the delivery of quality clinical and allied health services in the Mareeba Shire

##### **Mareeba Chamber of Commerce, Mareeba & Community Family Health Care Board**

- Established Mareeba Health Professional Workforce Alliance to attract and retain medical officers for GP and hospital positions, nursing, and allied health professionals

##### **Mareeba Hospital, Amaroo Medical Clinic, Mareeba & Community Family Health Care, Mulungu Aboriginal Medical Clinic**

- Improved attraction and retention of medical practitioners by GP clinics and Mareeba Hospital partnering to 'share' medical practitioners to meet expectations of better work/life balance by younger professionals
- GP Rural Generalist training tweaked to two weeks at the Mareeba Hospital and two weeks at a GP clinic for better exposure and knowledge of the community to encourage retention/return of practitioners
- Airconditioned Mareeba Hospital's former 'Nurse's Quarters'

##### **Amaroo Medical Clinic, Mareeba & Community Family Health Centre, Mareeba Hospital**

- Actively and creatively recruiting more medical practitioners and registrars and upskilling staff to fill gaps.
- Tailoring employment packages to suit needs of new staff e.g. accommodation, vehicle, assistance to settle into community

##### **Amaroo Medical Clinic**

- Freeing up GPs for more complex consultations by extending Nurse Practitioner Program for 12 months to provide bulk-billed services three days/week by Nurse Practitioner for scripts, referrals, medical certificates and follow up results for current patients etc



# PRIORITY OUTCOMES 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 3. ATTRACT AND RETAIN A SKILLED WORKFORCE CONT.

##### **Mareeba Churches Together**

- Provided pastoral support for seasonal workers through the regular “Hope Gathering” in Mareeba with a free BBQ, music, and support for community connection and to reduce social isolation of workers

##### **Department of Employment, Small Business and Training**

- State government supported the strong demand in Mareeba for apprenticeships and traineeships and re-training by funding programs delivered in Mareeba

##### **All Organisations**

- Acknowledgement that shortage of housing is the biggest issue in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce across all industries and increased willingness to explore creative housing options:
- NDIS supporting new accommodation for people with disability
- New planning regulations introduced by Queensland Government for ‘granny flats’ and on farm worker accommodation
- Hospital and local medical clinics looking at options to overcome housing crisis for staff
- Mareeba Shire Council continues to offer timely planning, building and plumbing approval processes for housing construction with fee increases kept well below CPI
- Increase in development applications for on farm rural workers accommodation to free up housing in town

##### **Federal Government**

- Federal Government announced HECS HELP Rural Doctors and Nurse Practitioners initiative to attract graduates to rural and remote areas.

##### **Health Workforce Queensland, Mareeba Rotary, Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Hospital, Mareeba GP Clinics**

- GROW Rural North Qld weekend event held in Tablelands towns including Mareeba, to host health and medical students to provide insight to living and working in rural communities.

##### **Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network (QAWN)**

- Supported agricultural producers and businesses to attract, train and retain workers.



# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 3. ATTRACT AND RETAIN A SKILLED WORKFORCE CONT.

##### **Mareeba Chamber of Commerce**

- Business Survey conducted to inform workforce attraction prospectus and other strategies to promote the livability of Mareeba to attract workers to fill skill gaps across all industries.

## 2023 FOCUS

##### **Mareeba Shire Council**

- Prepare and promote a Workforce Attraction Prospectus to attract and retain staff in all industry sectors.
- Review fees and charges and approval processes for timely streamlined approvals and affordability for housing development and construction.

##### **Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Rotary, Mareeba Hospital, Mareeba GP Clinics**

- Support the 2023 GROW Rural North Qld program conducted by Health Workforce Queensland to encourage health and medical graduates to choose to live and work in rural North Queensland, especially the Mareeba Shire.

##### **Mareeba Hospital, Mareeba Shire Council**

- Organise and host a one day 'Mareeba Famil' for conference attendees at the Rural Doctors Association of QLD Conference, Cairns 8-10 June 2023. The aim is to encourage Medical Practitioners to Mareeba by showcasing local employment opportunities, lifestyle benefits and community support for health professionals and their families.

##### **Transport Businesses, Mareeba Chamber of Commerce**

- Investigate viability of extending Townsville pilot project for transport, logistics, manufacturing, and warehousing to engage young people to consider a career in the transport industry.

##### **All Organisations**

- Explore new ways of attracting and retaining staff including advertising practices and employment packages.
- Continue to support the newly formed Mareeba Health Professional Workforce Alliance.



# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**ACTION OUTCOMES:** *Housing affordability and accessibility is improved to deliver sustainable benefits to health, employment, and well-being in the community.*

##### **Mareeba Shire Council**

- Advocated for, and gained approval to construct new two x two-bedroom duplex for seniors in Mareeba with Queensland Government funding
- Timely development, building and plumbing approval processes offered for housing construction with fee increases kept well below CPI
- Timely assessment of development applications for on farm rural workers accommodation to free up housing in town

##### **Queensland Government**

- Introduced two new planning regulations to help address the housing shortage:
- Property owners can now rent secondary dwellings, such as granny flats, to non-household members.
- The Queensland Rural Workers Initiative supports repurposing existing underutilised facilities as an interim solution for rural workers' accommodation. The Initiative allows for small scale rural workers' accommodation to proceed without a material change of use development approval, when meeting certain criteria.

##### **Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Community Housing Company, Dept Communities, Housing and Digital Economy**

- New partnership developed between Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Community Housing Company and Queensland Government to manage 108 accommodation units for seniors in Mareeba, Kuranda, Dimbulah, and Mt Molloy

##### **Mareeba Community Housing Company, Dept Communities, Housing and Digital Economy**

- Partnership between Mareeba Community Housing Company and Dept Communities, Housing and Digital Economy to construct new one and two bedroom units and a three bedroom house for low income tenants qualifying for social housing





# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONT.

##### Medical Clinics, Mareeba Hospital

- Mareeba Hospital and local medical clinics developed creative and collaborative options to overcome the housing crisis to attract and retain staff.
- Mareeba Hospital's former 'Nurse's Quarters' has been airconditioned.

##### MiHaven, Local Care Providers, National Disability Scheme (NDIS)

MiHaven, in collaboration with NDIS and local care providers, is establishing a new partnership aimed at providing specialist disability accommodation in Mareeba.

The project involves:

- the construction of four new dwellings that will cater for 11 people with disabilities who require a high level of specialized care.
- Placement in these homes will be approved and funded by the NDIS, while property management will be undertaken by MiHaven with the 24/7 care of the residents provided by local care providers.

##### Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Chamber of Commerce, FNQ Regional Organisations of Councils

- Lobbied for a new modern statutory Regional FNQ Plan for economic and population growth and increased affordable housing options.

## 2023 FOCUS

##### All Organisations

- Continue to advocate for sustainable solutions to the housing crisis including new affordable and social housing stock for low-income earners to free up housing for others.

##### Mareeba Community Housing Company, Private Investors, Queensland Government, Federal Government

- Seek private investment for new residential housing in partnership with new and existing affordable government housing programs.



# PRIORITY OUTCOMES 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING 2023 FOCUS CONT.

##### **Mareeba Community Housing Company, Dept Communities, Housing and Digital Economy**

- Construct new two x two-bedroom units and three x one-bedroom units for social housing with Queensland Government funding.

##### **Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Community Housing Company, Dept Communities, Housing and Digital Economy**

- Construct new two x two-bedroom duplex for social housing for seniors with Queensland Government funding.

##### **Mareeba Shire Council**

- Review fees and charges and approval processes for timely streamlined approvals and affordability for housing development and construction.

##### **Mareeba Shire Council, Queensland Government**

- Continue to lobby for sustainable options for new housing for seniors using the equity in Council's social housing for seniors' portfolio.

##### **Mareeba Shire Council, Mareeba Chamber of Commerce, FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils**

- Continue to lobby for a new modern statutory Regional FNQ Plan for economic and population growth and increased affordable housing options.



# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 5. IMPROVED COMMUNITY SAFETY

**ACTION OUTCOMES:** *The community works together in positive ways for improved community safety encompassing adequate policing, appropriate judicial outcomes, and sustainable funding to support the needs of the community's most vulnerable to deter criminal activity and improve community safety.*

##### Mareeba Shire Council

- Prepared advocacy material, hosted Ministerial visits, organised meetings with Ministers and senior officers and conducted other advocacy actions for increased resources and policy changes for improved community safety.
- Opportunities for public space redesign for community safety are being taken as Council rolls out it's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Three Year Action Plan. Lighting has been reconfigured, upgraded or additional installed, in hotspot public spaces like the Bicentennial Lakes, Anzac Park, Arnold Park and Railway Avenue.
- Mareeba CCTV Program offering financial assistance to businesses for installation of CCTV cameras in hot spots for improved community safety

##### Mareeba Shire Council, Community Service Organisations, Volunteer Groups, State and Federal Government Agencies

- Leadership and facilitation provided to establish new interagency network, "Mareeba Collaborating for Community Safety" for improved engagement by external agencies as well as improved local agency coordination and collaboration for community safety.

##### Queensland Police Service, Dept Communities, Housing and Digital Economy

- Additional resources secured by community advocacy.
- Additional two police officers deployed to Kuranda and five officers to Mareeba over three years.
- New PCYC Police Liaison Officer funded to work with disengaged youth and their families plus additional \$260,000 for Pulse Café and equipment for youth services.
- New Mission Australia position funded for connecting youth to country program.



# PRIORITY OUTCOMES 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 5. IMPROVED COMMUNITY SAFETY CONT.

##### **Dept Children , Youth and Justice Multicultural Affairs, Queensland Police Service**

- Commitment made and planning commenced to open new office in Mareeba for statutory youth justice and child protection services.
- Leadership and facilitation provided for multi-agency panel for coordinated care for vulnerable young people (CCYP).
- Special initiatives from the Queensland Government's Youth Task Force implemented to monitor and support recidivist young offenders and their families eg. weekly bail meetings.

##### **Mareeba Community Centre, Federal Government**

- New two-year youth pilot program commenced with federal funding.

##### **Mareeba Crime Stoppers**

- Established local Crime Stoppers to promote community safety initiatives and provide feedback for government initiatives.

##### **Mareeba Crime Action Group**

- Mareeba Crime Action Group established by local volunteers to advocate, liaise with local police and businesses, and provide feedback on government policy for local crime reduction.

##### **Youth Justice Task Force**

- Two Multi-Agency Collaborative Panels (MACP) established - Cairns and Mareeba.

##### **Muluridji Registered Native Title Body Corporate**

- Muluridji Registered Native Title Body Corporate received Federal funding to deliver a program to build stronger connections to culture, families and Elders.





# PROGRESS UPDATE 2022

## COMMUNITY TASKFORCE

### Actions & Outcomes

#### 5. IMPROVED COMMUNITY SAFETY CONT.

##### Mulungu Aboriginal Health Corporation, Ngoonbi Community Services

- Mulungu Aboriginal Health Corporation and Ngoonbi Community Services have received funding First Nations Sport & Recreation Program.

## 2023 FOCUS

### Mareeba Collaborating for Community Safety Interagency Network

- Maintain Mareeba Collaborating for Community Safety Interagency Network for ongoing collaboration and coordination.
- Investigate models and lobby for increased resources to reduce family violence.
- Develop strong partnerships to transition young people back into school, training, or employment to prevent re-offending.
- Investigate options for extending pilot programs for youth and family support.



## CONTACT DETAILS

For further details regarding the Mareeba Community Taskforce, the Action Plan and Progress Report, please contact:

**Mareeba Shire Council:**

Tourism and Economic Development Officer

[Info@msc.qld.gov.au](mailto:Info@msc.qld.gov.au)

1300 308 461

**Mareeba Chamber of Commerce:**

[Admin@mareebachamber.com.au](mailto:Admin@mareebachamber.com.au)

